

FAWCO at the United Nations: FAQs

What does the United Nations do?

The United Nations was founded in 1945 in the aftermath of World War II to take action on transnational problems: peace and security, climate change, sustainable development, human rights, disarmament, terrorism, humanitarian and health emergencies, gender equality, governance, food production, and more. The UN provides a forum for its 193 Member States to express their views in the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, and other bodies and committees. Through dialogue and negotiations among members, the UN is a mechanism for governments to seek agreement and solve problems. Its main functions are: maintain international peace and security; protect human rights; deliver humanitarian aid; promote sustainable development; and uphold international law.

Learn more about the [UN](#)

Read [Fast Facts About the UN](#)

What is ECOSOC Consultative Status and what does it mean for FAWCO?

The UN Charter established the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 1945 to advance the three dimensions of sustainable development — economic, social and environmental. ECOSOC serves as the central forum for discussing international economic and social issues, and for formulating policy recommendations addressed to UN Member States and the UN system. The UN Charter provides for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to contribute to the UN's work through consultative status with ECOSOC. Over 4,500 organizations hold special consultative status, including FAWCO. This status allows FAWCO to request the addition of an item on ECOSOC's agenda; submit written statements and make oral statements at meetings; and send delegations to ECOSOC's subsidiary bodies such as the Commission on the Status of Women, the various UN human rights mechanisms, as well as special events organized by the President of the General Assembly.

FAWCO received special consultative status with ECOSOC in 1997. To maintain our consultative status, we are required to submit quadrennial reports to ECOSOC demonstrating our active involvement and ongoing commitment to the UN's development agenda. We point with pride to the Target Program and FAWCO Foundation Development Grants as representative initiatives.

You can learn more about what ECOSOC consultative status means in [“Working with ECOSOC: An NGOs Guide to Consultative Status”](#)

What do FAWCO UN Reps do?

FAWCO's 17 UN Reps are members of AWC Berlin, AIWC Cologne, IWC Munich, AWA Vienna, AAWE Paris, AWC Rome, AWC Amsterdam, AWC Bern, AWC Zurich, AWC Central Scotland, AWO Greece, and FAUSA.

We play leadership roles on NGO Committees in NY, Geneva and Vienna, increasing FAWCO's visibility in the NGO community at the UN. We collaborate with other NGOs to advocate and seek to influence the UN Agenda regarding gender equality, human rights, women's health, and climate change. We post all the position papers and statements FAWCO endorses on the website under [Advocacy](#). We promote UN agency campaigns. We organize educational events -- panel discussions, speeches, film screenings -- on issues such as women's economic empowerment, early childhood development and education for refugee families, female genital mutilation, human trafficking, honor killing, and countering violent extremism.

- We advocate
- We promote
- We collaborate
- We inform
- We offer opportunities

What are NGO Committees on the Status of Women? What is the NGO Committee on Migration? NGO Committees, Constituencies, Major Groups, Stakeholders, Civil Society – what do these groups do?

The active engagement of several thousand NGOs with the work of the UN requires that NGOs organize and collaborate through work in committees and coalitions. This amplifies communications about the work we do, and fosters partnerships. FAWCO UN Reps play active roles in the following groups of NGOs at the UN:

- NGO Committee on the Status of Women NY
- NGO Committee on the Status of Women Geneva
- NGO Committee on the Status of Women Vienna
- NGO Committee on Migration
- NGO Major Group and Women's Major Group
- Women and Gender Constituency

What is CSW? What is UN Women?

The UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) was founded in 1946 to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women. UN Women is the UN focal point for women's rights, the “United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.” CSW, organized by UN Women, takes place in March every year and is the global forum for women's rights and gender equality attended by government officials, representatives of the UN and other international agencies, and thousands of activists from around the world. NGOs with ECOSOC consultative status may send a delegation of up to 20 people to CSW. FAWCO has had CSW delegations of as many as 15 members. Learn more about [UN Women](#) and the [UN Commission on the Status of Women](#)

How does the UN Advocacy Program fit in with the FAWCO Global Issues programs?

The UN Reps Team provides information and resources from UN agencies, publications, newsletters and other media to support the education and awareness-raising components of the Target Program and Global Issues Teams. We participate in and promote global campaigns relevant to FAWCO's priority issues. We offer the opportunity of a FAWCO UN Youth Program to children of FAWCO and FAUSA members. We contribute position papers and resolutions on the UN to the US Issues Team for Overseas Americans Week. We engage in awareness-raising through FAWCO's social media outlets.

The UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide the integrative framework for all of FAWCO's Global Issues Teams.

- Education SDG #4
- Environment SDG #13 and others
- Health SDG#3
- Human Rights SDG#5 Gender Equality and others

What do FAWCO's R&Rs say about our UN Advocacy program?

FAWCO's Resolutions & Recommendations spell out the work of the UN Reps Team.

- Champion the role of the United Nations in promoting world peace and improving lives, raise awareness among FAWCO members of UN endeavors and support the UN's mission and goals, particularly the UN's 2030 Agenda (Sustainable Development Goals - SDGs).
- Increase FAWCO's engagement as a UN Department of Public Information (DPI) accredited NGO with special consultative status to the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) by working with UN Women and the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and through partnerships with like-minded organizations. Raise awareness of and actively engage in UN initiatives.
- Advocate for the ratification by the US Senate of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the inclusion of American women living overseas in the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), and support Cities for CEDAW in the United States.