

# United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

United Nations International Research and Training Institute for Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) was established in 1975 in Mexico. It is headquartered in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. INSTRAW was instrumental in establishing GAINS (Gender Awareness Information and Networking System) with the objective of managing, producing and sharing knowledge and information related to gender.

## INSTRAW - Objectives

There are multiple objectives of this organization which are listed below.

1. Produce, manage and make available to a network of users gender-aware knowledge and information
2. Gather, organize and make available gender-aware research findings, training practices and other related knowledge and information, especially from the developing world;
3. Engender mainstream research and identify training gaps
4. Undertake research and training on gender issues
5. Enhance gender awareness on critical global issues and trends for the exchange of new ideas, concepts and methodologies for integrating and advancing existing knowledge on gender issues
6. Promote women's empowerment by increasing their participation in the use, production, and management of new information technologies.

INSTRAW has ceased to exist and it has been replaced with UN Women, after a resolution was passed in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).

## United Nations (UN) Women - Formed by Merging Different Organizations

United Nations Women is also known as the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women. UN Women was established in 2010. It is headquartered in New York. UN Women became operational in 2011. The 1st Executive Director of UN Women was the President of Chile Michelle Bachelet. UN Women was established by merging the following 4 organisations

1. Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW)
2. International Research and Training Institute for Advancement of Women (INSTRAW),

3. The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM, which was established in 1976),
4. Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI, it was established in 1976).

The main objectives of UN Women will be to promote equal opportunities, gender equality, and tackle discrimination.

## UN Women Executive Board - Distribution of Countries

The UN Women Executive consists of 41 members. They are elected for a term of 3 years by the Economic and Social Council. The distribution of members from different countries are given below.

1. Asia - 10
2. Africa - 10
3. Eastern Europe - 4
4. Latin America and Caribbean States - 6
5. Western Europe and Other States - 5
6. Countries that contribute to UN Women - 6

## UN Women - Areas of Work

The main areas of work of UN Women are given below.

1. Economic Empowerment of women
2. Leadership and political participation of women
3. Ending Violence against women
4. Working on peace and security
5. Work on Sustainable Development
6. Work on Humanitarian Crises

## **COVID - 19 : Contribution to Fight the Pandemic and Problems Faced by Women**

A huge chunk of people involved in the fight against COVID-19 are women. Women are at the frontline in the battle against COVID-19 pandemic. Globally women constitute 70% of the support and medical staff. 85% of the nurses in the hospital are women. Around 50% of the doctors in Organisation for Economic Development (OECD) countries are women.

However the major brunt of problems associated with COVID-19 are faced by women.

1. Millions of women are exposed to the risk of infection while fighting COVID-19.
2. Huge pressure on women due to closure of day-care centres and schools.

3. Around 740 million face severe economic insecurity due to forecasted rise of unemployment, underemployment and lack of social security.
4. In Mexico, 99% of female domestic workers are not enrolled in any social security schemes.
5. Due to increased risk of job loss in garment manufacturing industry in Bangladesh, women are at huge risk since they comprise 85% of the workforce.
6. Older women above the age of 65 live alone in G20 countries without any adequate pension.
7. There has been rise in domestic violence against women.