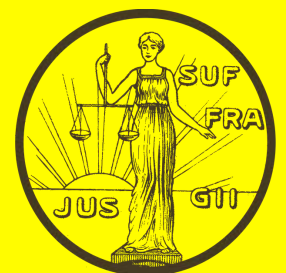




International Alliance of  
Women Annual Report  
2023-24

Alliance Internationale des  
Femmes Rapport Annuel  
2023-24



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# INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24 ALLIANCE INTERNATIONALE DES FEMMES RAPPORT ANNUEL 2023-24

International Alliance of Women is pleased to present the Annual Report for 2024. Not all possible reports are contained herein, just only the ones which arrived in our inbox in time to produce this booklet. We hope you are inspired by reading the many actions undertaken by office holders of IAW and the membership organisations.

L'Alliance internationale des femmes a le plaisir de présenter le rapport annuel pour 2024. Ce rapport ne contient pas tous les rapports possibles, mais seulement ceux qui sont arrivés dans notre boîte de réception à temps pour produire cette brochure. Nous espérons que la lecture des nombreuses actions entreprises par les responsables d'AIF et les organisations membres vous inspirera.

Alison Brown IAW President /Présidente de l'AIF

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# REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT

ALISON BROWN

International Alliance of Women has completed the 120th year of its existence. Conceived in 1902 and founded in June 1904 as the International Woman Suffrage Alliance (IWSA); reorganized in 1926, after many countries of the original founding organizations granted women suffrage in recognition of their service during the first World War, under the name International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship (IAWSEC). In 1949 after more political progress in the aftermath of World War II, it emerged with the name we know today International Alliance of Women, Equal Rights - Equal Responsibilities (IAW). Universal suffrage had still not been achieved: Swiss women, whose organisation joined IWSA in 1908, finally got universal suffrage on all levels in 1990! The last country to grant full suffrage was Kuwait: their Affiliate joined IAW in 1999 and women there finally got to vote, including for woman candidates, in 2009. However, the activists of IAW recognized that merely having the right to vote was not bringing the results the founders had anticipated. Indeed, to this day, women are still underrepresented in positions of power, hindered in their social and economic advancement, shackled by patriarchal restrictions and threatened both at home and out in the world by physical and psychological violence. Much remains to be done to reach the goal of Equal Rights - Equal Responsibilities.

As an organisation ages, the losses of important leaders add up. This past year has been particularly hard. We had to say goodbye to Gudrun Haupter, Representative to WHO, an active Convenor of the Health Commission with a special connection to Francophone Africa and a guiding light for the Water and Pads Project, which does important work on several continents. We lost Joke Sebus, the first editor of the e-Newsletter and a veritable dragon guarding her e-mail list from any data breach. The venerable Marijke Peters held various offices in IAW leadership and was an invaluable archivist and historian. Finally, Hon. President Joanna Manganara, a scholar who mined the topic of the economic situation of women producing consequential essays and who was particularly concerned with matters of succession in IAW, a concern which I share.

As President, I am pleased to point out the statements available on the website which we have presented to the UN on the topics of the Commission on the Status of Women, The Summit of the Future, and also on individual topics such as parental alienation, which harms loving mothers. These statements were not from my pen, but in true IAW fashion, from input provided by the various Commissions (we currently have 13, but we need to reduce that number to rely on the Commissions who are working productively).

We were involved in no fewer than nine virtual or in-person Parallel Events at CSW68: Cities for CEDAW: Collaborative Open Data Project to Accelerate Gender Equity; Achieving the Adoption of CEDAW Principles with Collaborations and Consultations in Cities, Counties, and States; Multilateral Approach To Achieve SDGS By 2030; Through The Lens Of Gender Equality Organizer; Achieving women’s economic success through ensuring reproductive and family planning freedoms; Available protection systems and supportive services to fight exploitation and trafficking of women and girls; A conversation: poverty data, US laws and role of CEDAW; The CEDAW Challenge for Future Generations: Why Innovation Matter; ”Multilateral Approach to Achieve SDGs by 2030: Empowering Women, Enabling Peace and Foster Sustainable Development by Accelerating Gender Equality. I had the honor to speak at the Parallel Event on education organized by our Affiliate, the Women Empowerment and Human Resource Development Centre of India. My heartfelt thanks go out to Dr. Uzma Gul, Executive Vice-President and Convenor of the Health Commission, for her enormous activity in organizing the two events on Multilateral Approaches to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

In conclusion, I wish to tell you that I spend many hours sitting at my computer in meetings of groups like NGO/CSW New York or at events like the 2024 UN Civil Society Conference held in Nairobi, listening for information that could be useful to convey to our Affiliates and Associates. I also field contact requests that come in over [www.womenalliance.org](http://www.womenalliance.org). Networking is a specialty of mine and I like that part of my job best.



*Photo: President MAB & SJ at the UN for CSW68*

# REPORT OF THE TREASURER

ANTONIA LAVINE

We ended Fiscal Year 2023 with a positive financial result, and most of our income funds were invested in IAW's inspiring "Water and Pads" program. In 2023, the program raised over 15,000 euros fully dedicated to supporting women in developing countries via advocacy, technical assistance, training, and educational/marketing materials. We acknowledge the excellent work of the leadership team of this excellent program. Their achievements inspire us all!

In addition to the successful fundraising for our "Water and Pads" program, we substantially increased our income from donations that directly support the operation of IAW. In 2023, we raised almost 4,000 euros more in general donations than in 2022, which brought us very close to our ambitious budget projection. While very successful, our efforts to increase donations directly supporting the operation of IAW need to continue.

Our efforts to collect annual membership fees did not lead to a substantial increase in revenue, mainly due to minimal recruitment of new members and delays in payments or membership of individual members. While the collection of organizational fees came close to the budgeted amount, the payments of individual fees did not reach the projected amount.

On balance, the funds collected through general donations and membership fees are still far from sufficient to support IAW's growth and ability to develop new programming. On the other hand, we acknowledge that reasonable efforts have been made to increase the amount of these funds in two consecutive years (2022 and 2023), leading to a higher income in some of the account categories, most importantly in the category of general donations.

This trend continued in 2024, and here is the place to recognize those who made this possible by generously increasing the amount of their donations, the frequency of their contributions and the level of their membership through the options of supporting and contributing members. In addition, our Membership Secretary's dedication and hard work in collecting the fees and tracking their submission from multiple sources is to be especially recognized.

We must continue these efforts and sustain the encouraging trend of improving our fundraising abilities. An important venue to achieve this result will be expanding our programming to projects that directly support IAW's advocacy and policy work and bring to our work passionate activists willing to invest funds and volunteer time in our organizational future.

In addition, we need to continue our efforts to fully ensure an effective system of checks and balances by separating the executive work on financials from the financial oversight, currently, both placed in the duties and responsibilities of the Treasurer. The support and advice of the Financial Advisory Committee in looking for ways to achieve this result has been critical and will continue to guide our considerations and decisions in ensuring IAW's financial health and prosperity.

Thank you to all members for supporting our work through advocacy, leadership, and financial contributions!

FINANCES IAW 2023 - All figures in EURO							
INCOME 2023				EXPENDITURE 2023			
Code		Actual	Budget	Code		Actual	Budget
AF	Affiliated Fees	2127.00	3200.00	DU	Dues Organizations	602.09	1000.00
AS	Associated Fees	745.20	800.00	EP	Translations	1062.00	1600.00
IM	Individual Member Fees	6162.60	11000.00	ED	Editors (IWNews)	0.00	300.00
SC	Subscriptions	60.00	260.00	PR	Printers (Special Printing)	0.00	780.00
DO	Donations	5473.00	6000.00	CB	Congress/Board	2980.68	1000.00
CB	Congress/Board	1671.00		AD	Auditor	998.13	1300.00
WP	Water and Pads	15159.96		MC	Miscellaneous	171.55	600.00
UN	UNESCO-Hydro	0.00		WB	Website	0.00	600.00
IT	Interest EU-CH-BCA	0.00		OC	Office Costs	1421.80	1500.00
IT	Interest Deposit	0.00		WB	Databank	1800.00	6800.00
				BC	Bankcharges	1267.89	1005.00
				AC	Accounting	4007.51	3000.00
				EV	Events	151.72	500.00
				WP	Water and Pads Project	12847.48	
				UN	UNESCO-Hydro	6673.00	
	<b>Total Income (IN)</b>	<b>31398.76</b>	<b>21260.00</b>		<b>Total Expenditure (EX)</b>	<b>33983.85</b>	<b>19985.00</b>
					<b>BALANCE = IN- EX</b>	<b>-2585.09</b>	
<b>ASSETS 2023</b>				<b>BALANCE 2023</b>			
Code		1.1.2023	31-12-2023			01.01.2023	31.12.2023
GA	Euroaccount	120352.58	119219.76		CREDIT	137889.14	135303.26
CH	Swiss Account	17536.56	16083.50		<b>BANK BALANCE</b>	<b>-2585.88</b>	
TA	Treasurer Account Cash	0.00					
HIBA	HIBA	0.00					
DEPA	Treasury Deposit	0.00					
	<b>Total</b>	<b>137889.14</b>	<b>135303.26</b>		<b>Total</b>	<b>135303.26</b>	<b>135303.26</b>
		01.01.2023	31.12.2023			01.01.2023	31.12.2023
	Total bankaccounts	137889.14	135303.26		<b>IAW ASSETS</b>	124678.09	126290.09
WP	Water and Pad Project	-6538.05	-9013.17		<b>IAW RESULT</b>	1612.00	
UN	UNESCO-Hydro Project	-6673.00				126290.09	126290.09
	<b>IAW</b>	<b>124678.09</b>	<b>126290.09</b>				

# REPORT OF THE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

SANJA JERAJ

## Website

From 21 August 2023 to 01 August 2024, 20 news articles were published on the English page and 7 on the French page. This amount of website activity is enough to continue to be found on Google. Our readers/visitors see that we, IAW as a whole, are active and are not overwhelmed or bothered by our public relations work.

Due to the increased activity on IWNews, some reports have migrated to our journal, where they ultimately belong. Not only is the website editor happy about this, but it also benefits the entire IAW.

## Social Media

The active social media channels LinkedIn, Facebook and X (Twitter) were also regularly fed in the reporting period.

### [LinkedIn](#)

We currently have 1,020 followers and 443 connections on LinkedIn. Our post caused over 21000 impressions and over 400 engagements during the reporting period. We are very pleased with this positive development, which shows that more and more people want to read what we say.

### [Facebook](#)

The type of Facebook presence has changed: We have increasingly used this medium to report on global news about women—dangers, injustices, and individual and social successes.

With over 200 posts, we also managed to increase our audience slightly (5152 followers).

### [X \(Twitter\)](#)

X (formerly Twitter) has been the subject of much discussion since a private investor took over. In the reporting period, we decided to continue operating our account and chose a presence similar to Facebook. In fact, we have seen a slight increase in readership there, too (1031 followers).

## Instagram

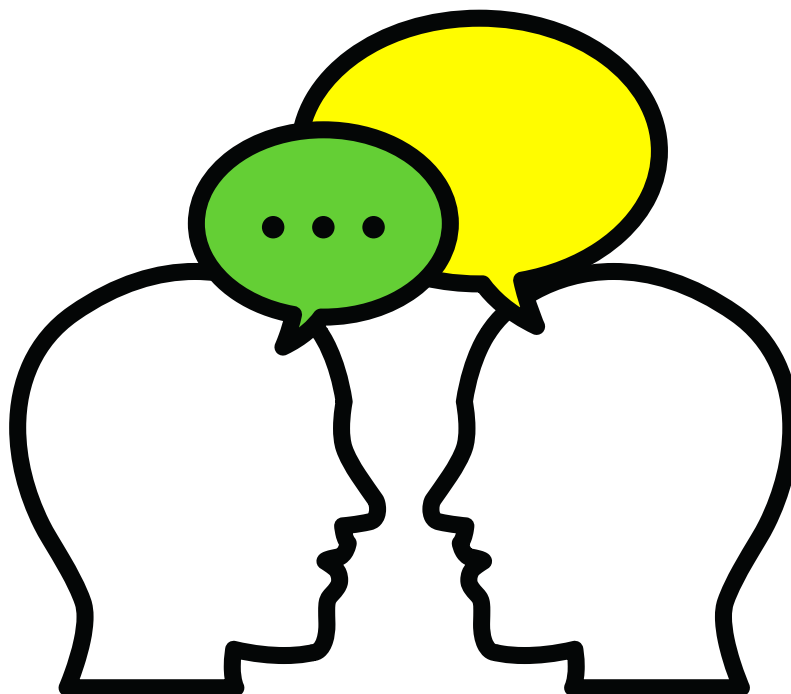
The handover from Instagram did not work well. There is hope that we can become active again after all, as 176 followers remain loyal to us.

We are struggling with whether to repeat the summarised lines from the last report:

Our reach on social media is modest, but the growing engagement shows that we are on the right track, especially because we are focussing on challenging topics or admitting to ourselves that we cannot achieve our goals via social media without professional guidance.

## Newsletter

There were 8 issues of the newsletter in the reporting period. The editor is still struggling a bit with the nature of the newsletter, in terms of length and frequency. the aim is to inform our readership without spamming, the right amount is still being sought.



# REPORT OF THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

LENE PIND

ASSISTANT MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY HOLLY HERBERT

We earnestly appeal to all members to pay their membership fees promptly upon receiving the first invoice. Timely payments greatly simplify our administrative processes and ensure the smooth functioning of our organization.

## The membership secretariat is dedicated to:

- Welcoming new members
- Maintaining and updating all member information in our database and other membership files, including MailChimp
- Ensuring compliance with GDPR regulations
- Corresponding with national collectors
- Invoicing members

Additionally, the Secretariat facilitates the exchange of information within IAW and assists members in various situations, striving to provide comprehensive support. We are committed to continuously enhancing the professionalism of our membership administration.

## Currently, IAW comprises:

- 25 affiliates, with a few at risk of losing their membership
- 16 associates, of which only one is not fully financial
- 288 individual members, many of whom are not financial

With respect to our individual members, we are gradually and carefully removing unfinancial members from our lists to maintain the integrity of our membership records.

## Looking Ahead:

At the Congress in 2025, Lene Pind will be stepping down as Membership Secretary.

We thank all our members for their continued support and cooperation. Your engagement and enthusiasm are the driving forces behind our success. Together, we have made significant strides in promoting gender equality and women's rights worldwide.



*Membership planning meeting.  
Holly and Lene in Copenhagen 2023*





REPORTS FROM  
COMMISSIONS

RAPPORTS DES  
COMMISSIONS

# COMMISSION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

CONVENER RUDI SAYID

IAW recognises that gender equality and environmental sustainability are interlinked and inseparable. Ecofeminism, a philosophy that emerged in the 1970s, highlights the connections between patriarchal oppression, environmental degradation and the exploitation of both women and nature. As the world faces the impacts of climate change and biodiversity loss, eco-feminism provides a critical lens for understanding and addressing these issues. This position paper will explore the importance of eco-feminism for achieving sustainable development, climate justice and gender equality.

With severe climate change in the past few decades, many countries have faced drastic weather changes and the collapse of ecosystems. If left untreated, our world may face inconceivable loss in years to come. Floods and draughts are some of the most serious consequences of climate change.

Without solidarity, the issue of climate change cannot be tackled. An incredible initiative in this regard is the Paris Agreement, which brings all nations together to combat climate change. This international treaty, signed on December 12, 2015, by 96 parties at the UN climate change conference, aims to "limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C, above pre-industrial levels" This agreement requires the countries to submit their nationally determined contributions (NDCs) in which they communicate their actions to reduce greenhouse emissions. To record the long-term goals for global change, the Paris Agreement invited the countries to submit their long-term strategies (LT-LEDs) to keep their greenhouse gas emissions in check.

Prior to the Paris Agreement, the Kyoto Agreement, which came into action in 2005, worked for the collective benefit of the climate. There are currently 92 parties to the Kyoto Protocol that are actively working on mitigating greenhouse gases. According to this agreement, developed countries are largely responsible for greenhouse emissions, and therefore, it is crucial for these countries to monitor their activities. The Nations Common Heritage of Mankind (CHM) is another step towards global change, which aims to preserve nature and restore stable climate conditions.

Women are disproportionately affected by climate change: Climate change is a global crisis that has significant social, economic and environmental impacts. Women, particularly those in developing countries, are disproportionately affected by climate change. They often have limited access to resources, including water, land and food. They bear the burden of caring for families and communities affected by climate change.

## IAW recommends the importance of:

**1.** Ecofeminism and climate change. Ecofeminism promotes a holistic approach to sustainability. It asserts that sustainable development requires a holistic approach that considers social, economic, and environmental factors. By prioritizing the well-being of people and the planet, ecofeminism promotes a more sustainable and just future for all while emphasizing that women hold many of the critical keys to unlocking a sustainable path for future generations.

**2.** Ecocide is declared as a crime. Ecocide is a crime because it not only harms the environment but also has a disproportionate impact on marginalized communities, including women. The destruction of the ecosystem and loss of biodiversity have far-reaching consequences that affect everyone, but they often disproportionately affect the most vulnerable members of society, including Indigenous people and women in developing countries. Furthermore, ecocide is often the result of practices that prioritize profit over people and the environment. These practices are often driven by a patriarchal and imperial system that values dominance and control over the natural world rather than cooperation and mutual respect.

**3.** Ensure equal gender participation in all development programs to minimize the financial risks of climate change. Women's participation is essential for sustainable development: IAW recognizes that women's participation is critical for achieving sustainable development.

Ecofeminism highlights the need to prioritize the participation of women in decision-making processes related to environmental sustainability and sustainable technologies and crops. Women's perspectives and experiences are essential for developing effective and equitable policies and practices.



# COMMISSION ON DIGITAL DIVIDE

CONVENER ARINA ANGERMAN

As Convenor, I have informed the members of the IAW Commission on the Digital Divide several times about TFGBV (Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence). This TFGBV can affect people from all backgrounds and genders, men as well as women, boys as well as girls, and is the most important initiative. “Women in the public eye, gender/women’s rights defenders, children, young people, and LGBTIQI people are particularly at risk” Note 1.

After our 2023 report, we, as an IAW Commission on the Digital Divide, contributed to the statement of IAW to the CSW68. Important points are: “Recognising gender bias in data, artificial intelligence, and algorithms leads to developing gender-sensitive and intersectional data that can be used in analyses for equitable outcomes. As the world moves toward more electronic connections and labour practices, the importance of (digital) education throughout the life course, including older women and women and girls with disabilities, cannot be neglected.”

Note 2: As this IAW Commission is new. We are now following the discussions about AI. I became a member of the Alliance for Universal Digital Rights (Audri) and shared messages by them on LinkedIn with #endTFGBV (July 2024). Did you know nearly half of Gen Z (women who were born after 1995) and millennial women have experienced online gender-based violence? I followed a webinar o.a. on Sexual violence and harassment in the Metaverse (April 2024).

In 2015, when Beijing turned 20, I was a member of a round table on ‘I love feminism’. As a follow-up, I wrote a blog, From Beijing ‘95 to Amsterdam ‘15 (in Dutch). Our former IAW President, Lyda Verstegen, is still posting messages on Facebook or giving a like.

The other two members of IAW (Joke Sebus and Marijke Peters) with whom I have worked a lot and who used the Internet or started mailing from Huairou (China) in 1995, too, have passed away at the age of 90+.

Since the end of 2023, as an individual member of IAW, I have supported the combination of Digitalisation and Sustainability and wrote a blog (in Dutch) celebrating International Women’s Day in 2024. Do you know (as I read in an opinion by Aaron Mirck in a Dutch newspaper in June 2024) that the Internet uses as much CO2 as the airline industry? As I zoom in or use Facebook/Instagram, I am always conscious of my privilege of being able to use the internet!

The most burning issue is to end TFGBV in my country and the EU region.

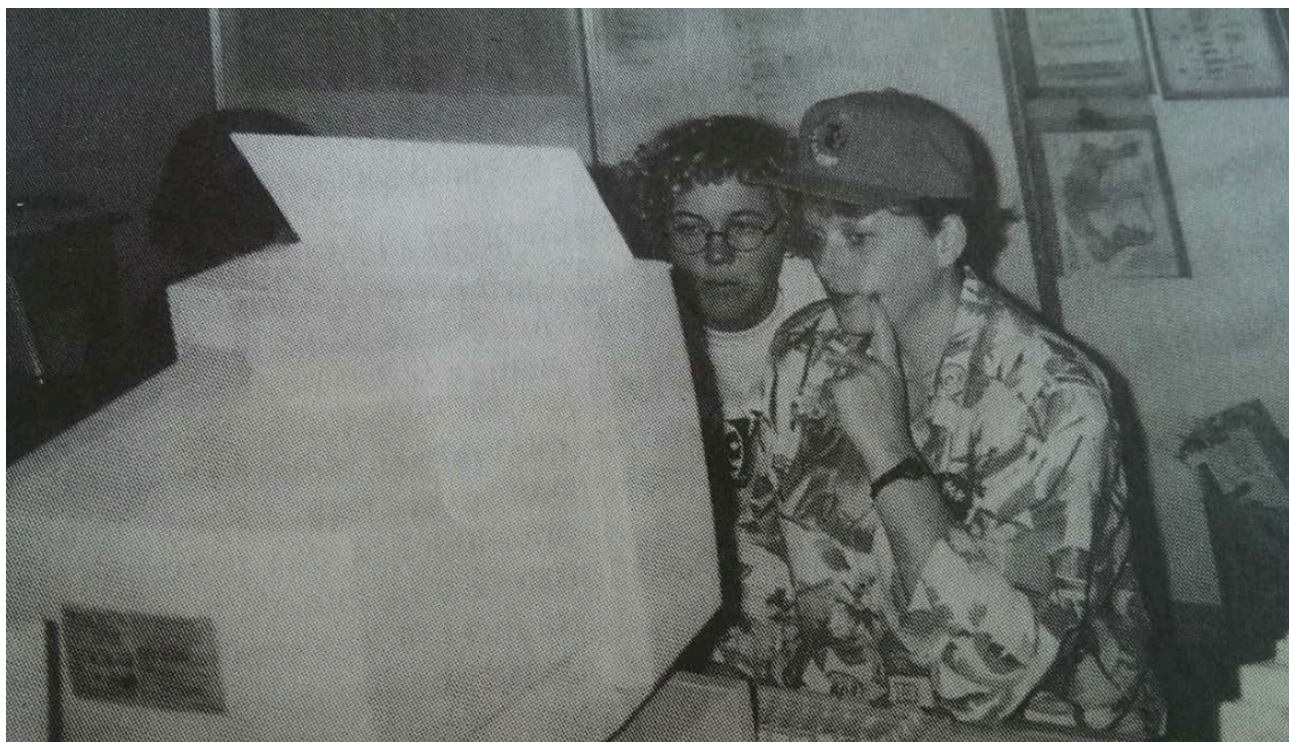
As the percentage of women in the European Parliament diminished in 2023 from 41% to 39%, the most important issue remains SDG5 (gender equality). In the Netherlands, we know not all female politicians are feminists; think of Giorgia Meloni, the Prime Minister of Italy.

As we all know since 1995, women's rights are human rights!

To conclude this IAW report of 2024 with my favorite quote out of Invisible Women by Caroline Criado Perez: "The solution to the sex and gender data gap is clear: we have to close the female representation gap" page 318

I, Arina Angerman, want to thank the members of the IAW Commission on the Digital Divide who contributed, among other things, to my activities to improve this report.

*Arina behind a computer in China in 1995*



Gender Equality bag of [Wo=Men, Dutch Genderplatform](#) (Arina is an individual member of this NGO in the Netherlands. Wo=Men is one of the facilitators of the preparation of civil society for CSW69, and Arina participated in several Wo=Men events about CSW68 and 67.



**Solutions:**

1. to stimulate the digital literacy of women and girls, including lifelong learning of new digital skills by women of all ages (including Arina and other members of IAW).
2. as equal rights still mean equal responsibilities, we, as the IAW Commission, support getting more feminist leaders in politics.

Note 1 2024 in: Report Decoding Technology- Facilitated Gender Based Violence p 9

Note 2 2023 in: IAW Statement by International Alliance of Women, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with Economic and Social Council p. 4

# COMMISSION ON EDUCATION

CONVENER DR KG VIJAYALEKSHMY

The Education Commission undertook a series of initiatives to understand global educational trends and identify areas for impactful interventions. As suggested, the commission initially conducted two meetings exclusively with IAW Education Commission members. However, these meetings faced limitations due to different countries' diverse and distinct educational ecosystems. Recognizing this challenge, the commission decided to leverage the broader network of WHI and began engaging with educationists globally to explore areas for strategic intervention.

## Key Focus Areas and Strategic Initiatives

**1. Advocacy and Collaboration with Policy Makers and Corporates:** The commission prioritized bringing key educational issues to the attention of policymakers and corporates. To achieve this, we aligned our efforts with the Department of Women and Child Development, Government of Kerala, and signed an MOU with them. The government provided access to their grassroots educational institutions, the Anganwadis, and their resources for this initiative.

Each Anganwadi center has youth groups, primarily consisting of students aged fifteen and above. The commission initiated a youth enrichment program at these centers, focusing on curriculum planning, student migration, and engaging with various government departments to advocate for curriculum reforms. Over forty-five sessions were conducted to discuss critical subjects not included in the existing school curriculum (refer to Annexure 1).

**2. Formation of National Consortiums:** The commission established consortiums across the country in alignment with Vellnez Foundation Trust (Redefining charity with tech) and similar networks. These consortiums have been instrumental in advocating for and addressing issues related to ending all forms of violence against women and children. For the 2024-2025 period, the commission has selected specific subjects for focused advocacy. It is actively lobbying with the government to develop age-appropriate policies and include them in the school curriculum.

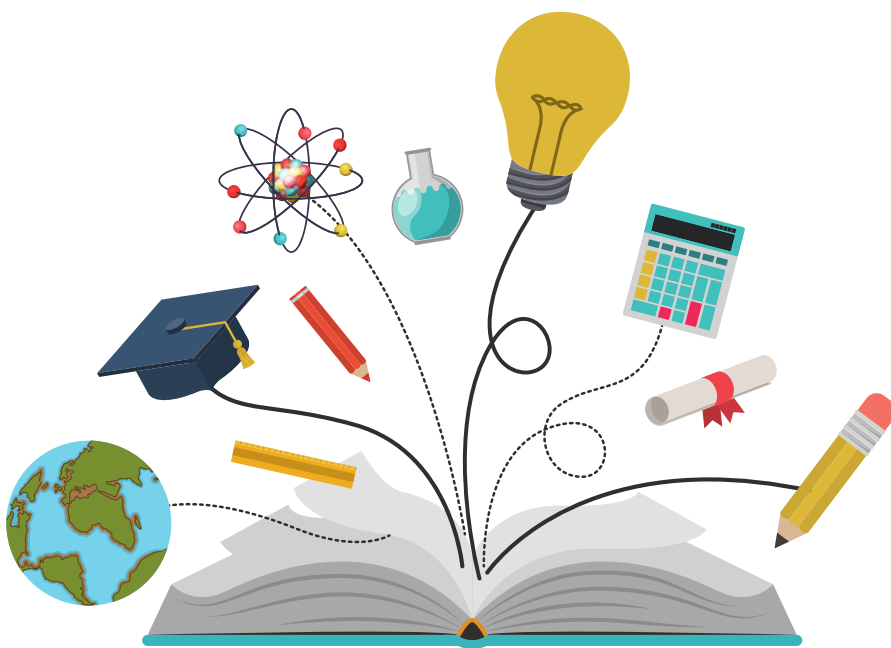
**3. Tribal and Forest Department Collaboration:** In partnership with the Forest and Tribal Welfare Department, Government of Kerala, the commission has launched initiatives aimed at the holistic development of tribal communities (refer to Annexure 2). This collaboration has opened avenues for addressing the unique educational needs of these communities.

**4.Partnership with the Excise Department for Anti-Drug Programs:** The commission also engaged with the Excise Department, Government of Kerala, to conduct a series of awareness programs focused on drug abuse and its detrimental effects. Education Commission WHI played a crucial role in organizing these programs, which aim to prevent substance abuse among youth.

**5.**In alignment with corporates, in 2024 -2025, the Education Commission and WHI jointly started technology-inclusive training and education ( 96 sessions ) among the younger generation for their holistic improvement.

### **Conclusion**

The Education Commission has adopted a multi-faceted approach to tackle educational challenges by fostering strategic partnerships and focusing on areas that have been historically overlooked in conventional curricula. Our collaborations with various government departments, educational institutions, and global educationists have laid the foundation for meaningful interventions aligning with local and international educational standards. This report outlines our progress and highlights areas of ongoing work as we continue our mission to influence policy changes, enrich curricula, and promote holistic educational development.





# COMMISSION ON FINANCIAL/ECONOMIC POLICIES

CONVENER MUNIRA JAUAD RIBEIRO

## Introduction:

The Operational Action Plan will help the Financial/Economic Policy Commission of the International Alliance of Women to determine what will be achieved in favor of the beneficiaries (IAF member associations). It sets priorities and provides a roadmap that allows the Commission team to move forward with the expected results.

This 2025 operational action plan of the IAF's Financial/Economic Policy Commission will include three points: a framework for implementing activities, a logical framework, and a risk matrix.

## FRAMEWORK FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTIVITIES

### 1.

Zoom meeting days are held regularly whenever an acceptable threshold of commission members is reached.

- a) Organize meetings of the Committee on Financial/Economic Policies.
- b) Report and minutes of the meeting
- c) Number of meetings held. Number of topics discussed
- d) Members of the Committee in charge of Finance Team support and hardware organization (Computer, tablet)
- e) The coordinator of the commission. The members of the commission

### 2.

- a) Potential funders and philanthropic individuals/funders are identified and contacted to solicit partnerships with the AIF.
- b) Identify potential funders and philanthropists/donors. Share reports of activities carried out by AIF members and organizations. Share the AIF website link.
- c) Number of mission reports from philanthropic organizations and donors contacted. The commission's members, computers, telephones, and the commission's coordinator.

### 3.

More than 10 projects are submitted in order to find funding for AIF member organizations in different regions (Africa, Asia, Europe, etc.).

### 4.

Submit projects for funding to donors working in the same areas of intervention as the International Alliance of Women. Writing concept notes related to the call for projects. Submission of projects to funders.

**5.**

Project documents. Proof of existence, registration documents from the AIF Computers, and an internet connection. The coordinator of the commission AIF Program Team IAF's members and associated organizations receive financial support to help implement their field projects. Provide financial support to AIF member organizations to facilitate their projects in favor of women and girls in different regions (Africa, Asia, Europe, etc.) Report on the activities of funded organizations. Number of staff of the organisations involved in the implementation of the projects.

**6.**

Advocacy and lobbying are made to decision-making institutions and bodies to reduce the rate of elimination of structural obstacles to women's economic empowerment.

**7.**

Advocate for the removal of structural barriers to women's economic empowerment, including discriminatory laws and policies, gender stereotypes, and harmful social norms. Advocacy report sharing and lobbying carried out.

**8.**

Number of advocacy briefs developed and submitted. Number of lobbying activities: The AIF's technical staff oversees advocacy. Administrative, financial and accounting procedures manuals are distributed to AIF members. Disseminate the various administrative, financial, and accounting procedures manuals and train board members and administrative staff at all levels on their use. Administrative, financial and accounting procedures manuals were disseminated; several textbooks were distributed. The proportion of members trained in the use of manuals expert development of administrative and financial procedures manuals; office supplies, computer consumables; Computers; overhead projectors; Printers; training modules; Copiers AIF technical team in charge. Decision-making institutions and bodies (UN Women, UNFPA, AU, etc.).

**9.**

The functioning of the Finance Committee is strengthened to meet the pressing needs of the IAF's member organizations.

The capacities of members of AIF organizations are strengthened on:

- Technique
- Financial education and use of procedural manuals
- Digitalization

Strengthening the technical capacity of the members of the Commission on Financial/Economic Policies.

Strengthen women's technical capacities according to their activities.

Strengthen women's capacities in financial education and using the procedure manual. Build women's capacity for digitalization. Train and empower the commission members. Coach commission members. Training Reports, Member, Training Report Coaching Sheets, Number of women trained.

## **LOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF INTERVENTION**

### **Objectives:**

- Increase the annual balance sheet rate within the International Alliance of Women
- The member organizations of the IAF are funded by the latter to implement activities on the ground.
- Strengthen technical and financial capacities, particularly in the digitalization of AIF members.
- Meetings of the Financial/Economic Policy Committee are held bimonthly. The International Alliance of Women builds relationships with other donors and donors, and is funded.
- The member organisations of the AIF are financially supported by the latter in order to implement their projects in the field.
- The IAF's advocacy with the United Nations, UNFPA, other decision-making bodies, and governments and parliamentarians of IAF member countries to address structural barriers to women's economic empowerment, including discriminatory laws and policies, gender stereotypes, and negative social norms. Manuals of administrative, financial and accounting procedures are distributed to members of the AIF. Women from AIF member organizations are trained, especially those from the finance commission.

### **Activities to be developed**

- Organize meetings of the Committee on Financial/Economic Policies
- Identify potential funders and philanthropists/donors
- Submit projects for funding to donors working in the same areas of intervention as the International Alliance of Women
- Provide financial support to AIF member organizations to facilitate their projects in favor of women and girls in different regions (Africa, Asia, Europe, etc.)
- Advocate for the removal of structural barriers to women's economic empowerment, including discriminatory laws and policies, gender stereotypes, and negative social norms
- Develops the various administrative, financial and accounting procedures manuals and trains board members and administrative staff at all levels on their use. Strengthening the technical capacity of the members of the Commission on Financial/Economic Policies

### **Indicators:**

- The number of AIF member organizations implementing field projects is increasing in each region (Africa, Asia, Europe)
- The AIF's annual financial balance sheet exceeds 20% within one year. The organization's actions are visible on the ground and allow other NGOs to be aware of its existence. The number of women trained in the various fields related to its activities.
- The members of the commission participate in the monthly meetings scheduled.
- The number of donors and partners of the AIF has increased; 50% of AIF member organisations are implementing projects on the ground. The IAF is conducting more than 5 advocacy campaigns and sharing reports. 75% of AIF members improve their knowledge of using administrative, financial, and accounting procedures manuals. 80% of the commission members increase their knowledge of financial and economic policy management.
- The Financial/Economic Policy Commission meetings are held due to one monthly meeting. Potential funders and philanthropists/donors are identified and contacted to solicit partnerships with them.
- Concept notes are submitted to funders to solicit funding. IAF member organizations are funded to facilitate the implementation of their projects in the field.
- Advocacy and lobbying are conducted at United Nations agencies and other decision-making bodies to reduce the rate of elimination of structural obstacles to women's economic empowerment. Administrative, financial, and accounting procedures manuals shall be drafted and distributed to members of the AIF.
- Members of the Finance Committee are trained to meet the pressing needs of the AIF member organisations.
- 

### **Assumptions:**

- The political and financial situation of the AIF remains stable, and the AIF is financed.
- The AIF's leaders are not biased, and each member organization is funded according to its field of intervention.
- The International Alliance of Women's Leaders assists the Commission on Financial and Economic Policy members in achieving these results. The Committee on Financial and Economic Policies should not be passive in its search for funds.
- The commission members collaborate closely with the AIF's Board of Directors.

## Risk Mitigation Measures

One of the main risks identified is the need to mobilise sufficient financial resources to implement this operational action plan. However, we can also note the weak commitment of the leaders of the IAF, both at the international and regional levels, which will limit the coordination of the commission members to carry out the various objectives assigned in this operational plan. In addition, political instability in different countries where the AIF member organizations are working is the root cause of the lack of achievement of the objectives in this operational action plan.

### **To address these challenges raised above, it is necessary that:**

The leaders of the AIF are actively involved at their level in the search for partners and funders.

The political and administrative authorities are restoring peace in various states where the member organizations of the International Alliance of Women are working.



# COMMISSION ON HEALTH

CONVENER DR UZMA GUL

## REPRESENTATION OF HEALTH COMMISSION - IAW AT CSW 68

The 68th session of the commission on the status of women was held from 11-22 March in the UN headquarter, New York. Women and health go hand in hand. Women according to a research are twice more likely to experience health issues and face crises due to the same in their lifetime. The health commission at the IAW is committed to promote awareness and raise voice at international platforms for women and their access to basic rights and healthcare.

We are well aware of the fact that we cannot achieve gender equality by achieving the targets of the sustainable development goals which are inter related to one another. The world cannot reduce poverty, hunger, discrimination & inequality without ensuring healthy lives and promoting wellbeing at all ages.

Out of multiple sessions the two important sessions highlighted the importance of Gender Equity Strengthening Health System Resilience and the pros and cons of digitization narrowing the gaps in access to healthcare, where discussions also highlighted the water and pads project run by the health commission of International Alliance of Women.

Speaker Ms. Pozzan, senior gender equality expert at ILO HQ addressed the gendered income inequality and emphasized on applying the principle of equal pay for work of equal value in times of crises and rising poverty which directly influence the health demographics. She concluded by underlining the empowerment of women and girls through social protection.

Women's poverty has stark implications for the Sustainable Development Agenda. If current trends continue, some [342 million](#) women worldwide will live in extreme poverty in 2030. Poverty increases the risk of violence against women and girls, limits education and employment opportunities, as well as their access to health care and financial inclusion. In turn, these factors keep women poorer. **The speakers demanded equal representation, access to basic rights including education and healthcare, stronger policies and investing in or financing women and women based initiatives.**

These gender equality gaps are not inevitable. International Alliance of Women will keep on working towards the goal together with civil societies, member countries and experts to discuss and agree on actions to increase investment in policies and programs that address gender inequalities and boost women's agency and leadership.

**Health Commission also sponsored few local events during the year 2023 that promoted inclusivity, women empowerment, and gender equality among marginalized communities with the partnership of the local NGOs in the health sector, and civil society members to promote the vision of International Alliance of Women.**



*Parallel event organized by IAW- health commission*

The IAW health commission attended multiple informative and interactive sessions during the bi-weekly CSW event but we also organised two days of parallel events with 6 different sessions to discuss how we can contribute and achieve gender equality by 2030. The event was attended and represented by many local, regional and international speakers and participants.

# COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

CONVENOR MARION BÖKER

## Members nominated after Congress 11/ 2022 in Post Congress meeting 01/2023

- Marion Böker, Germany, [marion.boeker@gmx.de](mailto:marion.boeker@gmx.de), [iaw.humanrights@womenalliance.org](mailto:iaw.humanrights@womenalliance.org),
- Derya Akinci Briand, Switzerland, Email: [derya.akincii@gmail.com](mailto:derya.akincii@gmail.com), part of Geneva HRC Team
- Klara Hansen, Australia, Email: [klarahansen@hotmail.com](mailto:klarahansen@hotmail.com)
- Samira Yassni, Morocco, Email: [yassnisamira@gmail.com](mailto:yassnisamira@gmail.com)
- Susanne Riveles, USA, Email: [susanne.riveles@gmail.com](mailto:susanne.riveles@gmail.com)
- Anne Pelagie Yotchou Tzudjom, Cameroon, Email: [pelagie\\_y@yahoo.fr](mailto:pelagie_y@yahoo.fr)
- Laoura Alipranti, Greece, Email: [laoura.alipranti@gmail.com](mailto:laoura.alipranti@gmail.com), part of Geneva HRC Team
- Esther R. Suter, Switzerland, Email: [dr.estherrsuter@bluewin.ch](mailto:dr.estherrsuter@bluewin.ch)

## Additional members/ guest

After the nominations I invited a few more AIW and external women to join IAW HR Commission:

- Ntakebuka Wene Mwafizi/ Wilhelmine, DRC, Email: [vcommunautaire@gmail.com](mailto:vcommunautaire@gmail.com), IAW IM
- Aberra, Siham, Germany, *guest*
- Myle, Birgit, Switzerland, Email: [birgit.myle@yahoo.fr](mailto:birgit.myle@yahoo.fr) or, [admin@afmr.ch](mailto:admin@afmr.ch) , *guest*

Association des Familles Monoparentales et Recomposées (AFMR)-> shared case of economical violence against women with us, partners with ADF in CH

- Delaney, Marie , France/USA, Email: [mariedelaney@gmail.com](mailto:mariedelaney@gmail.com), IAW Communication team
- Nobrega, Eve, UK, Email: [e.enobrega@btinternet.com](mailto:e.enobrega@btinternet.com), IAW member since long
- Sanaie, Sahar, Germany, represents in Geneva ECOSOC status NGO on Iranian women: Ass. Association International Pour L'Égalité des Femmes (aief), *guest*
- Tabar, Leonie, Germany, Email: [leonie.tabar@gmail.com](mailto:leonie.tabar@gmail.com), IM , (specialised sport & PWD & HR)
- Nûjjiyan Günay, Germany, Association of Êzîdi Women's Councils Germany (smje), *guest*
- Suham, Singal/Iraq , TAJE, Umbrella Assoc. of Êzîdi Women in Shengal, *guest*
- Rojda Aslan, Germany, in support Armenian, Êzîdi, Kurdish women; Water Jineoloji, *guest*



The **Commission meets every last Tuesday of every month** at the same time as a Jour Fix. Sometimes members respond to the invitation that they cannot join, and then it will be postponed. This happened especially before, during and after the CSW sessions since everyone was also involved in this UN session. Moreover, the Commission is negatively affected by the '**digital divide**' because, in Africa and Asia, power cuts (no energy) or limited access to WiFi/internet is a reality.

I as the Convenor had often proposed this issue with some recommendations for solutions to UN WOMEN, to UN representatives during CSW, national governmental delegates and the UNSG and his envoys,- since **it is a human rights issue** of the hindered right to participation. I am requesting :

a. UN shall set up its satellite system, especially in regions without access to or censorship of the internet (we learned that this helps since Elon Musk helped Ukrainian people and our feminist friends when he installed his satellite from his production for them in 2022 after the Russian Federation had systematically interrupted or destroyed the internet and energy infrastructure).

b. Shall introduce its internet as a second or safer UN administered and controlled UNWWW://... so not only to allow CSO/NGOs access but also safeguard the UN as the often attacked multilateral system to stay connected in times of crisis and under criminal cyber or warfare attacks

c. UN at the UNGA shall negotiate with member states that all of them shall open up co-working spaces/rooms with free internet access for NGO representatives and CSOs in all their foreign Embassy and consulate buildings and

d. all member states shall provide a free internet access infrastructure i.e. in their Foreign Offices and Federal, and provincial ministries, city council houses, or as special NGO network spaces with offices, meeting rooms and safe energy and internet accessibility.

After our initial meeting in which we defined our eight nominated members' focus issues the Commission's objectives were published in an IAW newsletter and on IAW's webpage [Human Rights - International Alliance of Women \(womenalliance.org\)](https://www.womenalliance.org) to also call on the IAW membership if interested to join. Only two more members followed the call and joined.

In 2023 the commission had 4 meetings with good participation and two in which only one other member joined, but we extensively discussed among us. Also, I had various exchanges and vice versa cooperations with MAAT, an NGO with ECOSOC consultative Status on Development, Peace, and Human Rights (with women and men).

The **meeting of 26th September 2023** offered the presentations of two eminent speakers:

**1.** Palwasha Kakar, Former State Minister of MoWA Afghanistan, who is co-founder of Afghan Women Coordination Umbrella (AWCU), which was launched in 4/2023 online under my presence and support; talked about the current human rights situation in Afghanistan and what she thinks we as IAW can do as an international UN -ECOSOC accredited NGO to support the causes. Note: the UN refers to it as the "Gender Apartheid Regime of the Taliban" and 'Systematic gender persecution". She introduced us to her new organisation AWCu- AFGHAN WOMEN COORDINATION UMBRELLA and requested my help for its registration in Geneva and under ECOSOC in NYC (which I did and since am often advising Diaspora NGOs to get regular UN Status). As a supporter of AWCu I am always in touch with them, but, in the later months until today, many more Afghan Women's NGOs are in my scope so I integrated them in the EWL WEBBINAR 12th of April 2024 on Global Feminist Peace Perspectives to which I invited the full IAW Extended board, and members of this and the Peace Commission. Palwasha Kakar was also a speaker, same as Husna Jalal (NL) and Sara, a former judge, now journalist, still in Afghanistan.

**2.** Evgenia ELEFTHERIADOU presented us with the findings of her Master's thesis "Business and conflict with Human Rights? Translating the UNGP in the context of the Israeli OPT." Followed by a Q & A session. In the long run, she showed interest in joining IAW.

Then Derya reported on the important women's actions taken by the UN HRC 54 (11 September to 13 October). We always point to the reports and findings of special mechanisms of the HRC which are in our scope of work.

In the session on 31st of October among other issues, we shortly discussed the complaint submitted to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) CINQUIÈME SECTION, Requête no **63664/19**

M. A. et 256 autres contre la France, et 4 autres requêtes (voir liste des requêtes en annexe), introduites le 6 décembre 2019/ communiquées le 23 mars 2021; in which sex workers from France and pro prostitution positioned persons opposed the French law on criminalising prostitution.

Now, we know that the ECHR on 25th of July 2024 had rejected their case and confirmed the French law in accordance with women's human rights. EWL press release on this said applauding this decision on this webpage [A massive step towards Europe free from prostitution \(womenlobby.org\)](https://www.womenlobby.org/en/press-releases/a-massive-step-towards-europe-free-from-prostitution).

" The ECHR's decision today is a significant development in the ongoing debate about the **criminalisation of buyers of sex**. The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) accepted a case challenging the French government's 2016 law that criminalises the purchase of sex. "

Notably, this decision is in line with Reem Alsalem, UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women and Girls of UN HRC's reports and letters. Since in Europe is a move towards ending this form of violence against women and girls.

Between the sessions, I contacted the IAW President Alison Brown to sign and support in June 2023 and later in 2024 a few statements of the Iran opposition movement, which I personally also support by special consultancy, i.e. to successfully preventing late Iran's President Raisi's participation in the October 2023' HRC in Geneva by having suggested and initiated that Swiss issued a warrant as of his long term responsibility for crimes against humanity (massacres in 1988 against opposition, executions and violence against women of the Jin, Jiyan, Azadi revolution). Some other IAW members also consult and support this opposition movement and in future, we will as on Iran's women's human rights and freedoms collaborate before un entities with them.

In the Commissions session on 26st of July 2024, we had several external guest speakers who will stay in touch with the IAW Commission:

- Guest introduction **Swiss new issue of 'economic violence against women'**: Planned and requested activity support by Birgit MYLE, AFMR CH (Association des Familles Monoparentales et Recomposées) to us; in short: in Switzerland women divorcees after divorce have to pay tax for their former husbands for the time span of the marriage. This forces them into poverty and is seen as direct discrimination (see CEDAW Art. 1,2, 11 and 16) and a new emerging issue called 'economic violence against women'. AFMR requested our support in their CEDAW Alternative report, and beyond, and I had agreed to do this since I am an expert in this and to involve Sybille van Heidenreich, since she is a Swiss lawyer.
- Guest report on the **situation in Iran** by Sahar Sanaie, Assoc. Int. Pour l'Égalité des Femmes (NGO; ECOSOC): activity planned: Joint women's rights statement for next HRC IAW & AIEF on Iran)- Marion and her are drafting, and the Geneva team shall join it.
- Guests co-report from Shingal/Iraq- Êzîdi women fear a new genocide/femicid 10 years after the n74th Genocide against them on 3rd of Aug. 2014 (TAJE, Shingal/Iraq, Nûjjiyan Günay, Association of Êzîdi Women's Councils Germany, Rojda Aslan, lawyer)

We are very happy to have options for concrete action in support of other women and their NGOs. In September 2024 it is on the Commission's agenda to set up a subgroup of a minimum of three members to draft text proposals for updates from a human rights perspective for IAW'S Action Programme for the next Triennium.

# COMMISSION ON MIGRATION

CONVENER ROSY WEISS

The last Committee meeting was held virtually on August 2, 2023. Organizational difficulties are my responsibility.

Then came the shock of October 7, the incomprehensible suffering of the families of the hostages and, as a consequence, the endless suffering of the Palestinian civilian population caught between the Israeli military retaliation and the cynical misuse of their vital necessities through Hamas.

Add to this picture the rise of right and far-right parties and movements of excessive nationalism and religious fundamentalism all over the world.

My personal hope is that there could be some light of hope before our IM has materialized. On the contrary, in this heated atmosphere, an objective reappraisal seems out of the question.

For this reason, I have decided to take part in the meeting of IAW Commissions and Committees on the afternoon of September 5, hoping that all members of our commission already present in Bulgaria will be able to attend.

Results of our deliberations should include not only closer cooperation between IAW commissions on causes and consequences of climate change, hostilities and poverty to migration movements as well as meaningful input into the new IAW Action Programme.



# COMMISSION ON PEACE

CONVENER DR MANJU KAK

IAW's Peace Commission is distressed by the absence of Peace and Women's suffering across the globe. Continues to strive towards a culture of peace

The past 3 years and specifically the last year, have witnessed deeply disturbing conflict zones across the globe, as well as natural disasters caused by climate changes. IAW, as an organisation, is deeply committed to a Culture of Peace and strives actively to reinforce the cause of peace by working at multilateral levels to create a more caring world, by attempting to forge networks of support for the protection of women and children in a world of escalating war and violence. IAW strives continuously towards making women's often neglected voices heard, to generate support groups and platforms for women to collaborate for the advocacy and strengthening of the Women Peace Security agenda to facilitate a sustainable Culture of Peace.

The IAW's strategic approach includes holding monthly/bimonthly meetings to foster a more detailed, in-depth understanding of critical issues linked to the deepening crisis in specific global areas.

The Peace Commission of the International Association of Women (IAW) held a series of meetings to generate ideas and formulate measures towards promoting the cause of gender equality and global peace, through sharing profiles to facilitate better collaboration between various groups, to comprehensively plan programs and develop support centres.

The IAW's aim of consultation and knowledge exchange on peace building from women's perspective, and pursuit of a Feminist Foreign Policy reflects its determination to deal with the global crises and intensifying violence. The focus on the interconnected and multiple effects of strife and the establishment of support systems underscores IAW's commitment to sustainable peace and gender equality.

The IAW's focus on women's empowerment is evident in its critical response to the framework of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325, aimed at evaluating members' experiences on the ground on the efficacy of the implementation, or/ and whether gaps and inadequacies need to be improved. The IAW recognises the widespread backlash against gender equality and a backsliding of democracy. There is equal concern about the too less debated innovations and technological change in warfare and how it affect the status of women. Notwithstanding, it was also perceived that the benefits of technological change for digital education can further the empowerment of girls and women and bring about gender equality.

The women's meeting on 14th October in Brussels reiterated the call for ceasefire and reconciliation. There are plans for having a women's peace march.

Dr Manju Kak reported on her meeting with the American Ethical Culture Society, in New York (USA) and suggested inviting them to the IAW Peace Commission to speak about their work. She brought in the fascinating work of a young Jewish American promoting "Not in My Name" and his campaign for peace.

Asha Hans held a seminar on Peace and an important seminar on the situation in the state of Manipur in India, and co-organised "Women Enacting Peace in War"

AIWC held a seminar on Hate Speech and 'Towards a Caring World' with the Bahai Community.

In our webinars, we also discussed the fact that India, and perhaps, as Esther suggested, many countries are not signatories to UNSCR 1325. This should be further studied. Similarly, we need to consider how many countries are signatories to the Hate Speech Resolution of the UN.

Ester reported on interfaith meetings as a way forward for peace. Magda and Marion attended the EWL GM. Marion was on VIP in the Women's March in Berlin and Paris speaking on the twin issues of Global Protest for Women's Rights and Freedom.

### **Preparation for International Conferences:**

The committee prepared for upcoming international conferences, particularly highlighting the themes of gender equality, poverty alleviation, and sustainable development. Notably, Secretary General, AIWC, Manju Kak represented the IAW at COP28 in Dubai and CSW69 in New York, where she advocated for environmental sustainability and gender equality. Marion Böker suggested the slogan of 'End War to End Poverty' at the CSW as a side event and Heide suggested going back to Beijing 95 'Fund Healthcare Not Warfare' as a core objective.

### **Promotion of Peace through Education, Awareness and Advocacy:**

The IAW honoured the contribution of peace educators who are inspirational such as Betty Reardon, highlighting their pivotal contributions in fostering global understanding and conflict resolution. The IAW recognised the need to empower youth as catalysts for change in peace and security initiatives. From schools to universities, we should aim at peace education and making peace a human rights priority. Gender rights, human rights and peace go hand in hand. Victimised women and girls need to be supported and digital platforms for their safe interaction should be created.

Emphasis was placed on inclusive decision-making processes that encompassed diverse voices from conflict zones, specially those under threat like Kurds , Yezidis . Implementing awareness programs and advocacy campaigns aimed at youth and adolescents is essential to empower them as 'Agents of Change' or 'Changemakers' in critical areas with special emphasis on · Climate Change · Gender equality, peace, and conflicts · Human Rights protection · Analyses and overcoming deeply rooted systemic barriers.

## **A New Agenda for Peace - Looking Forward**

### **Culture of Peace:**

The 39th Congress affirms the commitment to secure and foster a global Culture of Peace by ensuring such a culture within homes, communities, and between nations to ensure human security and sustainable development. It believes that gender equality and women's empowerment must be at the centre of the UN Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development so that future generations may thrive, and the spirit of respect, sharing, solidarity, non-violent conflict resolution, arbitration and reconciliation be practised in everyday life and promoted by peace education. IAW recalls the banner in front of the NGO peace tent in Huairou during the 4th UN World Conference on Women,1995 reading "Change the Culture of War to a Culture of Peace".

### **UNSC Reform:**

The 39th Congress is of the reasoned view that the UN Security Council structure should be reformed urgently based on equal responsibilities and shared power. It believes that the UN General Assembly should urgently set up a task force mandated for creating structural changes in the UNSC to achieve the objectives of the UN Charter. Veto rights must be eliminated. It finally calls on the UNGA, the UNSG, the permanent and former and current non-permanent UNSC members and all member states, civil society and all stakeholders to support these efforts and donate resources and capacities towards this end.

### **Right to Peace is a fundamental human right:**

We must ensure the right to live in peace and security, with access to food and medical services, without fear of endangerment, oppression and warfare is a fundamental human right.

In conclusion, amid conflict, violence, and war, the precarious conditions for gender equality, and the backsliding of democratic institutions and human rights, the IAW stands firm and steadfastly committed to the Culture of Peace, and the planet as the commonwealth of all peoples and beings.

# COMMISSION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

CONVENER ROLENE MARKS

It is estimated that almost one in three women globally have experienced physical and/or sexual violence at least once in their lives. Current or former intimate partners often perpetrate this type of violence. It is imperative that as a leading women's organization, composed of many different global organisations, we lead the fight to combat gender-based violence wherever it occurs in the world.

Gender-based violence (GVB) is recognized globally as one of the greatest threats to female mortality however, statistics continue to rise. Gender-based violence knows no boundaries – geographical or socio-economical.

According to World Population Review that offers a snapshot of GBV around the world:

- South Africa and Brazil top the list due to extremely high rates of violence against women, including sexual violence and intentional homicide.
- Russia and Mexico are notably dangerous due to high intentional homicide rates against women and significant limitations on women's societal and economic participation
- Iran's prominent place on the list is largely attributed to its vast gender gap, impacting women's roles in the economy, health and political empowerment.

On 25 November every year, The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence which is an annual international campaign that kicks off on 25 November, is the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and runs until 10 December, Human Rights Day. While this highlights the issue, statistics continue to rise around the world and organisations like the IAW could play a pivotal role in lobbying for more focus by global bodies.

I was appointed Commission Chair in 2023 and since the horrific events of October 7; my report has been greatly influenced by what happened just an hour's drive from where I live.

Women's organisations have not only been silent – some have either denied these events and some have endorsed them. Rape is never “resistance”. There are over 100 conflicts around the world, and the majority are barely reported in the media. As the months progress, we can be assured we will hear evidence of gender-based violence because of the war in Ukraine. We already have a few accounts of female Ukrainian soldiers captured and tortured by Russian military personnel. This report highlights several issues around the world and it barely scratches the surface.



## **Sudan**

Conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and Rapid Support Forces (RSF) broke out on 15 April 2023. This has created one of the greatest humanitarian tragedies in the world today and has resulted in one of the largest internal displacement crises globally, forcing over 9.2 million people from their homes and exacerbating an already dire humanitarian crisis, including more than 1.9 million people who have fled so far to neighbouring countries. Two-thirds of the aforementioned affected population are women and children. Brutal fighting is driving a hunger crisis in Sudan with some areas likely to experience catastrophic levels of food insecurity. The conflict has had a devastating impact on agricultural production leading to acute food insecurity, malnutrition rates soaring and the obstacles to aid delivery are many. WFP warns that at least 25 million people are struggling with escalating rates of hunger and malnutrition.

## **Israel**

On 7 October 2023, Hamas and other terror factions invaded southern Israel, murdering, raping, mutilating and torturing as well as kidnapping. Over 1200 people were murdered and 250 hostages taken. Hamas recorded their actions in real-time as the world watched. The horrified silence felt by Israeli's prompted campaigns like "MeTooUnlessU'reAJew", #BelieveIsraeliWomen and a special session at the United Nations called Hear Our Voices.

### **UN Hear Our Voices**

<https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1u/k1u8mfvmcm>

### **UN Report on Sexual Violence**

<https://www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/report/mission-report-official-visit-of-the-office-of-the-srsg-svc-to-israel-and-the-occupied-west-bank-29-january-14-february-2024/20240304-Israel-oWB-CRSV-report.pdf>

## **Gaza**

In response to Hamas October 7 attack on Israel, Israel launched Operation Iron Swords, with a ground invasion three weeks later. This has resulted in over 1.9 million civilians in the Gaza Strip being displaced, including what UN Women estimate to be nearly 1 million women and girls. There is immense concern for the humanitarian situation.

Due to insecurity and the destruction, there is a severely limited ability to physically provide GBV response services in Gaza at this current time. The GBV SC is mapping the very limited psychosocial first aid, individual counselling and psychosocial support sessions that partners continue to provide in overcrowded shelters.

## Iran

Since the murder of Mahsa Zhina Amini on September 16, 2022, by the Islamic Republic of Iran morality police, for "inappropriately" donning a hijab, the Iranian people have voiced their plea for basic human rights, protections, and dignity. Human rights are fundamental freedoms belonging to all people, the most essential being the right to life and physical safety.

Moral policing has been a practice by the Islamic Republic of Iran for forty-three years and has resulted in countless arrests, persecutions, and oppression. Past protests for such injustices against women have repeatedly been silenced by governmental police forces, slowing but not stopping the justice movement. Iranians are continuously risking their lives, fighting for the most basic of human freedoms. Iran is the world's foremost sponsor of terrorism – starting with its own populace.

## Nigeria

Nine years after Nigeria put in place its most comprehensive law yet to address Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV); GBV levels are still high in many parts of the country. The federal law, the Violence against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act, has been instituted in 35 of Nigeria's 36 states. The only state where it is yet to be domesticated is Kano, officially Nigeria's most populous state. In many parts of rural Nigeria, Islamic militant groups have killed Christians in their villages, taking many of the young girls hostage and raping women and girls.

## Haiti

In Haiti, violence against women is rising, driven by the recent proliferation of gang attacks, kidnappings, and political and economic upheaval. Conflict and natural disasters pose additional GBV risks to women and girls. Providing GBV support services in that country is a humanitarian imperative.

REPORTS FROM  
INTERNATIONAL  
REPRESENTATIVES

RAPPORTS DES  
REPRÉSENTANTES  
INTERNATIONALES

# UNITED NATIONS IN NEW YORK

## HEAD OF DELEGATION SOON YOUNG YOON

In the period 2023 – 2024, IAW members in New York were actively engaged in numerous events, contributing to the newsletter, and advocating for women's rights and gender equality at the UN General Assemblies, CSW 68, and as members of NGOs such as the NGO CSW/NY, Coalition for the UN We Need and Youth activities.

The IAW was invited to moderate the NGO CSW/NY/UN Women briefing on Beijing + 30 and CEDAW held on March 15 in conference room 4 during CSW. Soon-Young Yoon, UN rep for IAW and founder/codirector of the Cities for CEDAW History and Futures Project moderated the session. Dr. Qi Shujuan, Director General of the All China Women's Federation publication, *Women in China*, presented data showing the amazing progress Chinese women made after the UN Fourth World Conference in 1995. Bandana Rana, CEDAW expert from Nepal called for the CSW to reform and ensure that CEDAW is an integral agenda item every year. Esther Eghobamien-Mshelia, CEDAW expert from Nigeria, said that the Cities for CEDAW campaign that makes CEDAW a local ordinance should be replicated in all 189 countries that have already ratified the women's human rights treaty.

IAW members also actively engaged in the NGO Forum roundtables with members states in the Conversation Circles, Young Professionals mentoring sessions, and other events. As the NGO Forum was a hybrid event, this allowed NY members to do outreach online as well as in person (choices of more than 700 events).

The IAW also sits on the steering committee of the [C4UN](#), a civil society organization whose objective is to help member states envision a UN fit for future generations, working from the premise that gender equality is central to its success. The IAW helped commission papers on a Feminist Critique of the Secretary-General's "Our Common Agenda" report. Although there is ample reference to the importance of gender equality and women's leadership in the SG report, it was lacking substantive recommendations needed for implementation. The papers were published online by GWL Voices, covering topics such as GBV/VAW in peace and security, the environment, health, and women's leadership. These contributed to the C4UN We Need process drafting the People's Pact for the Summit of the Future, including on issues of generative AI and science and technology. One of the main points raised throughout the discussions in preparation for the Summit of the Future was the importance of gender inequality in decision-making, employment, and leadership in these sectors. This is critical as governments negotiate the final Digital Compact, which must be seen through a gender lens. Advocacy leaders are presenting these NGO documents to member states to guide the negotiations on the final outcome to be adopted during the GA in 2024.

For the GA session this year on 20-21 September, the IAW will co-sponsor (with the NGO CSW/NY, Women’s League for Peace, and Freedom and C4UN) side events related to the final Declaration and Pact for the Future. With the NGO CSW/NY, IAW will lead the Cities for CEDAW History and Futures Project to convene a virtual event commemorating the 10th anniversary of the Cities for CEDAW campaign onwards to Beijing + 30 through arts, music, theatre, and other cultural events. The theme will be a “Culture of Peace” launched to contribute to the commemoration of the Declaration on the “Culture of Peace” by the GA and ECOSOC.

As in previous years, the IAW in NY has actively followed preparations for Habitat on human settlements, particularly on localization of the SDGs. The Cities for CEDAW campaign expanded its importance in the USA with more than 70 jurisdictions that have resolutions or city ordinances in support of CEDAW. It currently covers more than 82 million US citizens. Most recently the League of Women Voters passed a CEDAW resolution, calling for the UN agendas to be fully implemented at local, regional, and national levels. This localization process is critical if SDG5 on Gender Equality is to be relevant to daily lives of ordinary citizens.

Looking forward towards Beijing + 30, it is important to recognize that 2025 is also the 50th anniversary of all UN women’s conferences (1975, 1980, 1985 and 1995). It is a year to consider CSW reform, in which CEDAW is brought back as a central accountability mechanism for the Beijing Platform for Action and SDG implementation. The IAW can consider emphasizing this in advocacy heading to next year’s CSW.



# HUMAN RIGHTS TEAM AT UN GENEVA

DR. SIBYLLE VON HEYDEBRAND



*IAW Team UN Geneva, from left to right: Dr. Laoura Alipranti, Derya Akinci Briand, Dr. Sibylle von Heydebrand, Simge Simsek, Sanja Jeraj*

## Preliminary remarks

The IAW Human Rights Team at the United Nations in Geneva presents its report on its activities from September 1st 2023 to July 1st 2024.

We report on the main activities directly related to the human rights of women and girls, as described in paragraph 2 of the IAW's Action Programme 2022 - 2025.

Meetings and sessions at the United Nations in Geneva were conducted with personal attendance or in hybrid form.

## Appointed Members of IAW's Human Rights Team at UN Geneva:

Main Representative: [Dr. Sibylle von Heydebrand](#)

Alternate Representatives: LL.M, MLaw Derya Akinci Briand, Dr. Laoura Alipranti, Sanja Jeraj (until July 15, 2024), [BLaw Simge Simsek](#), [MLaw Agne Seputyte](#) (from July 15, 2024).

## 1. IAW's internal meetings of UN Geneva's appointed Human Rights Representatives: Report by Dr. Sibylle von Heydebrand

On July 1, 2024, IAW's main representative, Dr. Sibylle von Heydebrand, invited IAW's HR Team UN Geneva to assist at an internal in-person team meeting.

### Human Rights Council (HRC)

#### Report by Dr. Laoura Aliprantia

The [Human Rights Council](#) is an intergovernmental body within the United Nations in Geneva and holds at **least three regular** sessions per year. No special session was held during the reporting period.

#### [54th session of the Human Rights Council \(September 11 to 13 October 13, 2023\)](#)

No discussion on gender issues. A report by an independent expert was presented: “Violence against and abuse and neglect of older persons on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons”.

#### [55th session of the Human Rights Council \(February 26 to April 5, 2024\)](#)

Side events on: “The equal representation of women for an effective and inclusive multilateral system” and Women’s role in building and sustaining peace”.

Presentation of a study on the issue of sexual abuse and exploitation of children in the entertainment industry and of a report of the special rapporteur on “the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children”.

Among the 32 adopted resolutions, a related resolution was about “Combating discrimination, violence and harmful practices against intersex persons” (55/14).

#### [56th session of the Human Rights Council \(June 18 to 12 July 12, 2024\)](#)

During this session, a full-day discussion on the human rights of women was held on 28 June. A panel discussion was organized on the important theme:

**“Economic violence as a form of gender-based violence against women and girls”.**

**Three resolutions related to gender issues were adopted:** “Technology-facilitated gender-based violence”(56/19), “Accelerating progress towards preventing adolescent girls’ pregnancy (56/21) and “Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and girls” (56/22).

### **2. NGO CSW Geneva part 1, Report by LL.M MLaw Derya Akinci Briand**

From September 2023 up to June 2024, 5 meetings were conducted. In 2024, NGO CSW Geneva welcomed two **new member organizations**: [Widows for Peace through Democracy](#) and [Bahá’i International Community](#). NGO CSW Geneva now consists of [30 member organizations and one associate member organization](#).

### **3. NGO CSW Geneva part 2, Report by Dr. Sibylle von Heydebrand**

On September 21, 2023, the International Day of Peace, the [NGO Committee on the Status of Women Geneva](#) celebrated its [50th Anniversary](#).

### **4. Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Report by Sanja Jeraj**

The [18 members](#) of [CRC](#) met for three sessions during this reporting period. The following sessions took place, naming the countries of the IAW member organizations with State Parties Reports: [94th Session](#) (04.-22. 09.23) Togo; [95th Session](#) (15. 01.–02.02.24) Bulgaria, Congo; [96th Session](#) (06.-24.05.24) Egypt.

CRC released important statements stressing that apart from the conflict in the occupied Palestinian Territory, children are dying in conflicts globally, including Ukraine, Afghanistan, Yemen, Syria, Myanmar, Haiti, Sudan, Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Somalia. The crisis for girls is particularly severe, with verified reports of abduction and rape in Sudan and Haiti. The Special Rapporteur on trafficking has raised concerns that the deteriorating humanitarian situation makes girls easy targets for exploitation, sexual slavery and recruitment by armed groups.

## **5. Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Report by Dr. Sibylle von Heydebrand**

In line with IAW's Human Rights Team's Action Plan, this report focuses on the states of IAW member organizations. Three [CEDAW](#) sessions took place in the monitored period covering the following states of IAW member organizations: [86th session](#) (October 9 – 27, 2023) Experts of the CEDAW commend [France's](#) feminist foreign policy and ask about female genital mutilation and femicide. [87th Session](#) (January 29 to February 16, 2024): The CEDAW adopted important statements addressing the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan and on women, peace and security.

On February 14, 2024, IAW's Soon-Young Yoon presented the "[Cities for CEDAW](#)" [campaign](#) in the presence of the IAW UN Geneva representatives at the United Nations in Geneva. The campaign aims to establish the principles of CEDAW in cities and towns across the United States. The US is the only industrialized country that has not ratified the CEDAW.

## **6. Committee against Torture (CAT), Report by BLaw Simge Simsek**

The [CAT](#) consists of [10 independent experts](#) who monitor the implementation of the Convention against Torture by reviewing regular reports from States parties and providing concluding observations with their concerns and recommendations.

### [78th Session: October 30, 2023 – November 24, 2023](#)

**Egypt:** The Committee recommends Egypt adopt comprehensive laws to criminalize all forms of gender-based violence, to ensure thorough investigation and prosecution of such cases, and to provide training for law enforcement on women's rights.

**Denmark:** The Committee recommends improving detention conditions for women, addressing their detention with convicted criminals, and investigating reports of forced contraception in Greenland. The responsible persons should be held accountable, providing adequate redress to the victims and ensuring adherence to international rules and women's rights.

### [79th Session: April 15, 2024 – May 10, 2024](#)

**Finland:** The Committee recommends improving detention conditions, combating all forms of violence against women by implementing national plans, and ensuring thorough investigation and prosecution of gender-based violence cases.



## 7. 60th Anniversary of the UN Trade and Development UNCTAD, Report by Dr. Sibylle von Heydebrand

From June 12 to 14, 2024, the Global Leaders Forum marked the [60th Anniversary of UNCTAD](#) at the United Nations in Geneva. Dr. Sibylle von Heydebrand was invited to make an [oral intervention](#) on behalf of the IAW on the impact of globalization, technology, and trade policy changes on women and [how to improve their economic opportunities](#).

## 8. Meeting with Rosy Weiss, IAW's Main Representative to UN Vienna, Report by Dr. Sibylle von Heydebrand

On December 30, 2023, Dr. Sibylle von Heydebrand met in Vienna with Rosy Weiss, the main representative of the IAW at [UN Vienna](#), for an informal exchange about our work as IAW representatives at UN entities. Rosy Weiss is a pioneer of the IAW. She played a key role in shaping the IAW as President from 2004 to 2010.



# EUROPEAN WOMEN'S LOBBY

HEAD OF DELEGATION MARION BÖKER

**TEAM:** Marion Böker, delegate to EWL, EWL Board member, since October 2023 elected EWL Executive Committee member, chair of EWL Feminist Economics Working group, Initiator of Peace Hub and future Working group on Peace, Member of Statutes Review Committee, alternate EXCO member of Diversity Committee; Lea Börgerding (alternate delegate of IAW/alternate EWL Board member, member of the EWL Observatory on Violence against Women); Leonie Valerie Schmid, member of the Working group on Sexual, Reproductive and Health Rights and Sexual Education (SRHRSE);



**Opportunity for an IAW member in WOMEN IN POLITICS GROUP. IAW friends, please come forward! Send your letter of interest and CV to: [marion.boeker@gmx.de](mailto:marion.boeker@gmx.de)**

*Arina Angerman was in the Women in Politics Working Group until 2023. **Now, this position is vacant.** We are looking for an interested IAW member to nominate. Qualifications: A member from EU's IAW affiliate or associate, or an IAW individual member from a EU member state; strong, proven focus on women in politics; commitment to increase women's share in politics (#parity) and support for women who are or want to become politicians, and on defending democracy and women's human rights as in the EWL programme on Principles And Values on national and EU level.*

## Achievements 2023/ 2024 before and after EU elections, June 2024 - Election outcome

EWL successfully advocated before the EU Parliament, its parliamentary commissions, aligned with campaigns, EU-wide petitions and protests in Brussels. **Here is what was adopted:**

### New European Union law with feminist input

- **Directive on Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence** (to be evaluated and improved by including 'rape' as a form of violence in the next five years)
- **European Parliament's Initiative on Prostitution:** Understanding prostitution as a form of violence against women and ending it (according to CEDAW Art 6)
- **EU Pay Transparency Directive**
- **EU Accession to the Istanbul Convention:** It was ratified in June 2023 by the whole European Union, and is now part of the Acqui Communautaire of the EU, the whole legal EU framework, and so is obligatory, binding also for accession candidate states, such as Turkiye
- **2023/24 Advocacy and recommendations for EU Artificial Intelligence Act:** We succeeded that in the existing draft cyber violence against women is included; in 2024 EWL compiled a study on cyber violence and deep fake which will be presented online in September 2024 (IAW might be invited)
- The Green Deal: After she was again elected EU Commission's President, Ursula von der Leyern promised, as did many others of the newly incoming elected MEPs, to update and still work on the Green Deal for combating Climate Change.

### Internal EWL – programme, campaigns and events

- AGORA –[Young Feminist Summer Camp](#) (2023 and in September 2024): This year it is highly diverse; we are very excited to meet all these women from EU, many of whom are part of global diasporas, and we are expecting many to later become members.

**FOR IAW THIS COULD BE A GREAT MODEL to offer annual IAW AGORA weeks because all NGOs need to recruit young women, appealing to them by offering a programme which is an empowerment and results in de-facto gains for each of the participant's feminist career.**

- GA Public Event: WPS Bulgaria with Min. Defense/ Dutch Ambassador, an element on our path to the Peace Summit
- Pre-Election Activities: EWL Manifesto in 23 languages, Pledge campaign for election candidates to embrace our feminist Election Manifesto, and a letter of gratitude to Ursula von der Leyen
- Gender Mainstreaming Training/ EP candidates training by HER NET HER RGHTS/ WiP

- Representation of EWL principles on EU and national levels, and cooperation with Swedish and Spanish Presidency, and at the beginning of February 2024 Belgium Presidency in EU Gender Equality Ministers Conference.
- February 2024 President Iliana Balabanova, Secretary General Mary Collins, and I participated in the Belgium Meeting of the EU Ministers of Gender Equality at the beginning of the Belgium EU presidency. We called on them to embrace the core issues of our EWL Strategic Framework 2022-2026: to close the pay and pension gap, implement gender budgeting across the EU, end all forms of VAWG including in cyber space and prosecute and punish it, end the digital divide. Also, ratify the UN CEDAW Convention. All EU ministers welcomed our objectives as their own.

### **Engagement for a meaningful Directive on Domestic Violence & Violence Against Women and Girls - Including rape**

Between June 2023 and June 2024, the EWL staff, especially Irene Rosales and Mary Collins, worked hard on the adoption of the EU Directive against Domestic Violence and VAWG. Because of resistance to including 'rape' as a euro-crime into the Directive, I worked with Lea Börgerding and Caroline Ausserer, Representative of the German National Council of Women (DF), and DF Board member Sylvia Haller to organize advocacy meetings to include 'rape' in the Directive; I organised an action to hand over the millions of signatures collected by EWL European-wide, engaging a campaign agency with photographers in front of the German Federal Parliament with Members of the Parliament. In November 2023 I moderated an EWL panel in the EU Parliament with various Members of the European Parliament and representatives who were standing with us. Later we protested in front of the European Parliament in Brussels and attracted much media attention.

After the June 2024 adoption of the Directive, I proposed plans to make sure that in the evaluation and update of the Directive in five years, we will succeed to include 'rape'. I also worked with the organization of Survivors of Rape, suggesting a two-day summit in the EU Parliament in which survivors will give endless evidence that rape is a serious form of violence that must be recognized as a crime and form of sexual exploitation.



## **Working Group on Feminist Economy**

In 2023 EWL continued work on gender budgeting with a focus on steering finances to combat VAWG and for women's NGOs projects for VAWG survivors. In 2024 we expressed our expectation that the new Parliament and Commission will mainstream gender and gender budgeting into the Green Deal after the election. For this purpose, this working group now is following up on the [Purple Pact](#). As Chair of the Working group I will be co-author and co-editor of the new Purple Pact. The former and the new Purple Pact is in coherence with IAW's resolution and vision on establishing a Caring Economy and Action Programme.

## **From three ISSUE GROUPS to a PEACE SUMMIT - Creation of EWL's PEACE HUB**

In March 2022 after the Russian war began against Ukraine, I proposed an ISSUE GROUP ON PEACE and gained a number of other members in support. I organized a webinar on "Women's Voices on the Ground: EWL in dialogue with the National Council of Women of Ukraine (NCWU)." Following the webinar, we proposed that NCWU become an EWL member, which was allowed after Ukraine became an EU membership accession candidate. During the GA 2022 we adopted a resolution on more concrete support for Ukrainian women. We then sent letters to EU and UN entities (EP, EU-Commission, EU-Commissioner Borell, UNGA, UNSCR, UN WOMEN) to call for support for Ukrainian women, to include them in all peace negotiation tables (see UNSCR 1325 AGENDA WPS) and act for immediate ceasefire and peace. In 2023 I again moved a proposal for GA with WILPF and in collaboration with NCWU, which was supported by six EWL members. This ISSUE GROUP's first step was a webinar on 6 June 2023 "Path to Peace in Ukraine: Towards a Feminist Future without War and Militarism." The Ukrainian women presented their needs for reconstruction after the war. A representative of the EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY AND ENLARGEMENT NEGOTIATIONS ([DG NEAR](#)) of the EU Commission assured the NCWU that gender equality for Ukraine support measures (1) is a main focus and invited them to be involved in the EU's annual donor conferences. The last donor conference was hosted by Germany in June 2024.

As debated in the IAW Peace Commission and the IAW Human Rights Commission, I planned a global peace webinar targeting women in armed conflicts and femicide. Since IAW Commissions have no financial and personnel capacities for webinars, I moved in February 2024 an ISSUE GROUP Proposal together with the Bulgarian Platform and the European Women's Lobby. This webinar took place on 12 April with 23 speakers from Africa, Asia, Middle East and Europe. The overwhelming response called on our global women to become more united and to act boldly for peace under the lead of women. They embraced EWL's plan for a global Feminist PEACE SUMMIT in Brussels in late 2024 or early 2025.

Deeply concerned after the Hamas attack on Israeli women on 7 October, the EWL Board meeting in October 2023 adopted a Resolution for Ceasefire in Gaza and Israel, calling to end all gender-based violence and femicide. We called on the warring parties and UNSCR to include women of the civil society into peace negotiations. During the GA in April 2024 we adopted another resolution on ending this war under feminist principles.

(1) [https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/european-neighbourhood-policy/countries-region/ukraine\\_en](https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/european-neighbourhood-policy/countries-region/ukraine_en)

### **EWL STATEMENT on Women's Human Rights Defenders at Council of Europe (COE)**

On 8 December 2023 I issued a statement on "Challenges Faced by Human Rights Defenders with a Special Focus on Women Human Rights Defenders" and the better protection which is needed before the Committee of Ministers Rapporteur Group on Human Rights (GR-H) in Strasbourg and later sent them my in-depth study from CEDAW sources.

### **European Êzîdi Women's Council's Conference in the European Parliament, 30 Jan 2024**

On invitation I delivered a speech to outline what action Êzîdi women can achieve in mutual cooperation with European and international Women's Movement's Solidarity under international criminal and human rights law. EWL Secretary General Mary Collins also spoke and promised support of Êzîdi women, optional as their European section might join EWL. 3 August is the 10th anniversary commemoration on the victims of the IS's (D'aesh) terrorist attack, enslavement and femicide of Êzîdi women and communities. In the same moment due to information by a survivor about the situation in Şengal/Iraq we are very concerned and afraid that a new genocide/femicide might happen. **Not only EWL shall stand behind our feminist Êzîdi and Kurdish women,- I call on IAW to take a stand of solidarity.**

# ARAB LEAGUE

OBSERVER PROF. HOREYA MEGAHEH

The League of Arab States, normally known as the Arab League, has its own women's sector in addition to the Arab Women Organization (AWO), which works under its umbrella as an intergovernmental organization with its headquarters in Cairo.

Meanwhile, AWO has a close relationship with UN Women. They declared on April 21, 2024, the continuation of their strategic partnership, stressing once again their commitment to enhance women's rights in the Arab region through the concentration on basic initiatives aiming at Women's empowerment and supporting their effective participation in all spheres in the Region. UN Women works with the Arab League and AWO to implement and further the Cairo Declaration (2014) and enhance women's peace and security agenda in the region. Many civil society organisations work as regional partners, reinforcing synergies between the UN and civil society partners. While stressing women, they don't exclude enhancing the role of men and boys as actors of change.

In addition, the Arab League, through its Women, Family & Childhood Department, signed the Action Plan's deal with the UN Women Regional Office on April 21, 2024, to implement the programs outlined in the Plan.

The Arab League, alarmed by the extended devastating war on Gaza, and fear of the extension of the fight to the region in turmoil, had dealt with the crisis in several ordinary and extraordinary meetings. The Manama, Bahrain Summit, July 29-31, 2024, stressed on that Gaza is subjected to ethnic cleansing; it addressed an emergency call to the UN Security Council to stop the war on Gaza immediately. The obvious stand is that the Palestinians in Gaza have been subjected to genocide while their land is an occupied territory since 1967 according to International law. The stress is on the two-state solution and the necessity to have a prevailed lasting peace for the sake of all. The League of Arab States backs, South Africa's case on Gaza against Israel which was brought before the International Court of Justice on 29 Dec., 2023.



Gaza before and after

## Events and Conferences:

The Arab Women Organization (AWO) organized:

- A workshop on “Enhancing the Capacities of Women Participating in Public Spheres”, in Beirut on April 11, 2024. It is being held in partnership with the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ).
- Program on “Women’s Political Participation”, with the main objective of reshaping the narrative and reality of women’s engagements in politics in the Region, aiming at increasing their participation.
- “Day of Dialogue on Inclusive Peace and Women’s Political Representation”. With Women activists from Libya, Yemen, Iraq, Syria, and Palestine, i.e., from countries with internal troubles. Supported by the European Union. In Paris, 25 December 2023
- Dialogue of the Arab youth of both sexes on: “The participation in the responsibilities within the Family in the Arab Countries in submitting housework and support” as training for social roles in the family. AWO and UN Women at the headquarters of the Arab League Cairo, 9-10 July 2024.
- Regional conference on: "Arab Women, Peace and Security: Challenges Facing Women in the Arab States Region", under the slogan of: "Stop the War on Gaza Today and Not Tomorrow". The conference, of utmost importance at this time, is organized by Kuwait Women's Associations, UN Women and AWO. It took place at the headquarters of the Arab League in Cairo, on February 15, 2024.
- An award by AWO in April on "Arab Girl and Technology for 2024", for girls between 12 to 24 years old to encourage them to engage themselves in the area of Information, Technology and Communication; in connection with the Universal Day for Girls and Technology.

## Database

- “Women in Political life”, towards a database as a result of AWO's monitoring the development of the status of Arab women in various fields.
- Arab Women E-library. Research on Women studies. (Data available in Arabic, English and French).
- It is worth noting that the Hoda Charawi Association has the oldest and best library on women in the whole region.



REPORTS OF  
REGIONAL  
OFFICERS

RAPPORTS DES  
OFFICIERS  
RÉGIONAUX

# AFRIQUE – FRANCOPHONE

REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT - NTAKEBUKA WENE

MWAFIZI WILHELMINE

VICO is a specialized organization of Congolese nationals created on February 13, 1996 by a group of Congolese rural development technicians of all specialties and managers following a bitter observation: the miserable living conditions of Congolese women in rural areas in general and those of the vulnerable in particular.

Thus, VICO will play the role of mediator in the research, construction and consolidation of peace, in the development process that involves the beneficiaries of socio-economic and health projects in the real management and sustainability of the services intended for them. The promotion and defense of the human rights of women and girls attracts more attention in the programming of the activities of the organization Vision Communautaire as a whole.

**MISSION: To contribute to the improvement of the social, economic, and healthy living conditions of the most vulnerable**

## AREAS OF INTERVENTION

- Rehabilitation of basic infrastructure and improvement of housing
- Human rights and maternity and child protection
- Economic and psychosocial reintegration
- Sexual and gender-based violence
- Food security, agriculture and livestock
- Good governance
- Apiculture
- Peace and security
- Entrepreneurship and micro finance



## PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT DURING 2023 - Routine activities

- Training and extension of guinea pig breeding in rural areas to combat malnutrition
- Identification and mobilization of victims of sexual and gender-based violence
- Safety advocacy
- Assistance to victims of sexual violence through psychosocial and economic care in Bukavu, Walungu, Kalehe, as well as medical referral to the Panzi hospital
- Advocating for the rights of women, girls, and children
- Participating and organizing the World Days of Rural Women
- Beekeeping project for the socio-economic reintegration, empowerment of victims of rape and sexual violence, fistula and prolapse after their referral and medical care at the Panzi referral hospital, under a technical partnership

## Additional activities during 2023

- Established women's village savings and loan associations
- Involved in the preparation and participation of the XOESE Forum, the Fund for Francophone Women, on the theme: Awareness-raising and training project on the sexual and reproductive health of young girls.
- Organized and deployed a mobile clinic to care for 500 vulnerable women, girls, and men in South Kivu, in the Karhogo group
- Participated in the peace process known as the Nairobi process
- Co-organized the Round Table for Peace and Development in South Kivu
- Advocated for peace and security in eastern DRC
- Participated in various online and face-to-face meetings organized by other women's rights, research and peacebuilding organizations, both national and international.

## Project in progress

Digitalization of monitoring and psycho-social, medical, and legal support for victims of sexual and gender-based violence in the city province of Kinshasa

This initiative involves setting up a digital application, available to the entire population of Kinshasa, through which victims can send alerts to a toll-free number. The email alert will then allow Community Vision to provide the victim with a link to gain access to the necessary services for the victim's support.

## Activities include

- Creating a digital system to collect information about the victim, the victim's location, the type of violence suffered, the identity of the perpetrator, and the victim's short- and long-term needs
- Organizing capacity-building on the care of victims of violence against women and girls
- Conducting advocacy in the National Assembly on strengthening measures against perpetrators
- Publishing reports on violence against women and girls in the province city of Kinshasa



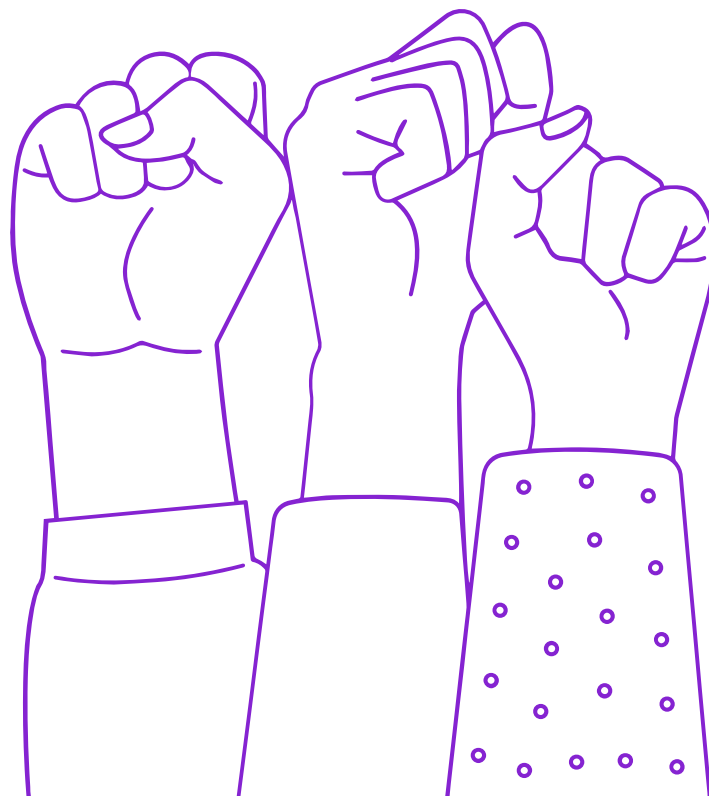
## CONCLUSIONS

### Major Constraints

- Insufficient salaried and volunteer human resources, and incommensurate financial responses from provider partners to meet the needs of human rights organizations
- The illiteracy rate and ignorance in the community about internet technology prevent vulnerable beneficiaries and communities from accessing services

### Opportunities

- Supportive networking for advocacy and lobbying for peace and security
- Existence of the national program for the Stabilization and Reconstruction of the country, (P-DDRRSC)
- The credibility and trust in the organization Community Vision
- Leadership of the Community Vision Coordinator, who is a member of the Board of Directors, Vice-President, and Regional Coordinator for Francophone Africa, within the International Alliance of Women; she also is a member of the Board of Directors of XOESE, Fund for Francophone Women, and a member of the Women's Funding Network.



## ARAB & GULF REGION

REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT -DR. HOREYA MEGAHED

### **A sad year for women in the Region: Gaza catastrophe and Sudan tragedy.**

The Arab region has been overshadowed by the sad situation in Gaza, which is categorized not as apartheid but as sheer genocide, which has been taking place for nearly a year. Without going into details, since the media all over the world is fully covering the tragedy, it is needless to recall that almost 40000 persons lost their lives, in addition to about 90,000 injured; 70% of them are women and children. Some are still under rubble and others are under arrest and imprisoned in an inhumane way including children. Moreover, the painful forced displacement occurred more than once to unknown and so-called safe places. On the other side, with the alarming situation of about 120 hostages, including some women, and the grief and anxiety of their families, the situation is in mass, and humanity is suffering, keeping aside the destruction of the infrastructure, schools, universities, hospitals, and the great majority of the houses. Needless to say, the geopolitical situation in Gaza is accentuating the situation. The area is very small and highly dense, with no normal outlet. All sorts of heavy and prohibited weapons are used in addition to continuous air bombing. According to the UN, clearing the rubble from Gaza will take 15 years, and rebuilding the destroyed homes to what they were before could take years and about 40 billion dollars. Every human in Gaza is suffering from hunger, thirst, and a lack of minimum sanitation and medical care. The most alarming is the beginning of polio and virus C. The war has devastated the civilians; in this dilemma, women suffer the most.



"The war on Gaza is a war on women", according to Mrs. Maryse Guimond, UN Women Special Representative in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The same words and allegations were repeated by UNRWA, which lost about 120 employees.

### **The drastic situation in Sudan:**

The Sudanese have been in the dilemma of civil war for over a year, with the displacement of millions. It is a drastic situation in general and for women and girls in particular since the assault on them has been used as a terrible war weapon. The prospect of a solution shortly is not so far.

### **New positions in the executive authority in 2024:**

#### **In Egypt:**

- The appointment of Dr Hala El Said as the Economic Advisor to the President, to become the first woman to occupy this high position.
- Dr Rania El Mashat, became the Minister of Planning, Economic Development, and International Cooperation. A key amalgamated ministry in the actual crucial time of the economic crisis in Egypt.
- Dr Nawal Michael, the former governor of Damietta, was appointed Minister of Local Development, a position held by a woman for the first time. In addition to the reappointment of the Ministress of Social Solidarity. Therefore, the number of women ministers has become 4 instead of 6 in the previous cabinet, representing 15% of the total.
- The appointment of 5 women deputy ministers, a governor, and 9 deputy governors.

#### **In the United Arab Emirates:**

The new cabinet included 9 women Ministers; 5 of them are without portfolios, and the others are occupying mainly services ministries (Society Development, Climate Change and Environment, and Government and the Future). Yet, they represent 25% of the cabinet, bypassing the global percentage and being similar only to Morocco in the Arab Region.

### **Women Empowerment Event and Initiatives:**

- Egyptian Women's Summit Convention, March 3–4, 2024, Cairo. The 3rd version, with the main aim of supporting the procedures of women's empowerment, was organized under the auspices of the Top 50 Women Forum in partnership with the National Council for Women and the European Union, with the participation of the head of the delegation of the European Union in Egypt, Amb. Christian Burger. One of the main objectives is to stress the need for women as a soft power capable of influencing the local and regional atmospheres, in addition to shedding light on the effect of universal changes on women. It is accompanied by a workshop aiming at supporting the chances for vocations and guidance roles for women and strategic planning and leadership capabilities, with a focus on the ethical code for fighting harassment and violence against women. In addition to that, the forum on women's employment took place.
- 2024 Forbes 30/50 Summit, March 5-8, 2024, Abu Dhabi.
- Women's Empowerment Convention (WE Convention), April 20–21, 2024. Dubai, UAE (the 2nd version). It is the biggest platform for women in the world; it is a global conference grouping women from 75 countries and attended by about 2000 participants.

- Doha Expo 2023, Qatar, Oct. 23–March 2024, is a great horticultural event that was a chance for advocates of women's empowerment. UNDRR organized a joint side event with AWC-UN Women on "Gender and Women Empowerment under Climate Change Impacts."
- The launch of the Women's Empowerment Programme "Tamkeen" (Arabic word for empowerment) in partnership between the Government of Egypt, the EU, Italy, Spain and the UN( UN in Egypt namely UN Women, UNFPA and UNICEF. June 18, 2024.

### **European Awards to Famous Egyptian Sopranos:**

- The famous Egyptian soprano Farrah El Dibany won the prestigious Arab Women Award for 2024 by the London Arabia Organization and was declared by the board of trustees the Arab Woman of the Year 2024 for achievements in cultural exchange. She was the first Arab and African singer to join the Paris Opera Academy in 2016. She can sing in 10 different languages. She won the Chevalier of the "Ordre des Arts et des Lettres" in April 2022, in addition to several top international awards. She sang the French national anthem at President Emmanuel Macron's 2022 victory event when he saluted her.



- Soprano Fatma Said received the European Cultural Award 2024 (of the first grade) in Luxembourg. She is known for her social and political interactions. She represented Egypt two times at the UN to focus on the rights of children to education and dignity through music.

We hope the best for the Arab Region and all humanity in the days to come.

# EUROPE

## REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT - YVONNE POKROPEK

My plan last Autumn was to try to get a European meeting, physically preferably, at least a hybrid meeting end of 2024 or the beginning of 2025. Since the board thereafter decided to have the international meeting in Bulgaria this September I realized that it would be too optimistic to gather people for a second meeting so early after that meeting.

Of course, I planned to come to Bulgaria myself but my bad leg hinders me and I'm also waiting for a replacement of my right knee, and I want to grab the opportunity when it comes.

Unfortunately, none of the Nordic countries' affiliates or associates will come to Bulgaria but Lene Pind, our member secretary will be there so, instead, we plan to gather the Nordic countries for a wrap-up from the meeting in late September.

I sent this email in April, as an invitation to this meeting:

In September the IAW International Meeting will take place in Bulgaria. My understanding is that none of you will be there for different reasons.

Nevertheless - I think we need to start cooperating more closely in Europe, and I aim to have a European, best-case physical, meeting in the autumn of 2025. My suggestion for a theme is "pushing back the pushback".

To plan this, together with our membership secretary Lene Pind, I would like to invite our Nordic colleagues to a planning session on September 21st, Saturday. We hope we can meet in person, either in Stockholm or in Copenhagen, if that is not an option we will have a Zoom meeting.

### **Agenda:**

- report from the international meeting
- update from each Nordic Country
- brainstorming around subjects for a European meeting
- delegation of tasks
- next steps

So far, I have gotten a "yes" from the Finnish, Swedish and Icelandic organisation and a "maybe" from the Danish one. No response from Norway so far. I hope to come together with Lene in a couple of weeks to plan a Zoom meeting on the 21st of September. To summarize my first year as VP Europe – it has not been a success, very little response from the countries, I'm sorry to report.



## SOUTH EAST ASIA

REGIONAL CO-ORDINATOR - SHEELA KAKDE

I was appointed to this position in 2023 with few guidelines. Last year, I was provided with the email id of all the representatives of the organizations who are members of IAW. Accordingly, I twice sent very inclusive and encouraging emails to about 7 or 8 of these representatives. I never got any response. No emails bounced back to me due to incorrect address. Hence I then suggested that if I could get their mobile numbers, I could contact them on Whatsapp. The phone numbers were not available.

I repeated the same thing this year. I sent email messages, and for a change I received one reply from Bangladesh, which I had mentioned in my reply on 30th June.

I feel organizations must have sent the reports directly to IAW, without marking the copy to the regional co-ordinator. Hence, I have nothing to report. Nor, I am able to visit the organizations to see their work, which are in different countries.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to express my views.



# NORTH AMERICA

## REGIONAL CO-ORDINATOR - JESSICA PIERSON

Below is a summary of activities I participated in as IAW North American Regional Coordinator in the past year.

In February 2024, I invited the North American membership to attend the international meeting in September. I heard from several members that they are planning to attend.

Also in February, I traveled to Geneva with IAW members Abby Hasselbrink and UN Representative Soon-Young Yoon to brief the UN CEDAW Committee on Cities for CEDAW, a national campaign in the US to implement CEDAW at the local level. Today, despite the US refusal to ratify the treaty at the federal level, over 80 million Americans are covered by CEDAW resolutions and ordinances thanks to Cities for CEDAW. The CEDAW Committee was supportive of our efforts in the US, with members stating that Cities for CEDAW is a model for bottom-up implementation even for States that have ratified CEDAW but were careful to point out that it is not a replacement for federal ratification, which the US unfortunately still lacks. We were joined at the briefing by IAW Geneva representatives and Cities for CEDAW advocates.

In March 2024, I participated in two events as part of CSW68 in New York. The first, “The CEDAW Challenge for Future Generations,” was co-sponsored by IAW, Coalition for the UN We Need, the Cities for CEDAW History and Future Project, Los Angeles County, and the Los Angeles County Women and Girls Initiative. This workshop brought together CEDAW and UN experts with human rights advocates to share innovative strategies to protect and expand women’s human rights from the local to the global level. I shared information about CEDAW Youth, an innovative student group advocating for CEDAW implementation from Miriam College in the Philippines. I spoke with several attendees who expressed interest in starting a similar program in their universities. You can watch this event in its entirety on [YouTube](#).

On March 19, 2024, as part of CSW68, I had the pleasure of speaking at an event on how gender plays a role in shaping our future. The event was co-sponsored by IAW, Coalition for the UN We Need, the Cities for CEDAW History and Future Project, and Oxfam International. The event, Transformative Action: Gender and the People’s Pact for the Future, discussed the Summit of the Future process from a gender perspective. The panelists, consisting of Lebogang Ramafoko (Executive Director, Oxfam South Africa), Chido Mpemba (African Youth Envoy), and me with opening remarks from Ambassador Leonar Zalabata Torres (Permanent Representative of Colombia to the UN) and closing remarks from Lbrenda Mofya (Head of the New York office for Oxfam) shared innovations, highlighted women and youth leadership, and addressed the questions of participation and inclusion. Soon-Young Yoon (UN Representative for IAW) moderated the panel.

My presentation focused on what happens after 2024 and the role of sub-national financing/politics for the implementation of the Summit's Pact for the Future. I specifically spoke about the Cities for CEDAW movement in the United States as a case study. This panel is available to view on [YouTube](#).

In July 2024, I surveyed the North American membership to gather their opinions on what the most burning issues for women are in their region and what IAW should focus on over the next 3-4 years as part of the new Action Programme. I received responses from one Canadian member and eleven American members. Members stressed the high cost of housing and childcare, the rise of Christian Nationalism, peace and security, climate change, the gender pay gap, human trafficking, the rollback of LGBTQ+ rights, the erasure of DEI initiatives, and the marginalization of women, especially Indigenous women, as important issues facing women in North America. The most burning issues they cited were the rollback on reproductive rights and gender-based violence.

Regarding the new IAW action programme, four members thought the current programme should remain, with two members suggesting reordering to put SRHR at the top and one member suggesting emphasizing WPS as well as SRHR. Two members thought that violence against women should be the number one issue IAW focuses on. Other issues North American members would like to see IAW focus on are climate change, childcare, increasing women in high-level positions, women's economy, health, and using UN treaties to promote women's human rights globally.

I look forward to continuing to engage members in IAW activities and sharing their feedback and women's rights advocacy in North America with IAW going forward.



*Pictured above: Cities for CEDAW advocates and CEDAW experts from the CSW68 event in New York: "The CEDAW Challenge for Future Generations."*



*Pictured above: The CEDAW Committee with Cities for CEDAW advocates and IAW New York and Geneva representatives at the UN Geneva.*

AFFILIATE  
MEMBERS

MEMBRES AFFILIÉS

# ALL INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE (AIWC), INDIA

REPORTED BY DR MANJU KAK

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

All India Women's Conference, a pan-India NGO established in 1927 with the primary focus of women's education and empowerment, has steadily grown into a pioneer women's organization working towards socio-economic empowerment of women. The organization has a membership of over 100,000 dedicated women volunteers working through a network of more than 500 branches across India. The organization has been working at the grass-roots level to make sure that the benefits of development reach the women from lower income groups, marginalized communities, and the most vulnerable sections of society.

During 2023 -2024, AIWC conducted activities to promote the sustainable development goals as follows:

## **Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages**

- Sanitary Pads and Menstrual Hygiene Programme
  - AIWC is creating awareness of menstrual hygiene and sanitation in the schools, colleges and communities. Educating rural women and girls about using clean menstrual hygiene products helps prevent infections. The sanitary napkin project has sanctioned to Darjeeling Branch (West Bengal) especially for rural women.
  - By embracing a life cycle perspective, the awareness programmes provide holistic support throughout the entire menstrual journey, catering to the distinct requirements of individuals from menarche to menopause. It emphasizes the importance of prioritizing marginalized and vulnerable groups, ensuring fair access to menstrual hygiene resources and addressing their specific needs.
- Maternal Health Care and Child Health Care
  - AIWC has undertaken initiatives through awareness programs to address breast cancer, cervical cancer, inflammatory diseases, hypertension, and post-menopausal depression. Additionally, AIWC focuses on enhancing maternal and child healthcare, recognizing its critical importance and the need for continuous improvement. The organization also conducts nutrition awareness programs for both mothers and children.

## **Goal 15: Life on land**

- Solid Waste Management

-AIWC's head office took the initiative for an integrated approach toward waste segregation. Our branches are creating awareness of solid and wet waste management in the urban, rural and slum communities, including e-waste management.

-AIWC collaborated with Hulladek Recycling Pvt Ltd as an e-waste collection center in Delhi. We create awareness in school and colleges through organized webinars to increase community participation in disposal activity. Around 941 kg 500 gm of e-waste was carefully disposed of under the guidance of our recycling partners.

-AIWC collaborated with NDMC and the Why Waste Wednesday organisation to curb plastic waste, with a goal to make our area zero plastic.

- Because women play a major role in domestic work, they are the main protagonists in disposal of waste in daily chores. To empower them, the AIWC head office provided training to sensitize women in semi-urban areas about the need for waste segregation and waste management.

## **Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions**

- Communal Harmony and National Integration Awareness

-AIWC works to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development and awareness for access to justice.

-AIWC organized the International Day for Countering Hate Speech. This programme promotes respectful dialogue by educating the public about harmful impacts of hate speech, enforcing laws against such speech, and fostering inclusive communities that uphold principles of equality and human dignity.

-A book club held at AIWC head office discussed "Bhagavad Gita: A Life Changing Conversation." To promote peace and harmony, it is important to follow the path of Dharma (righteous path), emphasizing the importance of doing one's duty and living in accordance with one's dharma.

-AIWC branches organized awareness programmes during Communal Harmony Week to spread awareness regarding National Integration and harmony in the community.

## **Goal 4: Quality Education**

- Integrated Literacy and Skill Development programme

- AIWC is implementing an Integrated Literacy and Skill Development Programme in the branches where AIWC is imparting skill training with education.

- AIWC's Non-formal Education Programme for Street Children/Migrated Children aims to provide education to student drop-outs, street children and migrated children. Branches undertaking this programme aim to increase the enrollment of children in the school and to advocate for children's education, including to impart moral values and life skills.

- Many AIWC branches are offering Non-formal Education and Skill Development Programmes for Women and Girls. These programs aim to provide literacy and numeracy to non-literate and semi-literate women. They also focus on capacity-building and skill training, empowering women to seek employment or start their own income-generating activities. Additionally, these initiatives enhance women's confidence, encouraging them to re-integrate into open programs for women and girls.

### **Goal 5: Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls**

- Equal Pay for Equal Work

-The AIWC UDAAN program promotes employment-oriented vocational skills and training for women and girls in the community. Branches are implementing this program across India to enhance the capacity of women and girls, empowering them to seek employment and start their own income-generating activities.

- Women Empowerment

The AIWC Gender Sensitization co-educational activity programmes aim to promote equal rights and opportunities irrespective of gender. These initiatives seek to educate participants about the intricacies of gender identity and expression, fostering understanding and inclusivity within diverse communities. AIWC Branches are taking initiatives in organizing such activity in the community where youth can find safe space to share their views on it.

- AIWC organized a well attended Symposium on Women's Reservation Bill on 19th June 2024. Many eminent speakers shared their views on the Women's Reservation Bill passed in India.

- Violence against Women

- Through its legal awareness, women's empowerment, women's safety, and self-defense programs, AIWC aims to empower women by raising awareness within communities. These initiatives educating women about their rights and equipping them with the knowledge and skills to combat violence effectively, fostering a safer and more empowered environment for women.

-A two-day workshop on Preventing Sexual Harassment at Workspace (POSH) was held 21-22 May 2024. It was conducted by Member In charge Women's Rights and Safety and Ex-Secretary General for AIWC Branches.

### Goal 13: Climate Action

- Gender Responsive Climate Change Action Meeting -G20 organized by AIWC.

This event focused on solving the social-economic matters that touch people's daily lives, including education, health and the environment. The event raised gender integration in climate responsive action, policies and implementation plans, acknowledging women not only as beneficiaries but also as contributors to sustainable development and efficient climate action plan.

- Our AIWC Staff attended a mega tree plantation drive organised by Delhi CM Shree Arvind Kejriwal.

- Gender Integration in Climate Change Policies

-The organization has played a significant role both nationally and globally in integrating gender into climate change policies, aligning with the targets of Goal 13. In addition to contributing to the global process through participation in COP and SBI meetings, we have been actively working at the national and state levels to ensure women's voices are included in climate change policies and implementation plans.

-Recognizing the pivotal role of gender in climate change, AIWC branches are initiating change by raising awareness about various environmental issues at the grassroots level. These programs actively involve women, empowering them to contribute to environmental sustainability.

-In the context of climate change, it is crucial for every individual to be aware of the rapid environmental changes occurring. Collective action can significantly impact the control of these changes. Initiatives through climate change programs will reduce vulnerability and enhance resilience.





# ALL PAKISTAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION (APWA), PAKISTAN

The All Pakistan Women's Association (APWA) is Pakistan's oldest non-profit organization dedicated to women's well being through service delivery and advocacy. Founded by Raana Liaquat Ali Khan in 1949, APWA has been successfully mobilizing women across the country for over 70 years. APWA's vision is to empower women and girls to become catalysts for positive societal change.

In Pakistan, APWA focuses on the education and health sectors. Currently, six education projects in remote areas of Karachi provide free quality education to underprivileged students, in collaboration with the Sindh Education Foundation (SEF). These projects also offer opportunities and exposure for the holistic development of around 2,500 students, who benefit from curricular and co-curricular activities under the guidance of trained and qualified young teachers.

Additionally, six health projects in Karachi provide hygienic healthcare facilities to community members at minimal rates. These projects also organize numerous awareness sessions on polio, breast cancer, and tuberculosis. Community women receive ante-natal and post-natal check-ups and ultrasound services under the supervision of qualified and experienced doctors, LHVs, and other paramedical staff members.

## APWA EDUCATION PROJECTS – Karachi



## Kashmir Day Celebration

A Kashmir Day celebration is organized each year on 5 February in every school to commemorate the solidarity with the people of Kashmir and raise awareness about the ongoing struggles in the region. The event aims to educate students about the historical, cultural, and political significance of Kashmir, while promoting peace, empathy, and solidarity. The activities provide an opportunity for students to learn, reflect, and take action on one of the most pressing humanitarian issues of our time.

### **Raa'na Liaquat Ali Khan's Birthday Celebration [Founder of APWA]**

On 13 February, APWA organizes a birthday celebration in honor of Raa'na Liaquat Ali Khan. The event commemorates her contributions to women's empowerment and social welfare in Pakistan, while promoting her legacy among students. Through an assembly presentation, performing arts showcase, and visit to her tomb, students gain a deeper understanding of her legacy and the importance of service and advocacy.

### **Pakistan Resolution Day**

The aim of celebrating Pakistan Resolution Day in schools is to instill patriotism, educate students about the historical significance of the Lahore Resolution, and foster a sense of national pride and unity among the youth. Such celebrations foster patriotism and national pride and also encourage students to become responsible citizens and ambassadors of peace and harmony in society.

### **Participation in Learning Festival**

The fine arts painting competition on the theme "TechCanvas: Where Science Meets Arts" was a resounding success, showcasing the talent and creativity of students in integrating scientific concepts with artistic expression. The event not only provided students with a platform to showcase their talents but also promoted interdisciplinary learning and collaboration. Students along with teachers visited the Learning Festival to gain knowledge and also participated in the arts competition and received appreciation and certificates. Moving forward, APWA Schools remain committed to providing opportunities for students to explore their passion and interests in both science and the arts.

### **International Women's Day**

The poster competition encouraged artistic expression on the theme "Inspire Inclusion – Invest in Women's Education to Accelerate Progress" and raised awareness about the importance of gender equality and women's rights. The students' artworks formed a poster-gallery walk during the celebration. APWA students participated in recitations, speeches, a welcome song performance, and a cultural song performance.

### **Human Rights**

APWA has been at the forefront of promoting human rights in Pakistan. The work includes campaigns to ensure the right to education, healthcare, and freedom of expression. APWA's efforts have not only improved public understanding of human rights but also have put pressure on institutions to uphold these rights. On 10 December 2023, APWA National celebrated the 75th UN Human Rights Day. The speakers highlighted the significance of quality education for freedom, equality, and justice. President of APWA National and Special Guest, Managing Director of Sindh Education Foundation, and other keynote speakers provided insights about the quality of education in Pakistan and the importance of education for future generations.

### **Ration Distribution**

The Ramadan ration distribution program implemented by APWA for teachers and support staff members underscore the organization's commitment to supporting the well-being and morale of key stakeholders within the school community. By providing essential food items and fostering a sense of appreciation, the initiative has made a positive impact on the lives of educators and support personnel, contributing to a culture of care and inclusivity within the school environment.

### **Parents' Orientation and Awareness Sessions**

Parents' Orientation and Awareness Sessions are designed to engage parents in the educational journey of their children. These sessions introduce school policies and programs, enhance parent-teacher communication, promote active parental involvement, raise awareness on key issues like child development and health and hygiene, and support academic success. These sessions are crucial for building a strong school community and ensuring that parents are partners in their child's education.

### **Integrating Computer Technology in APWA Schools**

Integrating computer technology in APWA schools is revolutionizing education by providing students with essential digital skills and enhancing learning experiences. This initiative involves infrastructure development, curriculum enhancement, teacher training, E-Learning platforms, equitable access and skill development. Through this initiative, Karachi is fostering a generation of tech-savvy students ready to thrive in a digital world, enhancing academic achievement and future career prospects.

### **Co-Curricular Activities**

Co-curricular activities in APWA schools play a vital role in the holistic development of students. These co-curricular activities provide students with opportunities to develop leadership skills, explore new interests, and build character, contributing to their overall personal and academic growth. These activities include sports and physical education, arts and culture, debates and public speaking, science math and language clubs and exhibitions, community service and social projects, literary activities, and environmental initiatives.

### **APWA HEALTH PROJECTS – Karachi**

According to the World Health Organization, "Health is the state of social, mental, and emotional wellbeing, not merely the absence of disease." Our goal is to provide easy access for women and girls to good quality education and health facilities, with health awareness as a major function of these projects. APWA has been working in this area for 50 years, and APWA's health centers have provided basic mother and child health services to over 3000 to 5000 women and children. We have a priority to look after the nutritional status of children under 5, as well as pregnant and lactating mothers.

### **Training of Health Workers and Vaccinators**

APWA has organized vaccination training programs for all health workers and vaccinators, with the collaboration of DHO and UC 51 at the APWA Golimar Health Center.

### **Polio Campaign and Awareness Sessions**

The government announced a polio campaign from 07-8-23 to 14-8-23, with APWA Golimar Health Center as the main point to provide the vaccination services. APWA Health Sector arranged awareness sessions on the Importance of polio awareness and nutrition at Gims Memorial School, conducted by doctors and health experts, attended by 30 mothers and teachers and 49 children. In addition, an awareness session on polio and hygiene was organized by APWA health worker and vaccinator Ms. Sayeda at Golimar Health Center and various community schools. Following the educational segment, polio vaccinations were administered to children. Additionally, hygiene kits and refreshments were distributed to all participants to encourage the practice of good hygiene habits.

### **APWA Health and Nutrition Program**

Dr. Shabana facilitated the training for a healthy diet and causes of poor nutrition. Because many families have busy schedules their diets involve a lot of convenience and take-out food, which can be unhealthy. Also, unhealthy eating habits can continue into adulthood.

### **Health and Hygiene Activity Program**

Madam Charmine Hydayat-ullah, President of the APWA, generously donated sanitary napkins and sanitizers for distribution at the Malir Health Center, as well as wheelchairs and blankets. In addition to the distribution efforts, Dr. Shahida conducted a session emphasizing the importance of regular use of sanitary napkins for menstrual hygiene, proper hand sanitization to prevent infections, and overall self-care practices. The combined efforts of Madam Charmine Hydayat-ullah, Ms. Cleventina, and Dr. Shahida significantly contributed to promoting better health and hygiene standards at the Malir Health Center.

### **Breast Cancer Awareness Program**

On 18 October 2023, APWA participated in a free screening and mammogram program, with assistance from the Atomic Energy Medical Institution (AEMC) , at the APWA Golimar Health Center.

### **Free medical camp**

APWA Golimar Health Clinic held a free medical camp, sponsored by Hilton Pharma. New LHV Gulshan Basara was appointed to monitor the medical camp.

# ASSOCIATION SUISSE POUR LES DROITS DE LA FEMMES – SCHWEIZERISCHER VERBAND FÜR FRAUENRECHTE (ADF/SVF), SWITZERLAND

## General

In 2023, the Association vaudoise pour les Droits des Femmes (ADF-Vaud) took over the presidency of the Swiss Association of Women's Rights (Association Suisse pour les droits des femmes ADF-SVF). The outgoing section frauenrechte beider basel frbb, whose competence and professionalism are indisputable, provided a great deal of support for the handover.

The year was marked by numerous actions by committed women, whether in the field of climate issues AP3, and equal rights for men and women. Thanks to a long struggle by various human rights organizations, especially women, the existing patriarchal penal code has been modernized by effectively protecting the sexual self-determination, thus enabling a harsher punishment for rape. AP1. Elisabeth Kopp, the first woman elected as a federal Councilor in 1984, and Simone Chapuis-Bischof, former president of ADF-SVF, have passed away. Both were important feminist personalities, who left their mark on their era.

## Elections 2023

The year also saw Eva Herzog, finance director of Basel and an active member of ADF-SVF, become President of the Council of States, as well as 16 women taking their first seats on the Council of States, an increase from 28% to 35%. On the other hand, the representation of women on the National Council has fallen from 42% to 38.5%. The fight must go on to get parity of women and men in the national parliament! AP7

## 2024

### ADF-SVF is expanding

The Bernese women have chosen 6 January 2024, the "Queen's Day", for their founding of the new ADF-SVF section. It is called frauenrechte Bern-Fribourg. Now there is again a women's rights organisation in this important Swiss region. They right away hosted a well-attended event on a federal vote about improving social security for women.

Later frauenrechte beider basel, the section of both Basel, adopted a new name. Recently it had expanded its membership to the neighbouring canton Aargau, and it is now called frauenrechte nordwest. AP7

### National democratic events

Thanks to a motion initiated by Eva Herzog, the federal assembly decided on 31 January 2024 on a law setting out the procedure and requirements for taking gender into account in federal studies and statistics. This is a great step for a better visibility of women! **AP7**

Who would have believed it? On 3 March 2024 the Swiss voters said yes to 13 instead of only 12 monthly official pensions for all elderly inhabitants! The intensive campaign by ADF-SVF together with many other women's organisations has definitively been successful. In fact, the women's voices were decisive for this result. It was a clear victory for the female population, as women are mostly stricken by poverty. **AP7**

Recent surveys are confirming a new trend: Young women voters tend to vote rather left, whereas the young men are drifting in the opposite direction by voting for conservative rightist parties. Do many young women realise that their rights are under threat from the backlash?

For SVF-ADF, this means that our organisation is needed more than ever. Democracy must be strengthened with gender parity at all levels. **AP7**

Again Eva Herzog, now President of the Council of States, took a step to give visibility to women:

She invited the presidents of all national (women's) organizations to a festive event in the Federal Palace. Annemarie Heiniger from section Basel was representing ADF-SVF. The event was a huge success, and Eva Herzog wrote: "Let's take the momentum of 8 March with us!" View the [official video](#) here.

ADF-SVF is also concerned about climate change and in close touch with the [KlimaSeniorinnen](#) (Swiss Senior Women for Climate Protection). In fact Rosmarie Wydler-Wälti, its Co-president, was a main speaker at the ADF-SVF event on 17 June 2023.

These very courageous women filed a complaint at the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR), stating that Switzerland had violated the human right of climate protection – and surprisingly on 9 April 2024

ECHR approved their complaint. The KlimaSeniorinnen have won! ADF-SVF has congratulated them.

Since then, however, nothing has happened in Switzerland, and the authorities are contesting the ruling.

### **ADF-SVF international, national, and local!**

ADF-SVF had its yearly assembly at Lausanne on 8 June 2024. Dr. Sibylle von Heydebrand, delegate of ADF-SVF at IAW, reported on **international events**, such as the UN conference CSW68 in New York and her IAW mandate at the UN in Geneva. She emphasised the importance of women's networking at all levels. Ursula Nakamura gave a brief report about the IAW "Water and Pads" project. AP-all.

With regard to the current national debate on sex and gender at the national level, ADF-SVF stated in a press release that gender, i.e. woman or man, must always be named. There should also be a third gender, especially for intersex people. **AP4**

Visibility of women should also be enhanced on the **local level**. Joëlle Moret, Equal Opportunities Officer Lausanne, reported on a very successful project. The [city administration](#) wants to make women visible in public spaces. ADF-Vaud is also participating in that working group. Some changes are spectacular: So the former “Central Place” is now called “Place of the Women Pioneers”! This is a perfect way to bring the work of countless women to light, a way also to a real democracy. **AP7**

### **14 June - nationwide women's strike**

Since 1991, women throughout the country have been commemorating 14 June 1981, when equal rights for women and men were enshrined in the Federal Constitution.

As the realisation of equal rights is unfortunately still very much lacking, again in 2024 thousands of women took to the streets across the whole country. The slogan was “CARE - our bodies, our streets, our world!”

All ADF-SVF sections were actively engaged in regional strike-collectives. This time, a surprising number of young women took part. They obviously begin to realise that women's rights are very much under threat. More than ever, one has to fight again very hard for them!

ADF-SVF sections emphasised the societal importance of the huge load of unpaid work women are performing each day. They asked for recognition of CARE. The demonstration in Basel with rollators, wheelchairs, and pushchairs was a perfect match. **AP all.**

### **ADF-SVF with a new website!**

Last but not least, ADF-SVF has a completely new website. It has been completely redesigned with a clear layout.

Anyone wanting to find out more about ADF-SVF can now find a wealth of information about ADF-SVF and women's political activities in Switzerland here. As ADF-SVF is an internationally well connected organization, now it also has also an English-language version with all important facts. You are invited to visit it.

[www.feminism.ch](http://www.feminism.ch) (French, German and English)

### IAW Action Programme AP:

1 Elimination of Violence against Women and Girls / 2 Human Rights / 3 Climate Change / 4 Health / 5 Peace - Security / 6 Women in Economy / 7 Democracy



*Women's strike at Lausanne*



*Women's strike at Basel*



# CANADIAN FEDERATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN (CFUW-FCFDU), CANADA

## About CFUW

CFUW is a non-partisan, self-funded organization with 94 Clubs across Canada and over 6,600 members. Since the founding of CFUW in 1919, our mission has been to achieve educational and economic equality and social justice through continuous learning and empowerment. Our vision is that women and girls are educated and empowered to make transformative change in the world.

## CFUW's National Priorities

CFUW's advocacy work is guided by our Resolutions, which are adopted annually at our Policy Session. Over the years, CFUW has taken a stand on many issues; today, our advocacy centres on three national priority areas: Education, Equity & Social Justice, and Safe & Healthy Communities. In 2023-24, CFUW and our members across the country took action to advance these priorities and their related UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

## Education

Education remains at the heart of CFUW's mission. CFUW Clubs gave over \$1 million in scholarships, fellowships, and awards in 2023-2024.

For CFUW members, lifelong learning is a highly valued dimension of education. In addition to the dozens of webinars and speaker series presented by CFUW Clubs across the country, at the national level, we hosted several virtual presentations to educate both CFUW members and members of the public on important topics related to equity and social justice. This included:

- A workshop entitled "Islam: Its Roots & Wings" delivered by the Canadian Council of Muslim Women.
- A virtual film screening of the movie "City Dreamers," recounting the stories of four women architects.
- A webinar on "Women in Skilled Trades."

In the legislative realm, the enactment of Bill C-35, An Act respecting early learning and child care in Canada, was a major success celebrated by CFUW in 2024. We submitted briefs to the [House of Commons](#) and [Senate](#) Committees that studied the bill, expressing our support for universal, accessible, and equitable child care and early learning, and its incredible potential to advance gender equality. Our Education Committee continuously monitors the implementation of the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care system.

## Equity & Social Justice

As a feminist organization, achieving equity and social justice is central to our mission. Under this overarching umbrella, we engaged in several advocacy endeavours this year, including the following:

- Our membership passed a Resolution on ending immigration detention in Canada. As a part of our “[Fall Advocacy Package](#),” we produced a [template letter](#) for Clubs to send to MPs and provincial members of government urging the end of all provincial contracts with the Canada Border Services Agency for the purpose of detaining immigrants in correctional facilities.
- We released a 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence [toolkit](#) that contained research, resources, social media graphics, and ways to take action. It included a [template letter](#) for Clubs to send to local officials requesting they declare gender-based violence an epidemic in their jurisdiction.
- CFUW National sent a [letter](#) to the Prime Minister in support of Bill S-210, An Act to restrict young persons’ online access to sexually explicit material.
- For Sisters in Spirit Day, CFUW’s Indigenous Issues Sub-Committee invited Marion Buller, Chief Commissioner of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG), to speak about the Inquiry and turning knowledge into action.
- CFUW prepared a [written submission](#) for pre-budget consultations in advance of the 2024 Federal Budget, outlining recommendations to ensure the budget improves the lives of women and the most marginalized. We also released a [statement](#) in response to the 2024 Budget.

## Safe & healthy Communities

To enable women and girls to realize their potential, CFUW advocates for communities in Canada and around the world to be safe and healthy. This includes advocating for conserving the environment, combating climate change, and championing equitable, high-quality public healthcare.

With respect to the environment and climate change, CFUW took the following actions:

- We published a [Call to Action](#) on Bill C-219, An Act to enact the Canadian Environmental Bill of Rights and to make related amendments to other Acts, which encouraged Clubs to write to their local MPs in support of the private member’s bill using a [template letter](#).
- CFUW’s Environment and Climate Change Sub-Committee actively engaged in environmental activism and education, including by hosting a workshop on “Environmental Action for Everyday Life” and producing an informative newsletter for Earth Day.
- Ahead of COP28, CFUW National sent a [letter](#) to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change encouraging the Canadian delegation to bring a gender-sensitive approach to all negotiations throughout the conference, and to take ambitious climate action. Shortly after, we received a response from the Minister.

### **With respect to health, CFUW took the following actions:**

- Our membership passed a Resolution on the need for a comprehensive maternal death prevention strategy. In support of the Resolution, we produced a [template letter](#) for Clubs to send to MPs urging the federal government to establish a system to collect and analyze disaggregated and anonymized data on maternal deaths and close calls. The Club that proposed this Resolution held a national webinar with experts in the maternal health field.
- CFUW National sent a [letter](#) in support of the government’s national pharmacare plan to the Prime Minister and the Leaders of opposition parties. We also prepared a [template letter](#) for Clubs to send to their MPs in support of universal pharmacare. CFUW was particularly supportive of the initial rollout of the plan including coverage for contraception.
- We held our annual Elder Action Day on May 1, 2024, a day for combatting ageism and advocating for better services and support for older people. CFUW’s Long-Term Care Study Group held a webinar entitled “Supporting Older People to Age in Their Communities: Showcasing Saskatoon,” with speakers from the Sherbrooke Community Centre and the Saskatoon Council on Aging. We also produced a social media toolkit for use by Clubs and members.
- The Long-Term Care Study Group monitored progress on the Aging with Dignity bilateral agreements and engaged with the National Seniors Council and representatives from the Minister of Seniors’ office regarding long-term care standards.

### **International Advocacy**

CFUW also engages in advocacy at the international level, striving for the achievement of the SDGs—particularly through the promotion of universal education and peace:

- As an ECOSOC-accredited organization, CFUW sent 17 delegates to attend the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW68) in New York in March 2024. In New York, we hosted a parallel event entitled “Women Rising from Poverty: Strategies, Transformative Educational Projects, Empowering Initiatives.” As a part of our “CAMEUS” collaboration with Women Graduates-USA and Federación Mexicana de Universitarias, we also held a virtual parallel event.
- Ahead of CSW68, CFUW prepared a [written statement](#) on the priority theme. We were also honoured to participate in Women and Gender Equality Canada’s “rapid response group” to provide feedback on the Agreed Conclusions throughout the negotiations. Lastly, CFUW National released a statement on the CSW68 Agreed Conclusions, and wrote to the Prime Minister and several relevant Ministers encouraging the outcome document’s implementation in Canada and internationally.

- Our membership passed a Resolution on the importance of using trade agreements to advance the SDGs and monitoring the gendered impacts of trade. We prepared [a template letter](#) for Clubs to send to MPs in support of the Resolution.
- Following the breakout of war in Israel and Gaza, CFUW National sent a [letter](#) to the Prime Minister, several relevant Ministers, and Canada's Ambassador to the UN asking the government to use its influence to secure the safe return of hostages, an immediate ceasefire, and the active involvement of women stakeholders in all aspects of conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and reconstruction.
- We delivered an "SDG of the Month" campaign, in which a different SDG was highlighted monthly on social media and in our newsletter to raise awareness.
- CFUW participated as a member of the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Network of Canada and attended meetings with Canada's Ambassador for WPS.
- We joined the UN SDG "Unite to Act Campaign" with the commitment to act as an organization on Goal 4, Target 4.4: "By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs, and entrepreneurship."
- CFUW Clubs and members across the county raised over \$7,300 for our annual International Service Project. The funds went towards two Mobile Learning Labs through the organization 60 Million Girls, enabling girls in Mozambique to receive remote access to education.



# DANISH WOMEN'S SOCIETY (DWS), DENMARK

REPORTED BY SIMONE MELBYE LARSEN

## About DWS

Since 1871 DWS have advocated for women's rights and gender equality, making DWS Denmark's oldest women's organization. We are a political NGO with feminist values working to improve the status of women through a wide range of agendas concerning gender equality. We aim to ensure that equal rights policy and equal opportunities policy remains a priority in national and international agendas.

DWS's work has been pivotal in some of the most epoch-making legislation regarding women's rights in Denmark. Among these are women's right to vote in 1915, free abortion in 1973, women's right to shelter from violence in 2004, the criminalization of psychological violence in 2019 and the sexual consent law in 2020.

## DWS' current advocacy work

In DWS we seek to:

- Influence public and private actors, legislation, and to challenge political discourses concerning equality, women's rights and status quo.
- Frame issues of equality through communication and knowledge sharing.
- Seek influence through councils and committees.
- Create debate and awareness about gender equality and women's rights.
- Engage in partnerships and collaborations to promote equality for all.

Currently, DWS has four strategic priorities: gender-based violence and femicide, youth representation, invisible women and equal pay and representation.

## Gender-based violence (GBV) and femicide

DWS works to end gender-based violence and femicide and to secure better and safer conditions for women exposed to intimate partner violence and their children. This work is located at Danish Women's Society's Shelters who, besides offering shelter and support for women and children exposed to domestic/intimate partner violence, also works politically to stop violence against women and children.

We are deeply concerned with how a gender-neutral approach to intimate partner violence is progressing in Denmark. Moreover, the phenomenon 'parental alienation syndrome' (PAS) will be introduced in Danish legislation in 2024. We have shared our concerns with the Danish government about how the introduction of PAS in Danish family law can be extremely harmful to women and children exposed to domestic/intimate partner violence. We continuously work to secure that these measures do not worsen women's and children's opportunity to live a life free of violence.

GREVIO carried out their thematic evaluation of Denmark in September 2023. DWS contributes to the shadow report in collaboration with the Danish National Observatory on Violence against Women. The shadow report can be accessed [here](#). GREVIO's report is expected during 2024.

### **Youth representation**

In 2024 DWS launched a 2-year project targeting youths between 18 – 30 years. In collaboration with a Danish foundation, we will equip youths to engage in debates concerning women's rights and equality. We will host a series of events, collect and share knowledge, inspire, create networks and offer training in how to debate and make one's voice heard.

With this project we seek to support young people who are interested in equality and establish a sense of community and engagement, e.g. by recruiting young ambassadors. The project will ensure that Danish youth across age, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, culture, etc. engage in questions concerning equal rights and equal opportunities. The project was tested in 2023 where we hosted an event about abortion rights targeting youths where we combined debates with creative elements. It was a great success.

### **Invisible women**

The past year a working group has collected data concerning how women's bodies and women's diseases are marginalized in research concerning health care. We work to secure significant changes in this area. A one-sided approach to research based only on men's bodies, whether it be in medicine or in the development of security measures, harms women and women's rights.

As a result of our efforts to create awareness of how women are made to be invisible in medicine, we have entered a partnership with the Gynecology and Obstetrics Department at Odense University Hospital. Together we address crucial topics in research about women's health and diseases. In 2024 we will establish a user panel of women who will shape future research in medicine. DWS's large platform will enable the distribution of the findings of the partnership.

### **Equal pay and representation**

DWS will focus on equal pay and women's representation on the labor market, in boards, in political power positions, etc. A working group has been established, who will begin this work. In 2023 DWS had events about entrepreneurship and the lack of equality in opportunity. The working group will continue this work.

### **NATIONAL MATTERS**

Besides our strategic efforts, we concern ourselves with a wide range of agendas of both national and international importance. Three of the most prominent themes of the past year have been free abortion, conscription, and peace.

## **Access to free abortion**

In 2023 Denmark celebrated the 50th anniversary of our right to free abortion. Alongside 25 other organizations in the Abortion Alliance, we celebrated the Danish milestone through events and debates about bodily autonomy in Denmark and abroad. DWS were also invited to The Ministry of the Interior and Health to share our views on abortion rights. They were specifically interested in our competencies regarding GBV.

DWS have worked to improve the current Danish legislation on abortion. We are pleased that the Danish government in 2024 decided to increase the current limit for free abortion from week 12 to week 18. Similarly, young women from age 15 will gain access to free abortion without the consent of their parents.

It is, however, with great concern that we witnessed how the Faroese government downvoted a proposal to secure women's right to free abortion up to week 12. DWS continues to support Faroese women's fight for free abortion.

## **Female conscription**

The Danish government aims towards a gender-equal military by introducing conscription for all genders as of 2027. DWS have opposed this policy, arguing that the military currently has a toxic work environment for women, with sexual harassment, physical and emotional abuse, sexism and misogyny. The current conditions are unacceptable and unsafe for women.

DWS will continue to focus on ensuring a proper working environment for all through action plans for gender equality within the Danish military.

## **Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security**

In continuation of our efforts against female conscription, DWS urged a strengthened focus on peacekeeping initiatives. Considering increasing conflicts, war, and systematic human rights violations, it is of utmost importance to lobby for disarmament, non-violent conflict resolution, peacekeeping, peace negotiations, and the reconstruction of local communities.

Over the past years, DWS has increased involvement with Res. 1325 and are currently also part of a national WPS-network. As Denmark has secured a seat in the United Nations Security Council (2025-2026), our focus the following years will be on advocating that Denmark prioritize women's role in securing peace and security during conflict and war.

In 1871 DWS was founded by Fredrik Bajer. Fredrik Bajer was a known pacifist who was active in peacekeeping, for which he won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1908. Peacekeeping is in DWS' DNA.

You can follow DWS on social media ([Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#)) or visit [www.danskkvindesamfund.dk](http://www.danskkvindesamfund.dk).

# DEUTSCHER FRAUENRING (DFR), GERMANY

## REPORTED BY MARION BÖKER

Since its founding, the DFR stands for democracy and peace, and against fascism.

We urgently recommend IAW to undertake everything possible to establish global peace. Let us focus on uniting women — including diaspora and minority women — for a feminist path to peace. Marion Böker started the initiative in the European Women's Lobby (EWL) in 2022 and included IAW speakers and IAW's Human Rights Commission and Peace Commission in the webinar on 12 April 2024. This will culminate in the EWL's upcoming Peace Summit.

IAW should loudly call for a global sustainable peace; IAW should call on UN and regional entities to put all measures in place to defend democracy and human rights and to act united through diplomacy, taking all possible political actions against dictatorship and fascism. We ask IAW to call for the reform of the UN Security Council (UNSC) to make the UNSC a democratic body representing all UN members on an equal level, and to fulfill its mandate in the UN Charter to keep peace.

### Annual Federal DFR Webinars 2023 and up-coming 2024

The DFR's Federal Seminar was held 23-26 October 2023, on the theme of **"Democracy under Pressure – Strengthening the Feminist Perspective for a Just and Inclusive Society."** You can find the PROGRAMME here <chrome-extension://efaidnbnmnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://deutscher-frauenring.de/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Vorlaeufiges-Programm-BFS-2023.pdf>

The Seminar was a response to the rise of the anti-democracy and anti-gender movement in Germany and beyond. It aimed to build strong coalitions and resistance against the alt-right movement and its threats against democracy. We presented services and projects to boldly advocate for an all-inclusive gender-equal democratic society.

Our annual theme for the 2024 DFR Federal Seminar is **"Social Inequalities in Germany – A Critical Feminist Perspective of Diverse Realities of Women's Life."** The theme derives from the CSW68 priority theme, the war against Ukraine, inflation, and the Caring Economy we strive for.

In 2022 DFR joined a new network on Women's Health and the Alliance for Good Birth, stemming from the 2022 alternative report for CEDAW about alarming birth-related health issues. Because of shifting budget priorities, our health systems suffer, providing less support for gender-related health services, social security, and mental health issues.



## **2023- 2024 Solidarity with the Iranian, Êzîdî, Kurdish and Afghan "Jin, Jiyan, AZADI" movement - For a One Women's Movement Voice on Peace, Freedom and Rights**

The DFR's International Affairs Committee continues its cooperation with activists, including the Êzîdî Women's Councils in Germany, Taje in Shengal/Iraq, the Women's Library, Archives and Research Center in Suleymania/Iraq, and its branch in Brussels/Belgium. On 3 August 2023, Marion Böker, Chair of the International Affairs Committee, gave a keynote speech before the Êzîdî Community in Berlin on "Commemoration of the Genocide/Feminized in Shengal/Iraq 2014"; she spoke about how to join forces to prevent another one. On 28 July 2024, she spoke on the same topic at an Iraqi conference; on 3 August 2024, she spoke on legal changes needed in Iraq and strategic solidarity at Bebelplatz/Berlin. In February 2024 she represented DFR on a panel of the European Êzîdî Women's Councils' conference in the European Parliament. Êzîdî, Kurdish, Iranian and Afghan women are role models. We extremely regret the withdrawal of the international missions from Afghanistan and the harmful Taliban's Gender Apartheid Regime. War crimes especially against women and femicide are on the rise: we must boldly engage to end this.

### **Alliance for CEDAW Germany**

Among other gender-equality objectives, the DFR has worked as part of the CEDAW Alliance to advocate for implementing the Concluding Observations of May 2024. As discussed in our preparatory meetings with the International Women's Rights Watch in Geneva, we proposed a webinar with International and European CEDAW Alliances/Coalitions on de-colonialisation. Our position is that colonialisation is a harmful root cause of crises and conflicts, and that each national (alternative) report under CEDAW should recommend that our governments take measures to effectively eliminate the issues still impacting women in colonised regions.

### **German CSO Network For UNSC Res 1325: Feminist Foreign Policy**

Our German CSO Network for UNSCR 1325 WPS focused in 2023 and 2024 on the new draft for the National Action Plan IV on which we are in consultative dialogue with the Foreign Office and eight other federal ministries. Now, the concepts of the Agenda for Women, Peace and Security (WPS), Human Rights, and Feminist Foreign Policy are interconnected. In July 2023 we published a Policy Paper "[Approaching a Feminist Foreign Policy in Germany](#)" and a DFR press release on the [DFR webpage](#). We also held discussions with Annalena Baerbock, Bureau of the German Foreign Minister; Tobias Lindner, State Minister; and the WPS and Human Rights units; and in 2023 we consulted with the Foreign Office on a series of workshops.

## Campaigning for Parity in all Parliaments - and the EU Elections 2024

The DFR used its Instagram account to urge everyone to vote in the EU elections, urging voters to support candidates who enshrine women's rights issues in their work agenda. We also joined an event in May, sponsored by the German Foundation on Gender Equality, featuring EU election candidates, and expressed our expectations for the next EU legislature. The DFR continued its campaign for 50% parity of women in all parliaments by an electoral reform. This was also supported by the CEDAW Committee at its May 2023 session in Germany. Our campaign, now based on CEDAW's obligatory human rights call on Germany, is ongoing.

## 2023-2024 Up-valuing Care Work

In 2020 the DFR joined the National Alliance of Women's NGOs which advocates for the expansion of childcare in companies and public childcare coverage, including additional childcare sites and qualified educators. The Alliance calls for the deletion of parental-paid childcare, especially since mothers cannot afford this; the Alliance also calls for fair distribution of gainful employment and care work. On 7 December 2023 we organised an online event, "Double burden of care work and employment - How is there room for the political participation of women?" with Heidi Lyck (VdK Nord) and Elke Schilling (Silbernetz).

## Istanbul Convention: Advocacy for the EU Directive against Domestic Violence against Women

At the Istanbul Convention in Germany, the DFR took part in the advocacy and the review processes. Of particular concern is the blockade by the German and French Ministers for Justice against the **EU Directive Against Domestic Violence Against Women's** inclusion of 'rape' as a form of violence against women and girls. The DFR joined the EWL and the National Council of German Women's Organizations in dialogues with the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Gender Equality, and a number of Members of the Federal Parliament to include 'rape' in the EU Directive, but without success. The Directive was adopted, and we will follow up in the next five years to include rape in the upcoming update to the Directive.

## Ending FGM/C in Germany and Beyond

Within the national NGO network [INTEGRA](#), the DFR continued its long support for better prevention and protection for women targeted by FGM/C. In 2024 the network is focusing on better financing for German counseling centers and experts. We also focused on providing support to women in Gambia, where an initiative urged parliament to cancel the 2016 law against FGM/C. Our advocacy with other global players finally was successful.

## DFR's Long-term Partnership in West Africa — now coordinated by Julia Schiller

The DFR continues its support in **Bukina Faso**, focusing on ending FGM/C by providing family planning services and raising awareness by community counselors. The DFR also works through its Youth Education Partner partner in **Togo**, focusing on education for economic independence. We note that the IAW Water and Pads projects have taken over for Gudrun Haupter, who recently passed away.

## Safe and Free Abortion as a Human Right

The DFR continues its advocacy with an NGO alliance for a free and self-determined decision for abortion and for women's full sexual reproductive rights, according to CEDAW, CESC, and WHO standards; DFR also fights for abortion's de-criminalisation. In summer 2022, §219a was deleted from the German Criminal Code, which violated the right to access safe abortion and criminalized those who provide the surgery. The focus now is on removing German Criminal Code §218, which for 150 years has criminalised women and controlled their body rights. See DFR's [Position Paper](#). Along with 85 NGOs, the DFR supported this issue by the Alternative report under CEDAW, delivered in May 2023 by [German Alliance for Choice \(GAfC\)](#).



# THE HODA SHARAWI – EGYPTIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION, EGYPT

## Background:

The Association was a pioneer in defending and enhancing women's social and political rights since its establishment by Mrs. Hoda Sharawi — the pioneer of Egyptian feminist movement — in March 1923, just before joining IAW conference in Rome in the same month. She established, among other things, the first nursery in Egypt and a high school for girls back in 1907. She gave scholarships to students of both sexes to study abroad. She devoted most of her wealth for the cause of women and children and for women's emancipation. She had a vision and a program of action that has been followed and developed along the years through its association, which managed to sustain and flourish, thanks to its solid organization based on an elected board of fifteen ladies by the general assembly of all members.

The activities of Hoda Sharawi Association are centered around community sustainable development through focusing on women and children for the wellbeing of the society. It is a nonpartisan, apolitical organization with a relationship with about 70 feminist organizations in Egypt. It also is a member of the Arab Feminist Union (AFU), since Mrs Hoda Sharawi established it in Cairo in 1944 as umbrella organization for feminist associations from Arab countries.



*Google Doodle celebrating Hoda Sharawi's Birthday*

### **The multitude of activities that the Association is keen to handle:**

1. Training centers including sewing, needlework, and other handicrafts to teach women according to their abilities to increase their income after mastering learning to become a productive family and then hold exhibitions to market their products.
2. A family planning center and a medical clinic for maternal care during pregnancy and after childbirth, to guide women to the appropriate family planning method and to provide them with health and social care.
3. Cultural activity, in partnership with the Ministry of Health: conducting monthly health awareness seminars on violence against women and health initiatives, early detection of tumors and maternal health, kidney disease, the harms of early marriage, female circumcision FGM, and chronic diseases.
4. Sponsoring orphans by taking care of them on all occasions and helping them after reaching the age of maturity or completing their studies to get legitimate work after graduation or obtaining a residential apartment or otherwise.
5. Hostel with nominal rent for female Egyptian students from outside Cairo who are studying at Cairo University in medicine, pharmacy, etc., because of its proximity to the university and their social care.
6. Activity to help breadwinner mothers (social assistance) on all occasions and care for them to live a decent life.
7. Model nurseries to provide children with care, education, and cultural skills to help working mothers.
8. A theater, owned by Hoda Sharawi, to develop high taste and artistic skills, with the help of the Acting Professions Syndicate and theater training courses for children.
9. A specialized library that chronicles the pioneers of the women's movement and the Information Technology Center, which serves a large number of students and interested audience under the supervision of specialists in the association.
10. Hoda Sharawi Preparatory School for Girls, under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, helps girls complete their studies, develop their skills, and provide health care.



Hoda Sharawi Association has a long history behind it and a bright future ahead of it with the will of the successive generations of the devoted people to the cause of women and children.



*Hoda Sharawi Association Board Members, 2024*

# NEDERLANDSE VERENIGING VOOR VROUWENBELANGEN, THE NETHERLANDS

REPORTED BY ARTEMIS WESTENBERG

## **Hidden poverty, Tax inspectors' bias – The realities of the 10th richest country in the World**

This year I was asked to pitch a speech to the Dutch government delegation on Poverty. I gathered information about what keeps the poor downtrodden by asking the poor directly, through a grass-roots organization (@ArmoedeMaaktMoedeloos), what they thought about the systems to assist the poor in the Netherlands. The answers were insightful and demonstrated, again, that the poor do not lack character or wits, they lack cash.

The **#1** problem for the poor is that they are denied agency in their lives. People are not allowed to determine where they shop for groceries and are not allowed to regularly eat together; where the non-poor are allowed to give friends a birthday gift, the poor are not. This unequal treatment is in direct violation of Article 1 of the Dutch constitution that reads 'All that are in the Netherlands, will, in equal circumstances, be treated equally'.

The **#2** problem for the poor is that the co-pay for health of 385 euros, plus extra co-pays for many medications, keeps them from visiting the family doctor. Also the for-profit healthcare insurance, which is compulsory in the Netherlands, is preventing the sick from seeing medical specialists. The money for treatments runs out long before the year runs out. Due to this for-profit limited system, setting up an appointment with a medical specialist becomes impossible around September, and the patient has to wait for the new year to be able to see a specialist.

The **#3** problem is loneliness, due to rules about sharing shopping and eating out together. Also loneliness is exacerbated by the high cost of public transport, preventing people from visiting family and friends. Loneliness is bad for health, a proven medical fact.

## **New Social welfare system is being set up (VIM = Verandering Inkomensondersteuning voor Mensen / Changes income support for People)**

Vrouwenbelangen was part of the NGO consultation by the government on how to change the income support system into a more fair system, that allows people agency and prevents the terrible bias that ruled the system for decades, causing misery and hardships, especially to women. Without our participation, 14 of the 56 points of interest would not have been considered. We intend to monitor the writing of the new laws very closely. We are having ongoing talks with members of parliament (house and senate) to ensure a speedy acceptance of the new ideas into laws.

## **CSW & UN conferences – How to leverage the full width of the Dutch NGOs**

The Netherlands Association for Women's Rights, Female Labour and Equal Citizenship (est. 1894) is deeply vested in the UN Commission on the Status of Women and has been sponsoring representatives for decades. In 2024, rising antisemitism made travel to New York more iffy, following the Hamas October 7 attack. In the Netherlands, the Association For Women's Rights, has condemned these atrocities in writing and by being present in demonstrations in favour of freeing the hostages.

The CSW68 this year saw again a large group of women and some men from Dutch women's rights organizations and other NGOs travel to New York. WhatsApp was very useful for keeping in contact with the delegates in New York and with those following the proceedings online.

This year preparations for the CSW started in June 2023, with the NLS Association For Women's Rights (Vrouwenbelangen, VB for short) being a very active partner in writing the Zero Draft of the Dutch government by September 2023. This involvement is instrumental in bringing problems to the attention of the Dutch government. We are proud that our organisation has had an outside influence on the CSW preparations, the text of the Zero Draft in the Netherlands, and the subsequent Zero Draft of the EU; and that VB subsidised my participation at CSW68.

Again, the Dutch government delegation gave a daily briefing during the two weeks of the CSW68 to the NGO representatives. This year, as the Netherlands was the facilitator of the CSW68 negotiations of the Agreed Conclusions, these daily briefings were held at the Dutch UN Embassy by one of the negotiating Dutch diplomats. The Dutch side event was held at the Embassy as well, as was a thorough meeting with the Dutch cabinet member in charge of Emancipation and the Ambassador Yoka Brandt. As always, I managed to have a determining input in this meeting, seating myself strategically between ambassador and her senior policy advisor and opposite the Dutch cabinet member, HE Robert Dijkgraaf, and the director of the Emancipation and his senior policy advisor.

During the week I managed to grab the microphones in many side events, starting at day one, which led to the saying 'Artemis is at it again'.

### **CSW68 – Every Theme is worth fighting for**

Concerning the CSW68 theme, VB has been very vocal in preparation (and in debriefing of CSW67), and strengthening their usefulness by inviting experts on the various financial topics that are encompassed in the theme of the CSW68: "(..)addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective." These expert sessions are what is needed to come up with useful ideas for the Zero Draft well before the draft is written by the Foreign Office and handed over for additional review in September.



## **Netherlands Women's Council – Cooperation strengthens our national messaging to politics**

The Netherlands Women's Council (in Dutch: Nederlandse Vrouwenraad, NVR for short) is an umbrella organisation representing over 1 million (out of a national population of 17.5 million) female inhabitants in the Netherlands. Meetings, workshops, events, General Assemblies, and meetings of the presidents of the member organisations of the NVR, are always well attended by (board)members of VB. And attendance means active participation. That being so, cooperation between VB and NVR has strengthened over the last year. PrincessesDay (a spiel on the word 'PrincesDay' for the General Assembly of Dutch Parliament every year's third Tuesday in September) is a yearly event that the VB membership heavily participates in, making up 10% of the attendees each year.

## **NAP1325 – Women need to be at the table as equals**

Over the years, VB has been involved with National Action Plan Resolution 1325 and with annual reports submitted by the Dutch government on the progress of implementing its articles in the Netherlands' policies. VB is an active participant in any meeting concerning peace and consultations in accordance with the NAP1325. VB pledged its contributions for the NAP1325 again this year. Also, VB contributes to the shadow report on the NAP1325 by the government, and will speak up at national meetings concerning this important subject of incorporating women in forging peace and in designing what their country will look like after peace has been established.

## **Convention of Istanbul – The Dutch government reporting and the reality**

Again, VB contributed extensively to the GREVIO (Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, for which the Dutch Aleid VAN DEN BRINK is First Vice-President) on what we, the NGOs in the Netherlands, see that our government is really doing vis a vis the Convention of Istanbul.

Regrettably, the Dutch NGOs collectively concluded that our Dutch government is mostly providing lip service to many of the Convention's articles. Femicide and other violence against women are not named as such, which results in lacklustre actions. Research into the practices of the Foreign Office regarding NGOs/Women in countries that the Netherlands supports taught us that gender discrimination is rife, within the Foreign Office workforce and in execution of policies worldwide by the Foreign Office. Furthermore, problematic in the Netherlands itself is unwillingness to report violence against women accurately, resulting in national statistics that are far from reality and thus an unwillingness to enact better laws to curb violence against women. Ironically, the police and other government agencies claim computer programs are not able to gather more precise data on perpetrators and their victims. Thus, lack of accurate data makes the plight of women invisible. The report by the Dutch Government on the Istanbul Convention practices in the Netherlands paints a far too optimistic picture in the Netherlands.

## Complaint at the UN CSW69 and the OHCHR/CEDAW on the lack of (peri)menopausal healthcare

In the Netherlands, 4.8 million women are perimenopausal / menopausal. Regrettably, healthcare for women in this phase of their lives is non-existent.

**We, the Netherlands Association for Women's Interests, Women's Work and Equal Citizenship, with ECOSOC accreditation, are filing a Complaint of discrimination of the 4,808,539 million women in the Netherlands, out of the 8.8 million women in the Netherlands overall, on the basis of their age-related health-needs.**

In the Netherlands, access to Hormone Replace Therapy on a safe level of hormones is hardly ever offered to women in the age group. Even when women ask their medical healthcare professionals for HRT, they are sent home without it.

- Menopause, the journal of the Menopause Society, volume 31, issue 5 2024 – study 363 [Menopause [31\(5\):p 363-371, May 2024.](#)]

Use of menopausal hormone therapy beyond age 65 years and its effects on women's health outcomes by types, routes and doses.

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38595196/> Full text available for free

**NOTE:** Our ECOSOC-accredited organisation is composed of mostly female members in perimenopause or menopause, including myself. Therefore my name '**Artemis Westenberg**', and also the name of my organisation can be displayed as plaintiff.

On 14 June 14 2024 a large gathering of women's groups of the Netherlands gathered in Amsterdam, tasked our organisation with bringing this problem to your attention on behalf of all women in the Netherlands, whether in (peri-) menopause yet or not.

# NTENGWE FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, ZIMBABWE

## Introduction

The past two years have been transformative and challenging for Ntengwe, reflecting our unwavering commitment to addressing critical issues faced by women in our region. Our initiatives have primarily focused on climate change adaptation, food security, and livestock sustainability. These efforts have been driven by the urgent need to mitigate the impacts of climate change, drought, and related crises affecting women and communities in Zimbabwe and beyond.

## Key Initiatives and Focus Areas

### 1. Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience Building

**Objective:** Empower women to adapt to climate change and enhance community resilience.

#### Activities:

- **Workshops and Training:** We conducted multiple workshops on climate change adaptation strategies, emphasizing sustainable agricultural practices and water conservation techniques.
- **Community-Based Projects:** Collaborated with local communities to implement small-scale irrigation systems and rainwater harvesting projects.
- **Policy Advocacy:** Engaged with local and national governments to influence policies supporting climate resilience and sustainable development.

#### Results:

- Trained over 500 women in climate-smart agriculture.
- Successfully implemented 10 community-based water conservation projects.
- Contributed to the formulation of local policies on climate resilience.



## 2. Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture

**Objective:** Enhance food security through sustainable agricultural practices and support for livestock.

### Activities:

- **Goat Training Centre in Chidobe Village:** Established a Goat Training Centre in collaboration with Rural Environment and Animal Protection (REAP) to educate women on goat farming, nutrition, and disease control.
- **Seed Distribution Programs:** Distributed drought-resistant seeds to women farmers to promote crop diversity and resilience.
- **Organic Farming Initiatives:** Supported the transition to organic farming practices to improve soil health and increase crop yields.

### Results:

- Empowered 300 women with skills in goat farming and livestock management.
- Increased crop yields by 20% through the distribution of drought-resistant seeds.
- Improved soil health and reduced chemical inputs in farming practices.



### 3. Livestock Sustainability and Disease Control

**Objective:** Mitigate the impact of livestock diseases and improve livestock sustainability.

**Activities:**

- **Veterinary Services:** Provided regular veterinary check-ups and vaccinations for livestock in collaboration with local veterinarians.
- **Disease Management Training:** Trained women on early detection and management of common livestock diseases.
- **Improved Shelter and Feeding Practices:** Promoted better livestock shelter and feeding practices to enhance animal health and productivity.

**Results:**

- Reduced livestock mortality rates by 15% through improved veterinary care.
- Trained 200 women in effective disease management techniques.
- Enhanced livestock productivity and health through better shelter and feeding practices.



## **Most Burning Issues for Women**

### **Climate Change**

Women in our region are disproportionately affected by climate change, facing challenges such as water scarcity, reduced agricultural productivity, and increased workload in securing household resources. Our initiatives have aimed to build resilience and adaptive capacity among women to cope with these challenges.

### **Drought**

Recurrent droughts have exacerbated food and water insecurity, placing immense pressure on women who are primarily responsible for household sustenance. Our focus on sustainable agriculture and water conservation has been critical in mitigating the impacts of drought.

### **Loss of Food and Livestock**

The loss of food and livestock due to climate change, disease, and inadequate resources remains a pressing issue. Our efforts in promoting sustainable farming practices, improving livestock health, and ensuring food security have been pivotal in addressing this challenge.

### **Conclusion**

The past years have underscored the importance of empowering women to tackle climate change, enhance food security, and sustain livestock health. Despite significant progress, ongoing support and collaboration are essential to address the persistent and emerging challenges faced by women in our region. Ntengwe remains committed to driving positive change and fostering resilience among the communities we serve.

### **Future Directions**

As we look ahead, our focus will be on:

- Expanding climate resilience programs.
- Enhancing support for sustainable agriculture.
- Strengthening livestock health initiatives.
- Advocating for gender-responsive policies and practices at local and national levels.

Together, we can build a sustainable and resilient future for women and communities in our region.

# WOMEN'S ELECTORAL LOBBY, AUSTRALIA

REPORTED BY JOZEFA SOBSKI

The year has been marked by a move from active state groups in NSW and, to some extent in Victoria and South Australia, to a focus on national work with the election of a new National Coordinating Committee (NCC) which meets bi-monthly via Zoom. Three working groups have been established: Policy, Communications, and General Management. In the intervening months these three working groups meet to advance the work of the organization.

WEL has been a member of the **Equality Rights Alliance (ERA)** and WEL's Convenor has represented WEL on its governing body the Advocacy and Policy Advisory Council.

## WEL's Work

WEL's work involved policy development and analysis, political campaigning, monitoring of Government policies and programs, collaboration with peak national bodies on relevant areas of policy and programs, lobbying Government through direct communication and representation as well as social media commentary and general media releases on issues of national importance to advancing women's equality and ensuring their safety. The organization issued bi-monthly newsletters.

With a Federal Government led by Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Senator the Hon. Katy Gallagher, Minister for Women, WEL saw the launch on March 7th of the **Working for Women, National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality** to which WEL contributed. This ten-year strategy will guide government and whole-of-community action to help make Australia one of the best countries in the world for equality between men and women. It has ambitious targets, and these will need to be matched by Federal budget allocations. WEL has issued its comments and has been monitoring progress with implementation. There will be a **Status of Women Report Card** issued to the Australian Parliament.

WEL members attended three important national gatherings this year: Elsie Women's Refuge Conference held in March at the University of Technology, Sydney; the ERA Gender Equality Symposium: Working Together for Women held in Melbourne; and the Human Rights Commission's Free+Equal Conference in Sydney. The Elsie Conference gave our members the opportunity to review the efficacy and impact of current women's refuge and domestic violence policy and services across Australia with a particular focus on issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The conference outcomes will help inform WEL's Ending Violence policies.

The ERA Symposium prepared us to address the future of work together. The symposium addressed the following issues: Gender Responsive Climate Action, Models for Sustainable Feminist Advocacy, Intergenerational Advocacy, Gender Responsive Government Systems and Budgeting, The Future of Human Rights in Australia, Women's Leadership and Public Participation. It was followed by a members' meeting addressing how collaboration among the 70-plus organisations might continue under a new National Women's Alliance structure.

The Free+Equal Conference called on the Australian Government to introduce a Human Rights Act to increase protection for a range of rights not sufficiently protected under existing laws. Our Policy Working Group has commenced working on our longer-term campaign and other activities as well as a national policy.

WEL members have continued their participation in **ERA's** important work with government agencies. This work under the current ERA Women's Alliance will end this year and will have to be undertaken under a possible new model of collaboration among women's and feminist organisations. WEL is awaiting the decision of the national tender process managed by the Federal Office for Women on the National Women's Alliance.

WEL joined other women's organisations in the Budget 2024-2025 lock-up and undertook a detailed analysis of the Federal Budget on which WEL issued its views through a Media release and other commentary.

WEL's policy work in preparation for the Federal Election in 2025 is focussed on Work and Decent Incomes for Everyone: Income Equality for Women; Affordable and Safe Housing for Women; Women's Health and Wellbeing; Reducing and Eliminating Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence against Women; Strengthening Women's Representation with a Focus on Local Government, Vocational Education, and Training, Early Childhood Education and Care; Human Rights/Anti-Discrimination/Culture and Intersectionality; Equitable and Inclusive Action on Climate Change.





# WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT CENTRE OF INDIA, INDIA

REPORTED BY DR. VIJAYA LAKSHMI

As a part of the Education Commission activities, the Youth Enrichment Program was inaugurated at the YMA Hall in Thiruvananthapuram, marking a significant milestone in empowering the youth through education and community engagement.

Dr. Vijayalekshmy, Chairperson of WHI, delivered an insightful address, underscoring the program's core objective of nurturing holistic development among the youth. She emphasized the imperative of transcending conventional academic learning and highlighted the program's commitment to offering diverse educational opportunities catering to all age groups and the role played by IAW through its affiliates.

The inauguration ceremony exemplified the program's inclusive approach, actively involving youth from Anganwadi centers and fostering a sense of community-driven participation.

A key component of the program was the energy efficiency session, which shed light on the pivotal role of energy conservation in mitigating climate change and reducing pollution. Through interactive demonstrations comparing traditional incandescent bulbs with energy-efficient LED technology and introducing BLDC fans, participants gained practical insights into sustainable living practices and environmental stewardship.

The program also featured engaging sessions on Spoken English and Vedic Maths, aimed at enhancing communication skills and fostering innovative problem-solving approaches among the youth. Through group discussions on the relevance of exams and homework, participants explored diverse perspectives, promoting critical thinking and collaborative learning.



Moreover, awareness programs addressing pressing social issues such as drug abuse and sexual violence against children underscored the program's commitment to holistic youth development. Participants gained valuable insights into the detrimental effects of substance abuse and received guidance on preventive measures and support resources.

Cultural enrichment sessions, poetry recitations, and interactive workshops on design and creativity provided avenues for self-expression and artistic exploration, enriching participants' cultural and creative competencies.

Furthermore, sessions on health and nutrition, career guidance, and digital literacy empowered participants with essential life skills and knowledge, equipping them to make informed choices and pursue their aspirations with confidence.

In conclusion, the Youth Enrichment Program stands as a testament to the transformative power of education and community engagement in shaping the future leaders of tomorrow. Through its multifaceted approach, the program fosters holistic development, empowers youth with essential skills, and nurtures a sense of social responsibility, laying the foundation for a brighter and more inclusive society.

The Youth Enrichment Program continued its impactful journey with enlightening sessions aimed at addressing crucial societal issues and fostering personal development among the youth. Here are the highlights of the recent sessions:

### **Awareness Program on Drug Abuse**

The session delved into the complex issue of drug abuse, shedding light on the factors contributing to addiction and the insidious nature of drug trafficking. Participants gained insights into the manipulation tactics employed by traffickers and the detrimental effects of drug addiction on individuals and society. The discussion also highlighted the importance of initiatives like the Vimukthi mission in combating substance abuse and promoting public awareness. Additionally, emphasis was placed on the role of family communication and supportive relationships in preventing juvenile drug misuse.

### **Children's Rights and Sexual Violence Awareness**

This session focused on empowering youth with knowledge about their rights and addressing the sensitive issue of sexual violence against children. Participants learned about fundamental children's rights and practical strategies for preventing sexual violence, including understanding personal boundaries and recognizing signs of abuse. Through demonstrations and discussions, common misconceptions surrounding sexual violence were dispelled, and participants were equipped with the necessary information to protect themselves and others.



### **Poetry Appreciation Session**

The session introduced participants to the profound poem "Aandupirappoli" by Ayyappa Panicker, encouraging them to explore its themes of social harmony and community well-being. Mr. Priyadas provided insightful analysis, facilitating a deeper understanding and appreciation of the poem's message. Through creative expression, participants were invited to illustrate their interpretations, fostering a sense of artistic exploration and cultural appreciation.

### **Awareness Class on Energy Efficiency and Life Skills**

In this dynamic session, participants engaged in interactive activities focused on energy conservation, the importance of spoken English, and the significance of music in daily life. Through demonstrations and discussions, participants learned practical strategies for optimizing energy use and enhancing communication skills. The session underscored the importance of sustainable living practices and the multifaceted benefits of language proficiency and artistic expression.

Overall, these sessions exemplify the Youth Enrichment Program's commitment to holistic development and empowering youth with knowledge and skills to navigate contemporary challenges effectively. Through engaging discussions, interactive activities, and cultural enrichment, participants are equipped to thrive personally and contribute positively to their communities.

ASSOCIATE  
MEMBERS

MEMBRES  
ASSOCIÉS

# BALI WOMEN'S UNION OF FARMING GROUPS (BAWUFAG), CAMEROON

REBECCA JUGA AZOADAM

On behalf of BAWUFAG, I would like to appreciate the working partnership between IAW and BAWUFAG. I also want to congratulate the new IAW president, Alison Brown, who is a longtime friend of mind.

- BAWUFAG has been an affiliate organization with IAW since 2003, following a conference I attended with CTA in the Netherlands. IAW has fostered the activities of BAWUFAG in various capacities. We have worked as partners in the areas of human rights, violence against women and the girl child, the water and pads project, promoting education of the girl child, creating awareness about the political rights of women, etc.
- 2023 kicked off with the Water and Pads project, which was greatly appreciated. We are thankful to IAW, especially to Ursula Nakamura and Heidi Bodmer, who preserved the project until we were able to execute it at the Akam Bilingual School in Yaounde instead of the Government High School in Baliama, due to the crisis in that part of the country. BAWUFAG had to create a new branch in Yaounde in order to run the activities smoothly.
- It should be noted that women and girls are displaced all over the country due to continuous unrest and instability in the Northwest Province of the country. There is still a lot of kidnapping and trafficking, because when someone disappears, you never know whether the person was murdered, sold to someone in another country,, or simply thrown in a dark ditch somewhere.
- Our continuous collaboration and networking with IAW over the years has been a stronghold that continues to sustain us. IAW's persistence, perseverance, and encouragement will never be underestimated, especially as the Water and Pads project had to be set aside for four years in order for us to settle down and peacefully execute the project.
- We appreciate the work of the IAW executive team, including President Alison Brown, for continuously believing in BAWUFAG, despite the challenges that we have had since 2017. We will continue to seek your fervent support, as we have crumbled from grace to grass. When IAW members visited BAWUFAG a couple of years ago, they found our big office, our literacy center, our poultry farms, and our farms for cultivation of crops. Today we are crawling like a little child, but with our faith and the hope that IAW is still our mother organization, we are sure to get up and walk again while in Yaounde. Long live IAW, long live IAW President Alison Brown, long live BAWUFAG.

# SAROJ NALINI DUTT MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION, INDIA

GENERAL SECRETARY APARNA GHOSE

A year passed and once more we are given the opportunity to review our work. The Saroj Nalini Dutt Memorial Association has kept its flag flying through the wonderful effort of the members and the staff. I will not go into the details of the working of our individual units as the departmental Secretaries have reviewed the working of their respective departments. We had to make certain changes in our Bank Account adhering to the Current Banking rules.

With the passage of time, our building is showing signs of age and at times the situation became crucial. We have sought corporate help, and one of our senior members arranged for a handsome amount, which is being used for the much-needed rooftop repair. Our heartfelt gratitude goes out for this timely help.

Another concern is that lately we are not finding interested students in the Adult Education Department. The teachers have repeatedly expressed their concern on this. The Old Age homes are also lacking in residents.

Members must be aware that we are almost completing our centennial journey, and in this respect we solicit the co-operation and participation of all our members and staff.

My sincere thanks to the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Joint Treasurer, without whose help I could not have shouldered these responsibilities. Our ever-dependable staff deserves mention.

Let us all keep working together and let our Association scale new heights.



IAW PROJECTS

PROJETS IAW

# WATER AND PADS PROJECT

CO-COORDINATORS URSULA NAKAMURA AND HEIDI BODMER

## **The Water and Pads Project WP is more needed than ever!**

Let's take a look back! In 2017, the WP project was born almost spontaneously out of a spontaneous spark together. We had heard the WHO's alarm call that millions of girls and women worldwide were being discriminated against because of their monthly periods. Incredibly quickly, our IAW colleagues in Africa and Asia agreed to help ensure that schoolgirls in remote rural areas would have a basic knowledge of menstruation. Then without a lot of big words, it all resulted in a joint action of many IAW member organizations showing solidarity across all borders: The WP project could start already in January 2019.

## **In memory of Gudrun Haupter**

At this point, we want to remember Gudrun Haupter from Germany, who, together with U Nakamura, has been the Coordinator of this project since its start. Thanks to Gudrun's enormous experience in communication with African IAW members and her great personal engagement, the project was based on an excellent "foundation." Even when Gudrun was severely ill, this project was of great concern to her. Gudrun passed away on 13 January 2024. We shall keep her in our memory.

## **The WP project today**

Now, the WP project is well-established in over 20 schools. The 10 participating IAW organisations have established regular contacts with "their" schools, and they have organised perfectly suited WP events together with the responsible persons. They have also promoted the project by doing an incredible amount of advertising for the public in general.

## **Lessons learnt**

In the meantime, we have also learned a lot about the completely different living conditions, be it in Europe, North America, or a country of the Global South. Printing and shipping educational booklets from Switzerland to our IAW colleagues might be easy, but heaps of problems might arise at the destination place from customs or corrupt local structures. Now, thanks to their careful investigations, our IAW colleagues are organizing the printing of educational booklets on-site at reasonable costs.

As mentioned, the WP project is well established in many schools, but everywhere, there is a great need for menstrual health education. Understandably, our IAW colleagues want to expand their activities to new schools, but unfortunately, there are clear limits due to our scarce financial resources.

WP events carried out from September 2023 until June 2024: (AP 1,2,4)



<p><b>September -December 2023:</b>  BAWUFAG Cameroon  RENATA Cameroon  SANDEPANI India  SOFEDDEC DR Congo  WCCF Zimbabwe  ZAW Zambia</p>	<p><b>January – June 2024:</b>  RUWON Nepal  SOFEDDEC DR Congo  ZAW Zambia  <b>WP events planned 2nd half year 2024</b>  BAWUFAG Cameroon  CEFAP Cameroon  SANDEPANI India  WCCF Zimbabwe</p>
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### Production of reusable pads

Recently, it became increasingly evident that reusable pads for demonstration and distribution are also necessary for a good presentation of the WP project. As our financial resources are very limited, we could only start with a pilot project based on the excellent proposal presented by Anne Yotchou, Coordinator of CEFAP Cameroon.

With used sewing machines donated by Swiss benefactors and with an extra-funding now a group of displaced women is producing 3'000 reusable pads at Yaoundé on a voluntary basis. The first patch of 1'000 pieces is now being shared among three IAW membership organisations in Cameroon: BAWUFAG, CEFAP and RENATA.

All three are planning their respective WP activities in the 2nd half of 2024. They are very much looking forward to distributing these pads to the schoolgirls!

### Fundraising

As we all know, the WP project can only continue to exist thanks to a sound financial basis.

With a view to the year 2025, we are now intensively involved in fundraising wherever we can.

We are therefore very grateful to the Basel section of ADF-SVF Suisse for selling roses again during the 1 May celebrations. All the proceeds went to the WP project. Passersby in the streets were highly interested in this unusual topic. Many flyers were distributed, and often, very interesting discussions ensued. There is also a high acceptance in parishes or other local gatherings, where we can sometimes receive donations.

### Special WP website

<https://www.iawwaterandpads.com/english/donate/>

The special WP website also plays an important role for everyone involved. The local IAW coordinators are always writing a report about their WP activities. They are published together with photos from the event on the website in English and French. This fulfils two objectives.

On the one hand, it is an excellent reference for potential donors, and on the other hand, it is very welcome publicity for the schools involved. This is particularly important for institutions located in remote areas without any internet connections, let alone having a website on their own!

### You can support the WP project by a donation:

Alliance Internationale des Femmes  
IBAN : CH96 0900 0000 9182 4969 4  
BIC/SWIFT Code: POFICHBEXXX  
Intended use: "Water and Pads Project"

**Thank you very much in advance!**



*CEFAP: One of the benevolent women producing reusable pads for schoolgirls at Yaoundé 2024.*



*Basel members of ADF-SVF are selling roses on 1st of May 2024 benefitting the Water and Pads project.*

### IAW Action Programme AP:

1 Elimination of Violence against Women and Girls / 2 Human Rights / 3 Climate Change / 4 Health / 5 Peace - Security / 6 Women in Economy / 7 Democracy;

# International Alliance of Women Annual Report 2023-24 Alliance Internationale des Femmes Rapport Annuel 2023-24

**International Alliance of Women Annual Report 2023-24**, is an open Forum for information and opinion on matters of importance to women. It is published by the International Alliance of Women.

**You can easily make a payment directly to IAW bank account by using the online payment system on our website. To do so, please go to the website: [www.womenalliance.org](http://www.womenalliance.org), choose JOIN US! MEMBERSHIP > Membership fee+Donation in the top menu and follow instructions.**

You may prefer instead to submit the fee via bank transfer. If so, please send the amount due to:

**Alliance Internationale des Femmes: Droits égaux-Responsabilités égales | Genève PostFinance, CH-3030, Bern, Switzerland | EURO account: IBAN: CH96 0900 0000 9182 4969 4 BIC/SWIFT : POFICHBEXXX | Bank address : Mingerstrasse 20, 3030 Bern, Switzerland.**

To avoid possible difficulties in the identification of the payment, we would be grateful if you could mention your name and purpose of payment in the subject of the transfer. Membership enquiries, change of address, and back numbers: contact the Membership Officer, **Lene Pind**, email: [members@womenalliance.org](mailto:members@womenalliance.org)

**Alliance Internationale des Femmes Rapport Annuel 2023-24**, publiées par l'Alliance Internationale des Femmes, constituent un forum ouvert pour l'information et l'opinion sur des question importantes pour les femmes.

**Il est facile de faire un versement direct sur le compte de l'AIF en utilisant le système de paiement en ligne sur notre site Web. Pour cela merci de vous rendre sur le site : [www.womanalliance.org](http://www.womanalliance.org) et de choisir JOIN US! MEMBERSHIP Membership fee+Donation du menu en haut de la page et de suivre les instructions.**

Vous pouvez aussi envoyer votre cotisation par transfert bancaire. Dans ce cas envoyer la somme à l'adresse suivante: **Alliance internationale des femmes. Droits égaux - responsabilités égales Genève | PostFinance, CH-3030, Bern, Switzerland | EURO account : iban CH96 0900 0000 9182 4969 4 | BIC/SWIFT : POFICHBEXXX | Adresse de la banque: Mingerstrasse 20, 3030 Bern, Switzerland.**

Afin d'éviter des problèmes d'identification du paiement nous vous serions reconnaissantes de bien vouloir mentionner votre nom, avec l'objet de votre transfert. Pour des informations concernant l'adhésion à l'AIF, pour informer des changements d'adresse, ou pour se procurer des vieux numéros particuliers, contacter l'Officier des adhérents, **Lene Pind**, email: [members@womenalliance.org](mailto:members@womenalliance.org)

