



# International Alliance of Women Annual Report 2025

*Alliance Internationale des Femmes Rapport  
Annuel 2025*



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# International Alliance of Women Annual Report 2025

## *Alliance Internationale des Femmes Rapport Annuel 2025*

International Alliance of Women is pleased to present the Annual Report for 2025. This is the last report for the Triennium and we hope that the information contained within gives you a good idea of the work your organisation has been doing to achieve Equal Rights - Equal Responsibilities at all levels of the women's movement gathered under the IAW umbrella.

Alliance internationale des femmes a le plaisir de présenter son rapport annuel pour 2025. Il s'agit du dernier rapport de la période triennale et nous espérons que les informations qu'il contient vous donneront une bonne idée du travail accompli par votre organisation pour parvenir à l'égalité des droits et des responsabilités à tous les niveaux du mouvement des femmes regroupé sous l'égide d'AIF.

**Alison Brown IAW President /Présidente de l'AIF**

**This Annual report was brought to you by a dedicated team: Kathleen Montgomery, Meenakshi Kumar, Lene Pind, and Holly Herbert.**

Thank you for your time, effort, and commitment, your work is truly appreciated.



INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN  
ALLIANCE INTERNATIONALE DES FEMMES

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*Water and Pads Team*



*Multicultural Meeting*



*IAW members together*



*IAW scarves*





Reports from the Board

Rapports du Conseil



# Report of the President

*Alison Brown*

The last year of the Triennium began full of optimism. We had new activists stepping into positions of responsibility and yet retained the counsel of experienced veterans.

We moved full speed ahead into the activities of CSW 69, “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century,” with a well-organized Task Force (Dr. Sibylle von Heydebrand, Kerstin Löffler, Jill Follows) shepherding the process. The delegates who invested time to comment on the issues to be discussed provided the basis for our official IAW Statement. CSW69 was to deal with the achievements since the Beijing Declaration and Plan for Action were agreed upon at the Fourth World Conference of Women thirty years ago. Our members rather pointed out the missed opportunities and remaining challenges in seven key areas of the Plan for Action —specifically, those in the areas of Education and Training of Women, Women and Health, Violence Against Women, Women and the Economy, Women and the Media, Women and the Environment, and The Girl Child.

Our own Parallel Event, “Beijing Declaration & Platform for Action: 30-year Review and Future Priorities for Women in Health & Decision Making,” organised by the Convenor of our Health Commission, Dr Uzma Gul, was well attended. IAW supported or cosponsored events held by our member organisations: “Revising the Action Framework for Youth Leadership in Collective Action for Gender-Just Climate Change Adaptation” (at which I spoke), organised by Women Empowerment and Human Resource Development Centre of India (WHI) with Dr. K.G. Vijayalakshmi; “Educating Women and Girls: Advancing their Empowerment and Equality,” organised by Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW); “Trapped in a Cycle of Abuse: Safeguarding Older Women’s Rights and Ensuring their Well-being,” organised by All Indian Women’s Conference (AIWC); “Young Women’s Leadership in Shaping a Peaceful Middle East Together,” organised by National Council of Jewish Women San Francisco (NCJW-SF); and “Services for Women and Girls Survivors of Human Trafficking,” also organised by National Council of Jewish Women San Francisco (NCJWSF) as well as San Francisco Collaborative Against Human Trafficking (SFCAHT) with Antonia Levine.

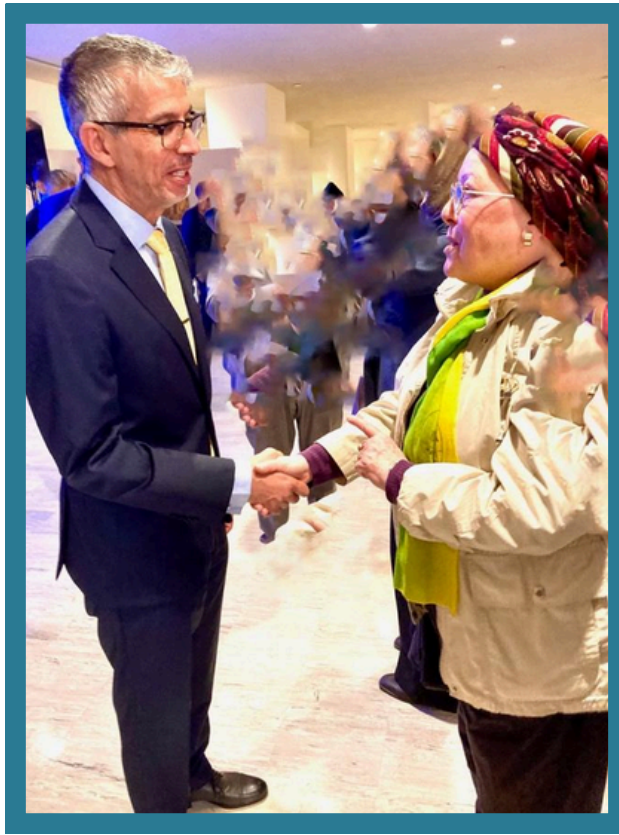


I personally attended events presented by our individual members Soon-Young Yoon (“Save Our Cities and Our Planet Through the Leadership of Women and Girls”) and Sung Sohn (“Women and Families in Conflict-related Sexual Violence”). Of course, I was also networking with other Parallel Event organisers, like Every Woman Treaty and MYAD, and spent a great deal of time in the UN itself, monitoring the statements of governments with whom our Affiliates and Associates would be working and learning a great deal at the Side Events on offer.

I and others of the delegation posted diligently on social media, spreading the word about the issues we were discussing and seeking resolutions for. Other delegates commented to us on our active presence, so the effort was successful. You can find me and International Alliance of Women on LinkedIn. The International Women’s News Vol. 120 No. 2, which followed the 69th Session, provides a good overview of the delegation’s experiences.

At the end of this cycle, a new Task Force for CSW70 was appointed: Eveline van Eerd, Natalie Fischer and Irit Miller Zmora were already hard at work and a promising delegation assembled. An excellent IAW Statement on the Priority theme: Ensuring and strengthening access to justice for all women and girls, including by promoting inclusive and equitable legal systems, eliminating discriminatory laws, policies, and practices, and addressing structural barriers, which is posted on our website, was submitted, comprising the contributions of the delegation. However, as the year drew to an end, it became apparent that none of the new CSW Task force would actually attend the 70th Session, and the leadership reverted to Sibylle von Heydebrand, Jill Follows and Antonia Lavine, who were committed to being in New York.

I took part in a working group to slim down the structure of IAW for the 21st century, the result of which was seen in the Constitutional and Bylaw amendments approved at the XL Congress. This particular group met outside the framework of the Constitution Committee appointed at the beginning of the Triennium, a body of which I have been a member for some 18 years, but other active members of that Committee also were part of this Task Force.



*H.E. Mr. Abdulazia M. Alwasil, CSW69 Chair, and Alison Brown, IAW President*

Our attempts to hold our XL Congress in person came to naught. Once again, we geared up for a virtual Congress with the hopes that attendance from one's own hometown would bring out more members for the vital activities of launching IAW into a new Triennium. The Congress Taskforce was reconstituted to that end, bringing back two veterans of the virtual Congresses in 2020 and 2022, Lene Pind and Ursula Nakamura.





And, indeed, the attendance at the virtual Congress was much higher than we might have achieved in an in-person Congress. We ran a fairly tight ship to get through an agenda that would, in person, be stretched over five days, in only three half-days (because of issues with time zones). At the XL Congress we welcomed a new Affiliate, Bulgarian Platform European Women's Lobby whose President Iliana Balabanova was also appointed as an Executive Vice-President; and a new Associate, National Council of Jewish Women San Francisco Section led by IAW Secretary General Antonia Lavine. Our work load included significant changes to the Constitution, especially in the area of Communication, including our 120 year-old journal, International Women's News. The last issue, International Women's News Vol. 120 No. 3 2025, would have traditionally been a report from Congress, but the editor has not taken steps to assemble it. The reorganisation of the Communications Unit to a Committee also has resulted in the discontinuation of the e-Newsletter and the cessation of website updates, which was an unintended consequence.

Elections brought many new faces onto the Board and a group of younger members, with the majority from Europe, India and the USA. Regional Vice-Presidents and Coordinators were retained in the slimmed down IAW apparatus. The Commissions were filled with women who said they truly wished to do the work. All of the new officers of IAW can be found on the website and will be reporting at the end of 2026 in the first Annual Report in years that strictly observes the calendar year.

Useful Resolutions, which are found on our website, were adopted at Congress, and they form the basis of the Statements that IAW submits in writing or in person at the various meetings of the UN. We attempted to maintain the timelines of the traditional in-person Congress as described in our Constitution and Bylaws, including very late deadlines for Resolutions. This will be rethought at the end of this Triennium, if we find we may never be able to resurrect the glory days of in-person meetings with delegates flying in from around the world to greet their sister members with joyous hugs.



As IAW President, I spent my days at the computer, answering messages that come in, managing our relations with the United Nations and its various sub-organisations. I wrote the accreditation letters to the various UN offices and organisations, like UNESCO, FAO and ILO, and seethed in frustration when weeks later no reply to an honest inquiry arrives. I did many things that should be the purview of the Secretary General. This phase has come to an end as a diligent and competent Secretary General, in the person of Antonia Lavine, has taken up the position. Upon request, I wrote for our Journal and website. I organized the signing of many petitions, UN Statements of allied INGOs, and open letters that were presented to us. Since I did not want to be the sole arbiter on these issues, but preferred that such decisions be taken up in the Executive Committee (albeit, via e-mail), this often spread issues out over several days. Our Executive Committee, however, met at least monthly and more often leading up to Congress.

In order to support communication among organs of IAW, I called regular meetings of our Convenors, our International Representatives and the women who were appointed to manage activities and information flow within the Regions as well as between the Regional Affiliates and Associates and IAW.

I took part in meetings of sister organisations on women's issues and either posted particularly striking discoveries on social media, or sent relevant information to Affiliates and Associates who might have been able to use it. I kept up with the meetings held by the NGO/CSW New York and lurk in conferences by the INGO groupings of the Council of Europe or working groups on topics like Women in Work, Mothers, or Widows. Many of these meetings have the goal of goading the laggard UN member countries into fulfilling their promises of each succeeding year of the 80 the UN has been in existence.



I distributed information on sources of funding, for example UNESCO prizes, to our membership and have attempted to assist in acquiring such prizes for members who qualify. This year, we had no success, but each year brings a new round of prizes. I hope in the new year, the benefit of the hydrology project organized by UNESCO will be felt by women of our own Associate members in Africa, rather than from a country where our member organisation has lapsed. Having one member from every group that takes part in the Water and Pads Project be trained in constructing and maintaining wells would finally realize the Water part of the goal, since up until now, only the Pads issue, with valuable information on women's menstrual health, has been within reach.

Left over from the time I was only the website content coordinator, I still answered inquiries that came in over the contact page of the website. Many interesting projects clamor for a partnership with us, but in truth, they mostly want funding and possibly advisory personnel, which we cannot provide.

I cannot close out a report for 2025, the last year of the Triennium, without expressing my deepest thanks to IAW activists who have been with the organisation since I first joined over three decades ago. Our Honorary President Lyda Versteegen handed over the reins of the Constitution Committee to Derya A. Briand. Former Secretary General and long-time Membership Officer, practically the memory bank of IAW, Lene Pind laid that office in the energetic hands of Holly Herbert, herself granddaughter of the indefatigable Membership Officer Pat Richardson. The contributions of Lyda and Lene are too numerous to hold in the three pages allotted to me, but IAW would not still have been around to celebrate its 121st year without their tireless work throughout the decades. It is a comfort to me as President to know I can still call on them for advice if the need arises.

There is much to be done in the coming year to stave off back-sliding on women's rights around the globe and for that, International Alliance of Women needs the combined efforts of all its members to make Equal Rights – Equal Responsibilities a reality.

# Report of the Treasurer

*Andrea Carlise*

As IAW's newly elected Treasurer, I would like to thank IAW members for entrusting me with this position. I began my term immediately after being elected during the IAW Congress at the end of November, 2025. I accepted this role with pride and deep commitment from our highly professional and resolute former Treasurer and now Secretary General, Antonia Lavine. I have been fortunate to have Antonia's invaluable advice, guidance and friendship over the last three years as I served as IAW's Assistant Treasurer. She assisted with our 2025 financial audit which was submitted in early 2026. Based on her meticulous work overseeing the organization's finances, IAW's auditor confirmed that the accounting for 2025 was conducted properly and that the accounts were kept clearly and correctly.

We ended Calendar Year 2025 with a deficit due to the fact that the grant funds for IAW's Hydro program were received at the end of 2024, while the funds were spent in 2025. We had an increase of our total assets in 2025 and a large part of our net income was invested, once again, in IAW's inspiring "Water and Pads" and "Hydro" programs. The two programs together provided over 23,000 Euro fully dedicated to supporting women in developing countries via advocacy, technical assistance, training, and educational/marketing materials. We are grateful for the continuing excellent work of these programs' chairs.

While the fundraising for these programs was quite successful, our efforts to increase donations directly supporting the operation of IAW fell short once again. We did not reach our goal of increasing income from individual membership fees or donations, while we almost met the budgeted goal for organizational fees. Overall, the funds collected through membership fees and general donations are far from sufficient to support IAW's operation, growth, and ability to develop new programming.

On the other hand, we acknowledge that good efforts were made to increase the amount of these funds in 2025. We ended the year with an additional 10,000+ Euro compared to year-end 2024.

We thank those who made this possible by generously increasing the amount of their donations, the frequency of their contributions and the level of their membership. We are also grateful for the dedication and hard work of our Membership Secretary in collecting the fees and tracking their submission from multiple sources. I am looking forward to working with our newly elected Membership Secretary to expand our reach throughout this triennium. I am also looking forward to receiving support and advice from the Financial Advisory Committee to navigate a path to ensure IAW's continued financial health and prosperity. Finally, I am grateful for the continuing support of the Executive Committee and the Board for their insight and inspiration.

Thank you all for your contributions and dedicated work toward achieving IAW's goals!

| FINANCES IAW 2025 - All figures in EURO |                          |                 |                 |                  |                               |                 |                 |  |  |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--|--|
| INCOME 2025                             |                          |                 |                 | EXPENDITURE 2025 |                               |                 |                 |  |  |
| Code                                    |                          | Actual          | Budget          | Code             |                               | Actual          | Budget          |  |  |
| AF                                      | Affiliated Fees          | 2095.00         | 3600.00         | DU               | Dues Organizations            | 900.50          | 1000.00         |  |  |
| AS                                      | Associated Fees          | 955.00          | 1000.00         | EP               | Translations                  | 0.00            | 2000.00         |  |  |
| IM                                      | Individual Member Fees   | 5658.03         | 12000.00        | ED               | Editors (IWNews)              | 0.00            | 300.00          |  |  |
| SC                                      | Subscriptions            | 25.00           | 260.00          | PR               | Printers (Special Printing)   | 0.00            | 780.00          |  |  |
| DO                                      | Donations                | 2215.86         | 7000.00         | CB               | Congress/Board                | 0.00            | 1000.00         |  |  |
| CB                                      | Congress/Board           | 150.00          |                 | AD               | Auditor                       | 1016.50         | 1300.00         |  |  |
| WP                                      | Water and Pads           | 16023.25        |                 | MC               | Miscellaneous                 | 42.80           | 600.00          |  |  |
| UN                                      | UNESCO-Hydro             | 0.00            |                 | WB               | Website                       | 0.00            | 600.00          |  |  |
| IT                                      | Interest EU-CH-BCA       | 0.00            |                 | OC               | Office Costs                  | 1926.00         | 1500.00         |  |  |
| IT                                      | Interest Deposit         | 0.00            |                 | WB               | Databank                      | 1929.60         | 1800.00         |  |  |
|                                         |                          |                 |                 | BC               | Bankcharges                   | 361.37          | 1005.00         |  |  |
|                                         |                          |                 |                 | AC               | Accounting                    | 4164.17         | 3000.00         |  |  |
|                                         |                          |                 |                 | EV               | Events                        | 0.00            | 500.00          |  |  |
|                                         |                          |                 |                 | WP               | Water and Pads Project        | 14810.94        |                 |  |  |
|                                         |                          |                 |                 | UN               | UNESCO-Hydro                  | 8899.60         |                 |  |  |
|                                         | <b>Total Income (IN)</b> | <b>27122.14</b> | <b>23860.00</b> |                  | <b>Total Expenditure (EX)</b> | <b>34051.48</b> | <b>15385.00</b> |  |  |



# Report of the Communications Unit

*Sanja Jeraj*  
*Website and Newsletter Editor*

## Highlights

- **Website** → remained the core communication hub;
- additional content published on IWNews.
- **IWNews** → 2 editions in a new design
- **Newsletter** → 11 editions + special updates; open rates good, clicks low.
- **Facebook** → 200+ posts; consistent visibility & engagement.
- **X (Twitter)** → Maintained activity; role should be reassessed.
- **LinkedIn** → Followers +70% within a year (01.01.: 951 → 31.12.: 1,625);
- strong engagement increase; the post that attracted the most attention was the publication of IAW Written Statement on CSW70.

## Strengths vs. Challenges

### Strengths

- Consistent visibility across channels.
- LinkedIn shows steady growth.
- Website reliable & well-maintained.

### Challenges

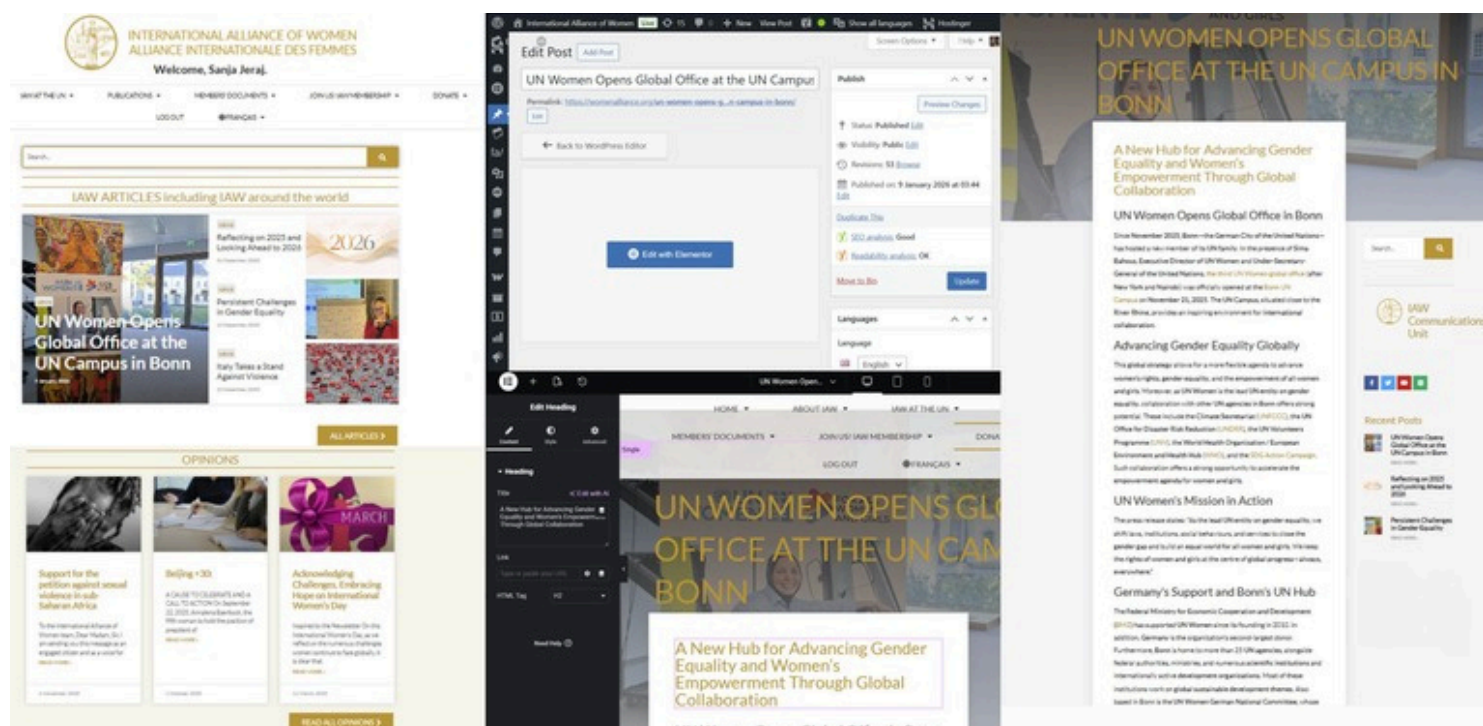
- Availability of French translations
- Tedious gathering information from position holders (individual and Commissions)
- Poor participation by member organisations (hardly any contributions)
- Low member participation in online engagement.
- Newsletter engagement (click-throughs) low.
- Limited SEO/search visibility.
- Social media presence not distinctive enough.

## Next Steps

The Communications Unit was replaced by the Communications Committee in January 2026. The Committee will develop its own new strategy and shape public relations accordingly.

## Farewell

With this transition, I have stepped down from the team. I am grateful for the trust placed in me by a number of dedicated colleagues and for the open, constructive, and inspiring collaboration I shared with them throughout my time in office. Supporting the communication and visibility of the IAW's activities has been a truly meaningful and enriching experience, one that I will carry forward with great appreciation.



# Report of the Membership Secretary

*Lene Pind*

This report outlines recommends changes to organisational membership, provides updated individual membership data, and shares a few personal reflections as I prepare to hand over my responsibilities.

## **Affiliates and Associate Memberships**

We are pleased to welcome two new organisations to our network: the National Council of Jewish Women/San Francisco (NCJWSF) and the Bulgarian Platform of the European Women's Lobby (EWL). Their inclusion strengthens our diversity and reach. We look forward to their contributions to our shared mission.

At the same time, it is important to recognise that we continue to lose more member organisations than we are gaining. This trend has persisted over several years and must be addressed with sustained, strategic effort. We need to prioritise outreach and recruitment to ensure the vitality and future of IAW.

Currently there are **24 Affiliate members** and **16 Associate members**.

## **Recommendations for Affiliates and Associate Memberships**

After careful review, I recommend the deletion of several organisations. These organisations have not been active or responsive for some time. In particular, I regretfully recommend the removal of the Greek League, which appears to have ceased operations. I had hoped the organisation might reorganise, and have therefore kept them on the list longer than usual. Further comments on the other organisations recommended for deletion will be provided during Congress.

| <b>Affiliate Members suggested for deletion</b>               | <b>Country</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Greek League for Women's Rights                               | Greece         |
| Ntengwe for community development                             | Zimbabwe       |
| <b>Associate Members suggested for deletion</b>               | <b>Country</b> |
| APWA UK                                                       | United Kingdom |
| Association Féminine Songmanégré pour le Développement, A.F.D | Burkina Faso   |
| Olympes de la Parole Canada Voices of Olympia Canada          | Canada         |

## A Call for Renewed Recruitment Efforts

It is vital that we take a collective approach to strengthen our organisational membership. This is not a new issue, and reversing the trend requires ongoing, coordinated outreach across countries and regions.

## Individual Memberships

We are happy to report that 21 new individual members have joined IAW in 2025. A warm welcome to each of you! We look forward to your involvement.

As of September 2025, IAW has 241 individual members. Below is a breakdown by payment year:

- Paid through 2030 – 1
- Paid through 2026 – 2
- Paid through 2025 – 121
- Paid through 2024 – 50
- Paid through 2023 – 45
- Paid through 2022 – 22

Individual members are removed from the database if they have not paid for three consecutive years. Based on this policy, the 22 members who last paid in 2022 will be deleted if they do not renew by 2026.

## Transition of Membership Secretary Role

I took over as Membership Secretary in 2019, succeeding Pat Richardson. I am pleased to share that I am now passing the torch to Holly Herbert, Pat's granddaughter, who has kindly agreed to take on the role. Naturally, I will support her as she settles into her new responsibilities, since it takes time to learn all the details. Holly has already begun: as the photos show, she visited me earlier this year, and together we worked on the database. I hope you will welcome Holly.

I wish IAW all the best.



*Holly visiting Lene in Denmark, July 2025*





IAW Projects

Projets IAW



# Water and Pads Project

*Coordinators Ursula Nakamura and Heidi Bodmer*

## **A quick look back:**

It all started in 2017 after the WHO's alarming call “that millions of girls and women worldwide were being discriminated against because of their monthly periods!” Thanks to the engagement of IAW members Ursula Nakamura and Gudrun Haupter (may she rest in peace) and the incredibly quick cooperation of our IAW colleagues in Africa and Asia, the IAW Water and Pads project became a reality in January 2019.

They all urgently wanted to promote a basic knowledge on menstrual health for schoolgirls in remote rural areas

## **Water and Pads trainings 2025**

Here are some statements of WP participants.

- Anuarite Siirewabo Coordinator of **SOFODEC**, Kinshasa DR Congo:

*The problem of young people living on the streets in Kinshasa is alarming, with an estimated figure of over 60,000... They live in extremely precarious conditions, exposed to violence and sexual promiscuity, and face major educational challenges. This has had a major impact on school-age children up to the age of majority. Some girls become pregnant at an early age and end up on the streets due to a lack of resources and education*

- Thérèse Akapo Adjoa Coordinator of **LA COLOMBE**, Togo, had a very impressive idea. She wore an apron on which all female organs were depicted.

- Rebecca Juga Coordinator of **BAWUFAG**, Cameroon:

*Every girl has the right to dream, the power to achieve goals and the courage to change the world!”*

- Anne Yotchou Coordinator of **CEFAP** Cameroon:

*This time we also had produced washable and reusable pads, which were distributed to schoolgirls in two schools in two villages, namely the CETIC in Medjo and the Mbemtum School in Tsebem.*

- Glen Middlemost **WCCF**, Zimbabwe:

*The topics included breast development, pubic hair growth, menstruation, menstrual hygiene, personal hygiene, and the proper use of sanitary wear. The booklets provided by IAW were instrumental in imparting knowledge in an easy manner.*

- Ms. Dr. Vijayalekschmy KG, Director of **Sandepani** School India:

*Participants were particularly curious about menstrual cups, which were new to most of them.*

- Rita Marque Mbatha and Glen Middlemost **WCCF**, Zimbabwe:

*What is important is to make sure that I do not stain my clothes, uniform or bedding during my period as that is very shameful,.. money is hard to come by, and most of us cannot afford to buy pads.*

The fact that condoms are given for free while adolescent girls have to pay for pads is a bitter pill for them to swallow. As they put it, “indulging in sexual intercourse is a choice, menstruation is not a choice, and the girls’ dignity is not given priority.”

From **January to December 2025** 10 organisations were carrying out their Water and Pads events, two of them WCCF and RUWON even twice:

2

-**UWON** at Bal Uddhar Secondary School, Kapan, Kathmandu Nepal

-**APWA** Punjab at the Begum Pura and Manga Mandi Schools at Lahore, Pakistan. We are very pleased that now AWPW Punjab is again participating with the WP-project. -

-**RENATA** at the Bikok and Kongola Schools, Cameroon

-**LA COLOMBE** at the Training Centre CAF Vo-Koutimé, and at GIPATO Vogan, Togo

-**SOFEDDEC** at the Centre scolaire La Puisette, Kinshasa DR Congo

- **WCCF** at the Prince Adonai School and High Pass Secondary School at Epworth, Harare, Zimbabwe

- **CEFAP** at the bilingual schools at Mbalmayo and at Kribi, Cameroon

- **WCCF** at Christian Academy College and George Beni Academy, Zimbabwe

- **SANDEPANI** at Sandepani School, Trivandrum, India

- **ZAW** at Chibwe School Kapiri, Zambia

- **BAWUFAG** at AKAM Bilingual Academy, Yaoundé, Cameroon

- **RUWON** at Shree Panchakanya Secondary School, Kathmandu, Nepal

All of the above activities are documented in words and pictures on our special Water and Pads website in English and French: <https://www.iawwaterandpads.com>

This WP website also plays an important role for everyone involved. The local IAW coordinators are always writing a report about their WP activities, which are then uploaded together with photos from their event. This fulfills two objectives.

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

**Fund raising.** As we all know, the WP project can only continue to exist thanks to a sound financial basis. We are intensively involved in fundraising wherever we can. Several events in northwestern Switzerland were extremely successful, one at the Soroptimist Club oberes Fricktal and another one at Wölflinswil. We are particularly grateful to the Basel section of ADF-SVF Suisse for selling again roses during the 1st May celebrations 2025. This time they were handmade, produced in paper. Passersby in the streets were highly interested about this unusual topic. Many WP flyers were distributed, and often very interesting discussions ensued. Again, all the proceeds went to the WP project. So, we encounter a lot of interest about menstrual health at regional gatherings or among our personal friends.

Most of all we hope that many IAW members may join us by supporting the WP project. It is thanks to this help that our IAW colleagues in Africa and Asia can continue their successful work.

You can support the WP project with 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!**



*Thérèse Akapo Adjoa explains the function of the female organs*



*Paper roses under construction  
Heidi Bodmer 31.12.2025*





Reports from Commissions

Rapports des commissions



# Commission on Digital Divide

*Convenor Arina Angerman*

Following our 2024 report, we, as the IAW Commission on the Digital Divide, contributed to the IAW's statement to CSW68. Key points include: "Recognising gender bias in data, Artificial Intelligence and algorithms leads to developing gender-sensitive and intersectional data and using them in analyses for equitable outcomes; As the world moves towards more electronic connection 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 1)*

Since this IAW Commission is new, we are now discussing AI. Please find the VN report on this topic. Did you know that nearly half of Gen Z (women born after 1995) and millennial women have experienced online gender-based violence? We also added a few lines to the new IAW Action programme.

In 2015, when Beijing turned 20, I was a member of a roundtable called '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 likes. Currently, I communicate most with the chair of Vrouwenbelangen and our representative on the IAW Board, Artemis Westenberg. In 2025, we are celebrating Beijing's 30th anniversary. I wrote my 100e blog about my herstory in ICT at **[angerman.europa@blogspot.com](mailto:angerman.europa@blogspot.com)**

Two other members of IAW (Joke Sebus and Marijke Peters), with whom I have been working 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, I, as an individual member of IAW, have supported the combination of Digitalisation and Sustainability. *(Photo 2)*



*Gender Equality Bag of Wo=men Dutch Gender Platform (Arina is an individual member of this NGO in the Netherlands). Women is one of the facilitators supporting civil society in preparing for CSW69, and Arina took part in several Wo=men events, including those about CSW69, 68, and 67.*

The most burning issue is to end Technology Facilitated (Online) Gender Based Violence in my country and the EU region. As the percentage of women in the European Parliament decreased in 2023 from 41% to 39%, the most critical issue remains SDG 5. (gender equality). In the Netherlands, we know that not all female politicians are feminists, as seen with 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 2025 with my favourite quote from 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 want to thank the other members of the IAW Commission on the Digital Divide who contributed, among other things, to the development of this report.



*The 2nd Conference of the National Coalition on Duurzame Digitalisering (in Dutch) on  
29.10.2025*

## **Solutions:**

1. To promote digital literacy among women and girls, including ongoing learning of new digital skills for 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 the promotion of more feminist leaders in politics.
3. Use AI only when it benefits people and helps build a sustainable future, ensuring ongoing support for justice for all women and girls.

# Commission on Education

*Convenor KG Vijayalekshmy*

## **Introduction**

As part of my role within the Education Commission of the International Alliance of Women (IAW), I have undertaken a series of studies aimed at addressing pressing educational and social concerns. To foster global collaboration within IAW, I reached out to members from various regions to initiate meaningful and insightful discussions within the framework of IAW. However, despite the enthusiasm, these interactions did not materialize as effectively as envisioned—perhaps due to the absence of a structured and organized format to facilitate such exchanges.

Recognizing these limitations, I remained committed to contributing in any way possible. This determination led me to pursue a series of action research projects that hold the potential to benefit diverse communities across the globe. These studies are designed to generate practical insights and sustainable solutions, with a focus on education, women's well-being, youth development, and environmental awareness. This approach aligns with the core values of IAW and can drive impactful change on both local and international levels.

## **a) Need and Significance of a Unique Women's Wellness Centre**

A focused study on the importance of establishing a comprehensive wellness centre dedicated to women's physical, mental, and emotional health. The research will explore:

- Gaps in existing health infrastructure
- Multi-disciplinary support systems
- Community outreach models tailored for women across age groups

## **b) Stress Among Working Women – A Threat to Development**

This research investigates how stress affects working women and the broader implications for social and economic development. The study will focus on:

- Causes of stress (workload, family pressure, societal expectations)
- Mental health outcomes
- Recommendations for workplace and policy reforms

## **c) Drugs and Education – The Alarming Consequences of Substance Abuse on Students' Futures**

An urgent inquiry into how drug and substance abuse affects the academic and personal lives of students. Key areas include:

- Patterns and causes of student drug use
- Academic and psychological consequences
- Role of schools, families, and peer groups in prevention and rehabilitation

## **d) Waste Management in Coastal Areas: Strategies to Educate Through Schools and Colleges**

This project aims to design education-based strategies for improving waste management practices in coastal regions. Focus will be on:

- Current environmental challenges in coastal areas
- Curriculum integration of sustainability topics
- Community and student-led initiatives

## **e) Educational Progress in Coastal Areas: A Systemic Study on Its Silent Progress and Impact**

A study to track the evolving educational landscape in coastal regions, identifying progress and areas needing intervention. The research will cover:

- Trends in literacy, access, and outcomes



- Influence on local development
- Challenges and actionable policy suggestions

## **f) Role of Anganwadis in Trivandrum**

An in-depth analysis of Anganwadis as grassroots educational and community support institutions, focusing on:

- Early childhood education (0–5 years)
- Adolescent health and awareness programs
- Support systems for young mothers
- Strategies to strengthen infrastructure, training, and outreach

## **g) Exploring the Exodus: A Comprehensive Analysis of Indian Students Pursuing Higher Education Abroad**

This research explores the growing trend of Indian students opting for international education. Key investigation points include:

- Push and pull factors behind student migration
- Socio-economic implications for India
- Recommendations to enhance higher education quality and retention within the country

## **Conclusion**

The diverse range of activities undertaken by WHI over the past year reflects its unwavering commitment to building an inclusive, empowered, and socially aware society. From women, youth enrichment and migrant health to counselling, climate action, and grassroots development, WHI has impacted thousands of lives through sustained community engagement, innovation, and compassion. As an ECOSOC-affiliated organization, WHI continues to bridge local needs with global goals, nurturing individuals and communities to thrive with dignity, resilience, and purpose.



# Commission on Health

*Convenor Uzma Gul*

This year has been marked by active representation, policy engagement, and coalition-building for the International Alliance of Women (IAW). In my capacity as Convener of the Health Commission, I have focused on advancing IAW's mission to promote gender equality, strengthen women's leadership, and integrate health and rights into global development agendas. The report below focuses on health-related topics that I encountered through my joint role as a member of the UN Headquarters New York Team and Convenor of the IAW Health Commission.

At the United Nations, I represented IAW and engaged in high-level dialogues and advocated for women's rights and health equity. Below I summarize key health-related insights gathered during the 80th UN General Assembly (UNGA80) in September 2025.

## **Health Forum at UNGA80**

The Health Forum emphasized the intersection of global health challenges with diplomacy, security, and human rights. The dialogue underscored the importance of resilient health systems, equitable vaccine access, and pandemic preparedness. It also highlighted the central role of women in healthcare delivery and leadership.

The speakers for 2025 were honored dignitaries, who discussed community-level climate and health solutions, policy and funding approaches, and building resilience through local interventions: Anne-Claire Amprou – Ambassador for Global Health, France; Dr. Sandile Buthelezi – Director General, National Department of Health, South Africa; Yvonne Aki-Sawyer – Mayor, Freetown; Awa Marie Coll-Seck – Former Minister of Health, Senegal; Dr. Omnia El Omrani – Vice-Chair, Global Climate and Health Alliance; Dr. Githinji Gitahi – Group CEO, Amref Health Africa; Kevin Linn – Lead Researcher, Collective MindS Report; Holy Ranaivozanany – Deputy Executive Director, Africa-Europe Foundation.



The Forum's main foci were that Global Health is facing a decline in donor funding, cuts to WHO, and growing challenges from non-communicable diseases (NCDs), climate impacts, and fragile supply chains. Moreover, prevention, early detection, and integrated care require special attention to obesity, cardiovascular disease, kidney/lung health, and Alzheimer's disease.

Speakers individually and collectively emphasized that institutions must “do more with less” and that new partnerships and innovative investment strategies are essential.

Participants further agreed to recognize and accept *health as an investment*. This requires a shift from viewing health as a cost to recognizing health as a driver of economic growth and resilience, with a growing focus on public-private partnerships, resilient health systems, and women's health data.

The forum emphasized that health is inextricably related to global security and wealth.

## **Risk, Resilience, Results – Event on Climate and Health**

The Climate and Health Forum addressed the health impacts of climate change, ranging from air pollution and food insecurity to vector-borne diseases. The discussions encouraged collaboration across health, climate, and policy actors. There was a strong emphasis on youth engagement and innovation in building climate-resilient health systems.

The event was organized by Foundation S, Africa-Europe Foundation, who applauded the work of IAW's Water and Pads project and committed to partner with IAW in the future for our long-term initiatives.

Main Speakers included Anne-Claire Amprou, Dr. Sandile Buthelezi, Yvonne Aki-Sawyerr, Awa Marie Coll-Seck, Dr. Omnia El Omrani, Dr. Githinji Gitahi, Kevin Linn, Holy Ranaivozanany. The theme for the year 2025 is “Climate change and health adaptation at the community level.”

### **Key Takeaways:**

- Community-level health interventions reduce risk and strengthen resilience.
- Proven solutions remain underfunded; flexible and responsive funding models are required.
- Policy and investment shifts can translate local innovation into broader global health security.

## **Her Power Forum @ UNGA80 – Event on Women’s Leadership and Health**

The Her Power event focused on the urgent need to integrate gender equality into global decision-making. Key themes included declining funding for gender initiatives, underrepresentation of women in leadership, and the importance of inclusive innovation. Sessions highlighted women’s health equity, family planning, and strategies to protect women’s rights worldwide.

Speakers were Sanam Naraghi Anderlini, Michelle Nunn, Mari Kiviniemi, Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, Dr. Samukeliso Dube, Bayer representatives, and others.

Theme: “Advancing women’s leadership, health, and rights amidst funding constraints.”

### **Key Takeaways:**

- Defend women’s rights and strengthen political participation.
- Invest in family planning, women-centered health, and collaborative philanthropy.
- Innovation and technology should support women’s empowerment and inclusive entrepreneurship.



# Commission on Human Rights

*Convenor Marion Böker*

The Human Rights Commission began after the 2022 Congress, and my nomination as Convenor began in 2023 with monthly online meetings of three hours. The meetings are summarised by English/French minutes.

In 2024 the members participated less than before, with about half the members participating, although we do not know why participation has decreased. Occasionally, we invited external speakers, experts or members of other women's NGOs.

To plan for the 40th IAW Congress in November 2025, the Human rights Commission's convenor met with convenors or members of other IAW Commissions between December 2024 and August 2025 to draft an update of the Action Programme.

In spring 2024 we convened joint meetings with the IAW Peace Commission and the IAW Human Rights Commission, and in 2025 our joint meetings were also attended by members of the IAW Democracy Commission.

Main outcomes of our substantial meetings are summarised below:

## **2023:**

**June Meeting:** We discussed the human rights of Palestinian women with Susanne Riveles. In addition, we began working on a draft of a new UN Commission on the Rights of Elder Persons. Laoura Alipranti, who is in the IAW human rights team at UN Geneva, reported on the 53rd UN HRC session, especially on the Special Rapporteur against VAWG and on the situation of women in Afghanistan and her visit to Turkiye.

**August Meeting:** This full meeting, transferred into a webinar, included guest speakers on Afghanistan and Palestine and big panels. Samira mentioned massive human rights violations in Africa that target our member organisations and urged that IAW take more notice of this atrocity. It was suggested that the Commission member survey also include questions especially directed to IAW's African members and their human rights concerns. It was noted that many of these issues are also dealt with in the Peace Commission.

Eva Nobrega also noted media reports of gang rapes in India and the unlawful situation of women and girls in Afghanistan. Laura still is interested in the EU Directives and laws against gender-based violence against women and girls (VAWG), including in Greece with a focus on migrant women and girls. Derya noted limitations of the Iran Fact Finding Mission since Iran's regime had not let them in; and the work of the HRC53 on Afghanistan.

Susanne was concerned about the recent political situation in Israel and its impacts on the Palestinian occupied territories where apartheid is growing.

Marion reported about the letter to HRC and the NCRI experts calling for a UN HRC Iran Inquiry Commission on the massacres 1988.

**September Meeting:** This meeting presented a joint webinar with the IAW Peace Commission and other invited IAW members. Panelists included:

**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; she will talk about

- The human rights situation in Afghanistan and what she thinks we can do as an international UN -ECOSOC accredited NGO to support the causes (Note: The UN refers to it as "Gender Apartheid Regime of the Taliban" and "Systematic gender persecution")
- Short introduction to her new organisation AWCU- AFGHAN WOMEN COORDINATION UMBRELLA



**Palwasha Kakar**, Former State Minister of MoWA Afghanistan, who is co-founder of Afghan Women

**Evgenia Eleftheriadou**, on her Master thesis "Business and conflict with Human Rights? Translating the UNGP in the context of the Israeli OPT."

**October Meeting:** Discussion of reports of the UN HRC on Violence against Women and the European and African Unions laws against VAWG, including gaps and new processes of new law drafts.

## 2024

**July:** Following discussions about texts submitted by a Swiss NGO AFMR - Association des Familles Monoparentales et Recomposées on tax discrimination against women, we met with this Swiss NGO. We continued this discussion in August.

**August Meeting:** The main agenda item was going through the current IAW Action Programme, to discuss which items should be updated for the next Congress.

**September Meeting:** This was a short meeting because of the upcoming International meeting in Bulgaria.

**October Meeting:** At IAW's International Meeting in Bulgaria, all Commission Convenors and some commission members who were present held a joint session to discuss updating the Actions Programme. It was also decided that the Peace Commission and Human Rights Commission should hold joint meetings going forward.

**November Meeting:** We drafted an open letter decrying the massive VAWG as a weapon of war against women in North DRC / Goma. The letter also included alarm about reports of forced prostitution, rape and trafficking of women by the UN Peace mission units. The letter demanded that these atrocities stop, along with impunity for UN entities involved. The letter was posted on the IAW webpage.

## 2025

We held regular joint meetings in January, April, July, August, and September. The main discussions concerned the planned resolutions for Congress. We decided to adopt the joint mission of Without Peace, No Human Rights.

In July, we also had a guest speaker from WILPF on plans to contribute to the planned new UN Convention on the Regulation of AWS (Autonomous /Artificial Intelligence steered Weapons Systems). Marion suggested applying to UNESCO for a peace education project, tabled until after Congress.

Commission members (Heide, Manju, Marion, Sherina, Susanne) reviewed the draft from Marion on the Action Programme 2025-2028 for Congress. Separate meetings were devoted to drafting resolutions for Congress. The following were agreed on:

1. Resolution on internal and external Action for Peace Education
2. Resolution- Action to join WILPF and others on Convention Against and Control of AWS (Autonomous Weapon Systems) as it is drafted and in process at UN Geneva Resolution to stand with action for UNSCR reform on equal responsibilities and shared powers
3. Resolution to Win Peace not War
4. Resolution to take action to criminalise and end femicide
5. Resolution to stand together against anti-gender and women's rights pushback

The Commission members urged that IAW become more visible internationally, with real action instead of rhetorics and only in UN meetings, as the motto of our founding mothers was expressing:

### **Deeds, Not Words.**

There is hope that the IAW Webpage will be updated soon at the beginning of 2026. Our Commission members will see IAW standing for the UNSCR reform which was adopted at the last UN SUMMIT OF THE FUTURE.

# Commission on Migration

*Convenor Rosy Weiss*

By 2024, an estimated 48% of the total number of international migrants were women and girls. In 2023, over 70,9% of identified victims of trafficking were women and girls. An estimated USD 857 billion in remittances was received worldwide in 2023.

The question of how orderly, safe, regular, and responsible migration can be achieved in the face of global threats such as wars, climate disasters, cuts in international development aid, and ideological polarization worldwide is one of the Commission's main focuses. In this context, it is important to the convenor to facilitate an objective discourse that is free from personal and national interests. The fact that this was hardly possible for long periods of time is due to her limited IT skills.

The leadership of the commission will therefore be placed in the capable hands of other Commission members.

The Commission's contribution to the discussion on the future AP was submitted to the coordinators on time. The proposed priorities for action concern the protection of migrant women from violence and exploitation in the workplace and the recognition of their experience, talents, and qualifications to avoid their exclusive employment in domestic work and low-skill occupations. Remittance policies should be encouraged to support achieving Sustainable Development, improve living standards and increase access to vital services.

**Members of the Commission:** Antonia Lavine, Lyda Verstegen, Anne Pelagie Yotchou Tzudjom, Samira Yassni, Susanne Riveles, Djamilla Assama, Horeya Megahed , Illiassou Diallo, Ruhi Sayid.

# Commission on Peace

*Convenor Manju Kak*

The IAW Peace Commission has held meetings in the last year to discuss various issues and take steps towards peacebuilding.

At the outset, it must be mentioned that the core recognition from every member of the group was the continuing and increasing conflict, war, and violence in the world, from Ukraine to Gaza to Sudan and Congo. Notwithstanding the very critical juncture we are at, the Peace Commission members tried to consider solutions and implement various ways in which to counter the growing culture of violence with peace initiatives and solidarity through letters, meetings and webinars to spread peace and cooperate with various women's organisations from Yezidi to Kurdish to Ukrainian, Israeli and Gazan women as well as reforms in the UN and laws to be drafted for the future.

We had meetings with the WILPF member Jennifer Menninger on Autonomous Weapons Systems where she made a presentation on the dangers and the road ahead.

Also present in our meetings were Alipranti Laoura from the Human Rights Commission and Tamara Rukhadze from the Commission for Democracy.

The members discussed various issues, some significant ones being: i) how the increase in the arms and ammunition budget took away from crucial allocations needed for social sector budgets; ii) increasing femicide iii) human rights violations; iv) ecocide caused by war v) climate change vi) peace and disarmament with a focus on building a culture of peace vii) the fragility of democracy in the current world scenario viii) The vulnerability of women and children migrants and refugees

## **Some crucial concerns we will work on are:**

1. Reform in the UN Security Council, especially regarding veto rights. Increasingly, the UN and other international bodies are being seen as ineffective, thus making it imperative that reforms be instituted for effective impact.
2. The agenda of WPS should be broadly binding on all states.
3. International Law and Human Rights issues should be binding on all states
4. Lobbying for Laws on the Prohibition of Autonomous Weapons Systems, which should be binding across member states of the UN
5. Statute on Femicide, which should be part of the Rome Statute
6. Women's Library, Archive and Museum should be created to document crucial moments. Art and podcasts as ways of intervention and resistance against violations of women's rights, human rights etc.

We understand the increasing need for greater cooperation and solidarity between women's organizations for a better future.





Reports from International  
Representatives

Rapports des représentantes  
internationales



# Arab League

*Prof. Horeya Megahed, Representative*

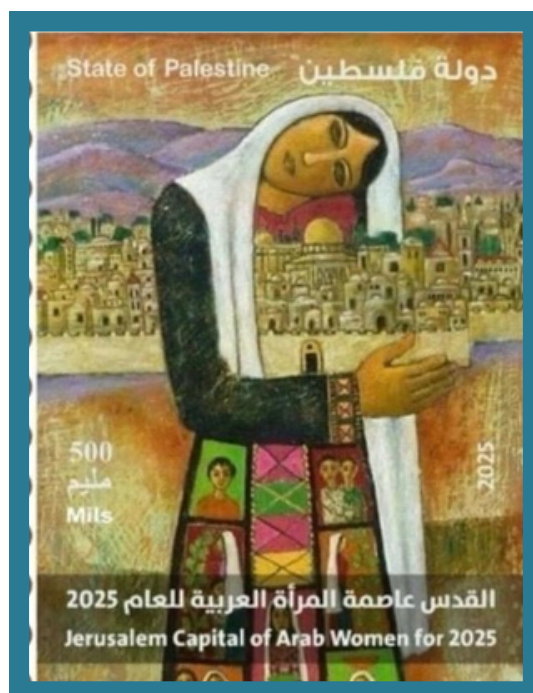
During the course of the year, the Arab League, and in particular its specialized agency the Arab Women Organisation (AWO), have taken several actions towards women's empowerment and wellbeing.

- The 4th High-Level Ministerial Conference on Women, Peace, and Security took place at the headquarters of the Arab League in Cairo on November 27-28, 2024, cohosted by the Arab League and UN Women. It aims to enhance the needs for protection, aid, and comprehensive response to the needs of women in conflict zones.





- Cairo Ministerial Conference convened on December 2, 2024, to enhance humanitarian response in Gaza, under the title "A Year since the Humanitarian Catastrophe in Gaza: Urgent Needs, Lasting Solutions," with delegations from 103 states from all over the world and the presence of the representative of the UN Secretary General.
- The Arab Women Organisation launched a regional study titled, "The Status of Women and Girls with Disabilities in the Arab States." The study was based on the reports prepared by experts on national legislation and policies, in addition to the status of national associations and non-governmental organisations working in this field, as well as the most important obstacles and challenges. It held a workshop on December 16, 2024, to discuss its findings.
- Businesswomen of Egypt 21" hosted its 10th annual conference under the government of Egypt and the Arab League patronage. The opening session was held on Feb. 13, 2025, at the seat of the Arab League in Cairo, and the conference continued from Feb. 4-7, 2025, in Luxor and Aswan in Upper Egypt, focusing on the national Vision 2030 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).
- The Arab Women's Committee of the League of Arab States announced on February 17, 2025, during the committee's 44th session, that Jerusalem is the Capital of Arab Women for 2025-2026. For this occasion, and within the national celebrations, an official logo was announced by the Palestinian authorities, and symbolic postage stamps were designed.



- On February 18-20, 2025, Morocco hosted the Arab Land Conference in partnership with the League of the Arab States, which discussed land issues, including women's challenges in possessing and managing lands. The conference ended with the Morocco Declaration for Land Governance that addressed women's land rights to achieve sustainable development.
- The 10th Conference of the Arab Women Organization took place at the headquarters of the Arab League in Cairo on May 5-6, 2025. It aims to create a safe digital space for women and girls in the Arab region and provide the necessary legislative atmosphere for this purpose, in cooperation with the National Council for Women, under the title of "Women and Girls in the Cyber and AI Era: Connecting, Empowering and Protecting." During the conference, the Organization launched the Arab Girl in Technology 2025 award to promote women's engagement in innovation and technology.

The conference witnessed the participation of high-level official delegations from Arab countries, in addition to the League of Arab States members of AWO's advisory committee and several organizations and experts.

- A regional technical workshop, "Developing School Curricula from a Gender Equality Perspective," took place in Amman, Jordan, from September 14-15, 2025, organized by the Arab Women Organization (AWO) in cooperation with the Jordanian National Commission for Women and the National Center for Curriculum Development. It provides a platform for dialogue and cooperation among Arab education ministries and national mechanisms responsible for women's issues. It seeks to exchange expertise and identify practical ways to integrate gender equality into school curricula. Participants include specialized representatives from Jordan, Egypt, Tunisia, Sudan, Oman, Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon, Libya, and Yemen.

# Council of Europe

*Heleen Jansen and Monique Bouchet, Main  
Representatives*

The Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) of the Council of Europe convenes twice a year. For 2025, the first convened on 7–9 April (spring session) and the second is scheduled 13–16 October (autumn session).

The Conference is composed of six committees

(see: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/ingo/committees>). The International Alliance of Women (IAW) is a member of three of these: NGOs as Advocates for Gender Equality and Women's Rights, Committee on Migration Issues, and Committee on Sport and Human Rights.

Due to limited human resources, and because committee meetings are often scheduled simultaneously on the first day of the conference, it is not feasible for IAW to be represented in every committee. Over the past period, IAW has been particularly engaged in the work of the Committee on Sport and Human Rights. Special attention has been devoted to the situation of athletes with disabilities as well as to the persistent inequalities faced by women in sport.

In the spring of 2025, IAW also contributed to a study visit held in the Netherlands. A brief summary follows this report. The full report is available from Heleen Jansen, main IAW representative.

In addition, several webinars were organised by the various committees, with the participation of IAW members. During the spring session, a number of important decisions were adopted; the relevant documents can be consulted via the following links

- [CONF/AG\(2025\)REC2 - Recommendation on the shrinking Civic Space and actual political developments](#) - adopted on 9 April 2025
- [CONF/AG\(2025\)DECL1 Declaration on the announced EU anti- poverty strategy](#) - approved on 9 April 2025

- CONF/AG(2025)DECL2 - Statement calling for the immediate release of Ekrem İmamoğlu, Mayor of Istanbul - approved on 9 April 2025
- Communiqué on Internal security and border management in the context of migration: Respect for human rights is essential - endorsed on 11 April 2025
- On 25 July 2025, the Conference of INGOs issued a press release.

## **STATEMENT ON THE SUSPENSION OF THE RIGHT TO ASYLUM IN GREECE**

**Strasbourg, 25 July 2025**

*The Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe expresses its deep concern following the adoption, on 11 July, by the Hellenic Parliament of Article 79 of Law 5218/2025, which suspends for three months the possibility to lodge an asylum application for persons arriving in Greece from North Africa. This provision also foresees their immediate expulsion without any registration of their situation.*

*The right to seek asylum and the principle of non-refoulement are recognised as fundamental rights, enshrined in international, European and national law, and cannot be subject to derogation under any circumstances. Access to an asylum procedure is an essential safeguard for all individuals fleeing persecution, conflict, or serious human rights violations.*

*In this respect, the Conference particularly supports the statement of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which recalls that, even in times of migratory pressure, States are obliged to ensure effective access to asylum procedures. The swift and fair identification of persons in need of international protection is a cornerstone of any dignified and functional asylum system.*

*Furthermore, the Conference underlines that frontline States such as Greece must not be left to face migration challenges alone. Concrete and effective solidarity between European States—both politically and financially—is essential to ensure the respect of fundamental rights and the fair sharing of responsibilities.*

*The Conference calls on the Greek authorities to immediately withdraw this legislative provision, which is contrary to Greece's obligations under international law, including the European Convention on Human Rights of the Council of Europe, and urges European and international institutions to fully exercise their protection mandate.*

*July 25, 2025.*



Furthermore, a new Bureau was elected for the INGO Service. IAW has previously held the position of Treasurer within this Bureau on two occasions.

Finally, it must be stressed that in recent years all possibilities for direct contact with parliamentarians have been eliminated. IAW considers this restriction a serious setback that significantly weakens the role and effectiveness of the Conference of INGOs. Even more unacceptable is the prohibition of access to the meetings in which parliamentarians finalize the texts to be submitted to the Assembly for a vote. Such exclusion is deeply shocking, as it closes the door to any dialogue, deprives INGOs of a voice at the most crucial stage of the decision-making process, and prevents any interaction with the parliamentarians leading the dossiers, including informal exchanges in corridors or offices. In the past, our presence not only enabled us to request meetings to present our positions, but also to influence the content of texts — sometimes even achieving last-minute amendments. Today, this institutional lock-out reduces transparency, undermines the democratic quality of debate, and unjustly marginalizes INGOs.

Brief Summary: Report of the Sport and Human Rights Committee study visit to the Netherlands, spring 2025.

“The study visit included meetings with leaders of the sporting movement, elected representatives, heads of refugee reception centers and education associations, as well as visits to sports facilities, training centers and schools. The visit revealed that sport is an essential part of Dutch culture. However, the most vulnerable groups do not have the same access to sporting activities...not all members of parliament are aware of the need for everyone to be physically active in order to preserve their health and thus reduce the burden on public health spending. To sum up the impression left by the study visit...by offering a structured, benevolent, and ambitious framework, the country aims to enable each individual to succeed according to his or her choices, with a balance between high standards and humanity.”

## Hybrid Autumn Session of the Conference of INGOs of the Strasbourg, October 13–16, 2025

Heleen Jansen and Monique Bouchet, IAW Representatives

### Monday, October 13 – Thematic Committees Meetings

The first day was mainly devoted to the meetings of the thematic committees.

IAW delegates attended the sessions of the **Committee on Sport and Human Rights**, the **Civil Society Committee on the Rights of the Child in Europe**, and the **Committee on NGOs as Advocates for Gender Equality and Women's Rights**.

### Tuesday, October 14 – Opening of the Plenary Session

The plenary session of October 14 was opened by **Mr. Gerhardt Ermischer**, President of the Conference of INGOs.

Throughout the four days of meetings, the Conference held discussions with several diplomatic representatives:

- **Ms. Caitriona Doyle**, Ambassador of Ireland and Permanent Representative to the Council of Europe, answered members' questions regarding the **New Democratic Pact**.
- **Mr. Vebjørn Heines**, Ambassador of Norway and Vice-Chair of the **Steering Committee on Democracy (CDDEM)**, also engaged in dialogue with participants.
- **Ms. Daniela Cujbă**, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Moldova to the Council of Europe, outlined Moldova's priorities as the forthcoming Chair of the Committee of Ministers. She notably addressed **support for Ukraine, freedom of the press, child protection, and combating violence against women**.

### Studies and Thematic Presentations

**Mr. Jerry McBride**, Chair of the Expert Council on NGO Law, presented two upcoming studies planned for 2026:

- one concerning **the registration of NGOs representing minority communities**,
- and another on **recent national developments that may undermine NGO operations**.

Several organizations, including IAW, have already submitted responses to the related public questionnaire.

## Gender Equality Initiative

**Ms. Anne Bergheim-Nègre** (University Women of Europe)

proposed the creation of a **working group on gender equality**, supported by about twenty organizations including IAW.

This initiative is based on **General Recommendation No. 40 of the CEDAW Committee (United Nations, October 2024) on the equal and inclusive representation of women in decision-making systems.**

## Presentation of Draft Texts

A significant portion of the session was dedicated to presenting draft texts prepared by several committees:

- **Draft recommendation on the responsibility of the State in providing housing for displaced persons, refugees, and asylum seekers**, proposed by the Migration commission
- **Draft recommendation for a permanent platform for interreligious and inter-convictional dialogue** within the Council of Europe, proposed by the Committee for Interreligious and Inter-convictional Dialogue;
- **Draft recommendation on access to sport for all as a recognized fundamental right**, submitted by the Sport and Human Rights Commission.
- Practical Information
- The full list of adopted decisions and documents is available on the Council of Europe's website.

## Sessions of the Conference of INGOs – Conference of INGOs

The next spring session will take place from **April 14–17, 2026.**



## Bref compte rendu de la session d'automne hybride de la Conférence des OING du Conseil de l'Europe

Strasbourg, 13–16 October 2025

### Lundi 13 octobre – Réunions des comités thématiques

La première journée a été principalement consacrée aux réunions des comités thématiques. Les délégué·e·s de l'IAW ont participé aux travaux du **Comité “Sport et droits humains”**, du **Comité de la société civile sur les droits de l'enfant en Europe**, et du **Comité “Les ONG en tant que défenseurs de l'égalité de genre et des droits des femmes”**.

### Mardi 14 octobre – Ouverture de la session plénière

La session plénière du 14 octobre a été ouverte par **M. Gerhardt Ermischer**, président de la Conférence des OING.

Pendant les quatre jours de travaux, la Conférence a échangé avec plusieurs représentantes et représentants diplomatiques :

- **Mme Caitriona Doyle**, ambassadrice d'Irlande et représentante permanente auprès du Conseil de l'Europe, a répondu aux questions des membres, notamment au sujet du **Nouveau Pacte démocratique**.
- **M. Vebjørn Heines**, ambassadeur de Norvège et vice-président du **Comité directeur pour la démocratie (CDDEM)**, a également dialogué avec les participantes et participants.
- **Mme Daniela Cujbă**, ambassadrice de la République de Moldavie, représentante permanente auprès du Conseil de l'Europe, a présenté les priorités de la prochaine présidence moldave du Comité des Ministres. Elle a particulièrement insisté sur le **soutien à l'Ukraine**, la **liberté de la presse**, la **protection de l'enfance**, et la **lutte contre les violences faites aux femmes**.

## Études et présentations thématiques

**M. Jerry McBride**, président du Conseil d'experts sur le droit des ONG, a présenté deux études à venir en 2026 :

- une sur **l'enregistrement des ONG représentant les communautés minoritaires**,
- et une autre sur **les développements nationaux récents susceptibles de mettre en danger le fonctionnement des ONG.**

Plusieurs organisations, dont l'IAW, ont déjà répondu au questionnaire public relatif à ces études.

## Présentation de projets de textes

Une grande partie de la session a été consacrée à la présentation de projets de textes préparés par divers comités :

- **Projet de recommandation sur la responsabilité de l'État dans la fourniture de logements aux personnes déplacées, réfugiées et demandeuses d'asile**, proposé par la Commission des migrations ;
- **Projet de recommandation pour une plateforme permanente de dialogue interreligieux et interconvictionnel** au sein du Conseil de l'Europe, proposé par le Comité pour le dialogue interreligieux et interconvictionnel ;
- **Projet de recommandation sur l'accès au sport pour tous comme droit fondamental reconnu**, soumis par la Commission "Sport et droits humains".

## Initiative sur l'égalité de genre

**Mme Anne Bergheim-Nègre**

(University Women of Europe) a proposé la création d'un **groupe de travail sur l'égalité de genre**, initiative soutenue par une vingtaine d'organisations dont l'IAW.

Cette proposition s'appuie sur la **Recommandation générale n° 40 du Comité CEDAW (Nations Unies, octobre 2024)**, portant sur la **représentation égale et inclusive des femmes dans les systèmes décisionnels**.



## **Informations pratiques**

La liste complète des décisions et documents adoptés est disponible sur le site du Conseil de l'Europe :

### **Sessions de la Conférence des OING – Conférence des OING**

La prochaine session de printemps aura lieu du **14 au 17 avril 2026**.

# European Women's Lobby (EWL)

*Marion Böker, Delegate to EWL*



## Transition and continuation for IAW in the EWL Board

**In June 2021, I was elected as the IAW delegate to the EWL Board, and Lea Börgerding was elected IAW alternate.** We took part in the EWL observatory on Violence Against Women until summer 2024, at which time Lea stepped down and Leonie Valerie Schmid (IM of IAW) in EWL stood from 2022 until today in the SRHR task force of EWL. Her focus issue is free and safe abortion rights and reality in the EU. Our space in the working group Women In Politics is still available for an IAW Member and EU citizen, as Arina Angerman stepped down. I remain the chair of the working group on Feminist Economics and also created the subgroup on Peace and Security. In 2025 Salome Adamia, the famous peace activist from Georgia who has established the BERTHA VON SUTTNER PEACE PRIZE, will now join this working group.

Since 2022 EWL has succeeded to influence the Anti-Gender & Anti-Democracy movement during Covid-19. In beginning of 2023 I was re-elected to the board and in October 2023 I was elected as a member of the Executive Committee of the EWL Board (ExCo) and during the General Assembly in June 2025 I was reelected to the Board, then with the alternate for the board, Salome Adamia, and in my 2nd ExCo term until June 2027.

## 2022 EWL adopted its Strategic Framework (SF) 2022-2026

In 2025 we worked on a new SF 2027-2030. But the still valid SF “WOMEN CHANGING EUROPE” guides our work, provides the objectives we had defined under the Green Deal and adopted during the General Assembly in 2022. You can find in it the Vision & Mission:

### VISION

*We have a vision of a Feminist Europe, in which all women and girls enjoy equal rights and participation in power and decision-making structures across all levels of society. Liberated from all forms of oppression and exploitation, women and girls have true freedom of choice, and live lives free from sexism and all forms of violence. Women’s contribution to all aspects of social, political and cultural life is recognised, rewarded and celebrated.*

### MISSION

*We represent an inclusive, fearless, loud, independent feminist voice and bring the voices of women and girls into the European political arena. We act as a catalyst connecting different actors to bring transformational change at both national and European level. Representing the diversity of the women’s movement across Europe, we build consensus and mobilise our members’ collective experience and expertise to work on major issues affecting women and girls. We strive to realise women’s rights, equality between women and men and social justice, leaving no woman and girl behind.*

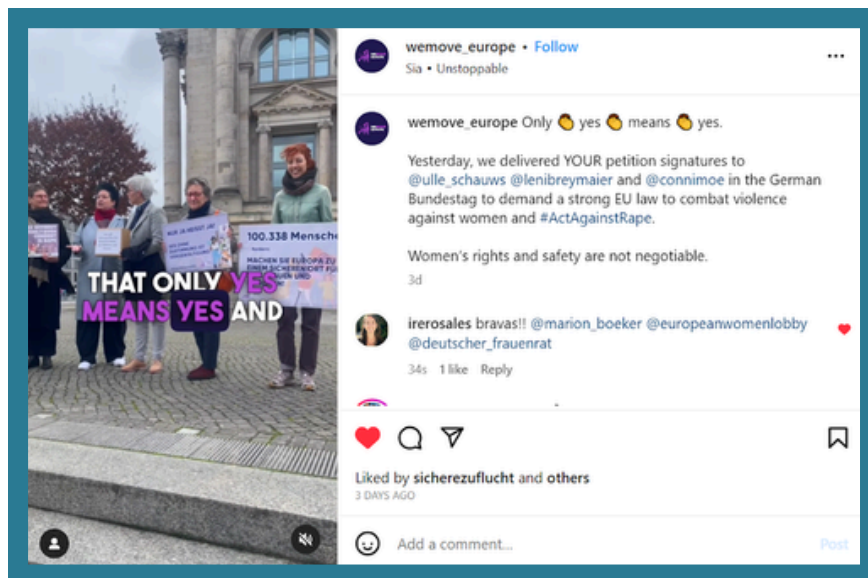


2022-2024 EWL was consulted and provided advocacy for drafting and adoption of the following EU directives.

## In 2023:

- **Directive on combating VAW and Domestic Violence** (will be reviewed and improved 2028)

– a law that EWL tried in the last 30 years to get in practice: the first EU law to ensure that victims of violence against women and domestic violence receive adequate protection, support, access to justice and reparation, no matter where they live in the EU. The EWL advocacy was extremely busy and accompanied by many actions, a signature campaign and the stressful debate on the exclusion of “rape” as an included form of VAWG by the German and French justice ministers (liberals). But this will be revised soon.



- EP Initiative on Prostitution
- EU-Pay Transparency Directive – for equal pay (**deadline to implement is 26st of June 2026**)
- EU-Accession to the Istanbul Convention (which again enshrines EU-Accession countries like Turkey to IC obligations after Turkey’s withdrawal in 2021)
- The implementation of Gender Budgeting into the EU Budget and member states budgets at 1st January 2023

## In 2024:

- Updated Anti-Trafficking Directive
- In 2024 EWL published a Desk Study REPORT ON CYBER VIOLENCE, which you can find on EWL's webpage, including recommendations for policies and regulations, along with summaries in 25 EU languages: <https://womenlobby.org/new-publication-report-on-cyber-violence-against-women/>
- Through the 2024 EU elections we called on the EU Member States to adopt specific measures to:
  1. Achieve parity democracy & women's equal representation;
  2. Champion women's economic independence towards a feminist economic model;
  3. Put an end to all forms of violence against women and girls perpetuated by the patriarchal system;
  4. Put an end to the neo-liberal and patriarchal exploitation of women's and girls' bodies;
  5. Guarantee women's bodily autonomy;
  6. Include women's voices in peace-building;
  7. Make women an integral part of the green and digital transitions.

## In 2025:

- In spring EWL participated in several events on WPS UNSCR 1325 and women's important role as peace and change makers;
- The completed petition on free and safe abortion in the EU, which resulted in 1 September 2025 in the number of 1,2 MIO signatures, enough to make the European Parliament work on its implementation;
- After the elections and with the new EU Parliament in place from April to end of August 2025 EWL worked on the MFF- The Multiannual Financial Framework (7 years) and joint the EU CSO Consultations;
- In July EWL provided content to the new EU Gender Equality Strategy 2026-2030;
- In August EWL provided content to the EU CSO Consultation for the EWL Contribution to the EU Civil Society Strategy;

In September the Women's Youth Summer camp AGORA was joined by 40 amazing young women and EWL celebrated its 10th anniversary;



- On 6 Nov during EU Gender Equality Week I was speaker on the “Gender Budgeting in New MFF (2028-2024)- Moving Forward” Panel in the European Parliament (see the [recording here](#)) as an professional expert but, the moderator when introducing my biography, it was also mentioned that I represent NGOs as EWL and in it IAW.

## **At its 2025 in-person EWL Board Meeting in Budapest (Hungary), EWL decided upon drafts on**

- Recommendations to the EU and its member states on Equal representation (parity), having had Mrs. Amelie, former CEDAW Committee member, in a session and EWL joined the Global Gender Parity Network which she had established;
- Updated recommendations on safe and free abortion;
- Draft recommendations on surrogacy;
- Recommendations on gender digital exclusion;
- Strategic discussion on Gender Budgeting in the upcoming Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2028-2034- Pathways for improved financial sustainability and to gender mainstreaming in all portfolios, and add a well defined set of qualitative and quantitative indicators throughout, make all member states by regular training, dialogues with all stakeholders including NGOs, experts, ... work coherently on GB on their local, national and regional level, do evaluation and correcting steering changes at least all two years; next to much more, undergo GB methodological analyses and evaluation on all budget lines, programmes and fundings and Ex and Post Ante impacts on Women, Peace and Security, defense, militarisation;
- Additionally, EWL was introduced as a member of the European Gender Budgeting Network (EGBN) for our 26-28 March 2026 Conference on GB in the next EU MFF (2028-24) with the EU-Presidency in Cyprus, Nikosia. We wanted to have Mary Collins, the EWL SecGen and a staff member there on panels in order to merge more experts and women's NGOs to push forward GB in MFF and all EU levels as a strong and well methodology for gender mainstreaming in finances. EWL agreed to this; we in EWL now are collaborating with EGBN and British GB Watchdog and many more and will continue to join the next EU Presidencies on this (Ireland, Lithuania, Greece, Italy...);

- 
- Strategy to encounter the backlash against women's rights (this is a result on a webinar in September 2025 and the Brussels and member states experiences);
  - Getting control and influence over AI to make it coherent on women's rights and free from gender stereotypes, cyber violence against women and girls (CVAWG) and use it;
  - The Feminist Economics Working Group including Subgroup of Peace, which I chair, had made a list of long-term existing and new issues, which shall be worked out 2026 in a new updated version of our Purple Pact;
  - Planning of CSW 70 since EWL is always involved and concerned on access to justice.

On 18th of December EWL offered a Webinar on the next MFF and our plans and demands.

# UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

*Valeria Mangani, Main Representative*

The year 2025 has been one of exceptional intensity for IAW's engagement at FAO. As Main Representative, I maintained a consistent and active presence across the full range of FAO's work throughout the year, attending in person all major sessions held at FAO Headquarters in Rome, and following international events via official webcast when held abroad.

At the level of FAO's governing bodies, I attended the 177th and 179th Sessions of the FAO Council as well as the historic 44th FAO Conference, which coincided with the Organization's 80th anniversary. On each occasion I intervened in the NGO forum to advocate for the stronger inclusion of women's civil society organizations in FAO's policy and governance processes.

Food security was a central and recurring theme throughout the year. I followed closely the launch of the SOFI 2025 report — presented for the first time on African soil, in Addis Ababa — which confirmed that women remain more food insecure than men in every region of the world, and that some 673 million people still faced hunger in 2024. I also monitored the Global Report on Food Crises and FAO's participation in the High-Level Political Forum in New York, submitting IAW observations on the disproportionate burden that women and girls bear in contexts of acute hunger.

On food safety, I attended in person the 48th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, where new international standards were adopted on fresh dates, lead limits in spices, and food additives — decisions with direct implications for women-led food businesses in developing countries. I also participated in the World Food Safety Day commemorations at FAO Headquarters, whose 2025 theme, "Food safety: science in action", highlighted the importance of translating scientific evidence into accessible guidance for producers and consumers worldwide.



The Committee on World Food Security was particularly active this year. I attended both the June multi-stakeholder dialogue and the full 53rd Plenary Session in October, engaging actively through the Civil Society Mechanism. A landmark achievement of 2025 was the adoption of the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment, to which IAW contributed formal observations during the consultation process. The session also marked the 20th anniversary of ICARRD, with substantive discussions on land tenure governance and the protection of women's land rights against dispossession — one of IAW's core advocacy priorities.

On land rights more broadly, I attended the launch of the joint FAO-UNCCD Technical Guide on Tenure and Land Degradation Neutrality, advocating for the inclusion of gender-sensitive indicators in its monitoring framework, and participated in the resumed sessions of COP16 on Biodiversity, hosted by FAO in February, where sustainable land use and community-based resource management were at the centre of debate.

In the area of fisheries, I followed via webcast the 36th Session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI), monitoring closely the discussions on the Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries and the call for gender-disaggregated fisheries data. I also followed the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean annual session in Nice via webcast and briefed IAW's Mediterranean network on outcomes. In both cases I submitted IAW's position advocating for the stronger inclusion of women — who represent a largely invisible but essential workforce in fish processing and trade — in governance and policy dialogue.

Across the themes of rural development and agrifood transformation, I followed online the Financing for Development Conference in Seville and the FAO Regional Conference for Africa, submitting IAW statements in both cases, and attended in person the launch of the FACE-NDC climate education initiative at FAO Headquarters, which highlighted the links between renewable energy transitions and gender equality in rural communities.



Without question, the most extraordinary event of the year was World Food Day on 16 October, which this year took on a truly historic character. The celebrations were part of a full week of activities — the World Food Forum flagship event — held from 10 to 17 October at FAO Headquarters in Rome, guided by the theme "Hand in Hand for Better Foods and a Better Future". I attended in person throughout the entire week, which is undoubtedly the most widely attended and visible annual event on the FAO calendar, bringing together delegations from governments, civil society, the private sector, academia, and youth networks from across the globe.

World Food Day itself — 16 October — brought together an exceptional gathering of world leaders. Among those present at FAO Headquarters were Queen Letizia of Spain, King Letsie III of Lesotho, the President of Uruguay, senior Italian government representatives, and His Holiness Pope Leo XIV, making his first ever visit to FAO under the UN family. The Director-General's opening address framed the right to food as a fundamental human right, inseparable from peace and from the dignity of every person on earth.

The centrepiece of the day was the inauguration of the Food and Agriculture Museum and Network — FAO MuNe — a permanent legacy of FAO's 80th anniversary. The museum was opened by FAO Director-General QU Dongyu and Italian President Sergio Mattarella in a ceremony at FAO Headquarters. Covering approximately 1,300 square metres and situated in the heart of Rome between the Circus Maximus and the Colosseum, FAO MuNe is a permanent, interactive and immersive educational space open to the public — to students, families, and international visitors alike, both in person and online. Guided by the slogan "Explore. Learn. Act.", the museum blends culinary traditions, agricultural heritage, scientific knowledge, and innovation into a living experience of FAO's mission. At the heart of the museum lies the HOPE room, entirely dedicated to Indigenous Peoples, which was inaugurated with the historic first-ever visit to FAO by Chief Deskaheh, leader of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy — a deeply symbolic moment in the context of FAO's 80th anniversary and its growing commitment to Indigenous Peoples' food systems and knowledge.



As IAW Representative, my presence at these celebrations was an opportunity to reaffirm, in one of the most visible and well-attended forums of the year, that women's empowerment and gender equality must remain at the core of FAO's mandate for the next 80 years.

Throughout 2025, IAW's advocacy at FAO has been coherent and consistent: ensuring that women's voices, data, and rights are embedded in the policies and recommendations that shape global food systems. I look forward to continuing this engagement in 2026.

# International Criminal Court in The Hague

*Diedre Exell Pirro, IAW Co-representative*

The role of the International Criminal Court (ICC) is to investigate and, where warranted, to try individuals charged with the gravest crimes relating to the international community: genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and the crime of aggression. As a court of last resort, its object is to complement, not take the place of, national courts. It is governed by an international treaty called the Rome Statute. To date, 125 countries are States Parties to the Rome Statute of the ICC, which was adopted on 17 July 1998, nearly 25 years ago. Out of them, 33 are African States; 19 are Asia-Pacific States; 20 are from Eastern Europe, now including Ukraine which signed the Rome Statute on 20 January 2000, and, on 25 October 2024, it deposited its instrument of ratification of the Rome Statute while there is news that Hungary is now planning to leave the Court; 28 are from Latin American and Caribbean States; and 25 are from Western European and other States. The United States of America, Sudan, China, India, and Russia are not State Parties to the ICC and do not recognize the jurisdiction of the Court.

On 14 June 2023, the ICC officially launched four strategic plans for 2023 to 2025: the ICC Strategic Plan 2023-2025; the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) Strategic Plan for 2023 to 2025; the Registry Strategic Plan for 2023 to 2025; and the Trust Fund of Victims Strategic Plan for 2023 to 2025. This is the first time that all four strategic plans were developed and adopted concurrently, following the same three-year cycle. The aim was to promote greater synergies while upholding the independence of the organs involved in the Court's judicial proceedings. However, with current global events, especially with two major conflicts, that in Ukraine and that in Gaza, it has proved a difficult and dramatic triennial for the ICC.





The 2024 edition of the ICC Office of the Prosecutor’s Annual Report, “The Law in Action for All,” provides an in-depth overview of its activities over the last year and the steps taken towards implementing the Office’s Strategic Plan for 2023–2025. The Report highlights key developments that have shaped the year, and outlines strategic initiatives to achieve the Office’s mandate of ensuring justice and accountability for crimes under the Court’s jurisdiction independently, impartially and effectively. There have been significant developments in various situations and investigations. There was also a record number of applications for arrest warrants: 30 current outstanding warrants of arrest known to the public, including 18 warrants resulting from applications in the last three years; these include six arrest warrants in the Situation in Ukraine, which, although issued as secret, were publicly announced as having been issued by the Court. These do not include pending non-public arrest warrants which Judges may issue under seal. These are designed to ensure the safety and protection of victims and witnesses, to maintain the integrity of investigations and evidence, and/or to enhance the chances of tracking and arresting suspects and securing their transfer to the Court.

Particularly disturbing are the recent attacks on the impartiality and independence of the Court. U.N. investigators are currently examining allegations of sexual misconduct by International Criminal Court Chief Prosecutor Karim Khan (British) made in October 2024. He has temporarily stepped down while the investigations proceed. It is however suspected that Mr Khan, who was elected as the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court in February 2021, may be being targeted after the warrants issued by his office in the high profile cases of Benjamin Netanyahu and Vladimir Putin.

Added to this, on 20 August 2025, the United States government announced new designations for sanctions against International Criminal Court Judges Kimberly Prost (Canada) and Nicolas Guillou (France), as well as Deputy Prosecutors Nazhat Shameem Khan (Fiji) and Mame Mandiaye Niang (Senegal). These measures clearly seek to intimidate the ICC’s elected officials and, ultimately, to strip victims of their right to justice. According to Reuters, there also is speculation that the United States is considering imposing further sanctions against the entire International Criminal Court, putting the court’s day-to-day operations in jeopardy as retaliation for the ICC’s investigations of suspected Israeli war crimes.



In November 2024, the ICC, it should be noted, indicted Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Defence Minister Yoav Gallant, as well as figures from the Hamas militant group, for alleged crimes committed during the Gaza war. The former are allegedly responsible for the war crimes of starvation as a method of warfare and of intentionally directing an attack against the civilian population; and the crimes against humanity of murder, persecution, and other inhumane acts from at least 8 October 2023 until at least 20 May 2024.

Instead, the accusations against Hamas at least from October 2023 include taking hostages as a war crime, rape and other acts of sexual violence as crimes against humanity, also in the context of captivity, torture as a crime against humanity, and also as a war crime, in the context of captivity, other inhumane acts as a crime against humanity, in the context of captivity, cruel treatment as a war crime in the context of captivity, and outrages upon personal dignity as a war crime. The Court has recognized the state of Palestine as a member and has ruled that this gives it jurisdiction over actions on Palestinian territory. Both Israel and the United States reject this.

To recap the history of the ICC's investigation into the Situation in Ukraine, the first declaration was lodged by the Government of Ukraine, which accepted ICC jurisdiction with respect to alleged crimes committed on Ukrainian territory from 21 November 2013 to 22 February 2014. The second declaration extended this time period to encompass ongoing alleged crimes committed throughout the territory of Ukraine from 20 February 2014 onwards. On 28 February 2022, the ICC Prosecutor announced he would seek authorization to open an investigation into the Situation in Ukraine, followed on 1 March 2022, by a State Party referral from the Republic of Lithuania. This led the Prosecutor to open an investigation into the Situation in Ukraine on the basis of the referrals received. This investigation encompassed any past and present allegations of war crimes, crimes against humanity, or genocide committed on any part of the territory of Ukraine by any person from 21 November 2013 onwards.

On 17 March 2023, ICC Pre-Trial Chamber II issued two warrants of arrest in the context of the Situation in Ukraine: one for Mr Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin, President of the Russian Federation, and the other for Ms Maria Alekseyevna Lvova-Belova, Commissioner for Children's Rights in the Office of the President of the Russian Federation, based on reasonable grounds to believe that each suspect bears responsibility for the war crime of unlawful deportation of population (children) and that of unlawful transfer of population (children) from occupied areas of Ukraine to the Russian Federation, to the prejudice of Ukrainian children. However, as Russia withdrew from the ICC in 2016, after the Court ruled its invasion of Crimea amounted to an "ongoing occupation," Russia maintains that it has no legal obligation to cooperate with the ICC and is unlikely to enforce arrest warrants against suspects located on Russian territory or hand them over for prosecution or trial.

Especially in this time in which the ICC's reputation and, perhaps, even its future existence is under threat, it must always be kept in mind that the IAW and its member organisations can be invaluable in promoting the ICC's principles and work. If you, as an IAW member organisation, have direct experience of the issues with the Court's mandate, you can and should provide the ICC's Prosecutor's Office with that information. If not, and your country is not a State Party to the Rome Statute, you can strongly campaign and lobby for it to become one so that the iniquitous impunity gap can finally be closed. If you are not sure where your country stands, you can find out on the International Criminal Court website at: [Assembly of States Parties](#) . If your country is a State Party, you can promote the Court by providing your members with up-to-date information on its work – just as IAW will continue to do.



# UNESCO

*Kerstin Löffler, Main Representative  
Dr. Sibylle von Heydebrand and Dr. Maria Longobardi*

Since January 2025, a fresh wind has been blowing through our representation at UNESCO. Dr. Sibylle von Heydebrand, Dr. Maria Longobardi and Kerstin Löffler were appointed to represent the International Alliance of Women (IAW) at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris.

The year opened on January 24 with the **International Day of Education**, themed around AI and education. “AI can either reinforce harmful gender stereotypes through biased training data or become a force for equality by eliminating such biases and amplifying women’s voices”, emphasizes Sibylle.

Science and technology were at the forefront in February. Maria (called Marilena) Longobardi attended two key events at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris: the Opening Ceremony of the **International Year of Quantum Science and Technology (IYQ 2025)**, a global initiative highlighting the transformative potential of quantum science, and the celebrations of the 10th **International Day of Women and Girls in Science**, which brought together scientists, policymakers, and students to reaffirm the urgent need for equality in STEM.

Beyond participation, Marilena is directly involved as an organizer and instructor in the **UNESCO Empowers African Women in Quantum Science** program, launched this year. “This initiative offers open learning and mentorship opportunities for African women in STEM, with a focus on quantum technologies,” explains Marilena. The program received 900 applications for only 50 places, highlighting the high demand for this type of training. The initiative addresses UNESCO’s 2025 data showing that women make up less than 30% of researchers worldwide, only 20% in AI, and under 2% in quantum-related jobs.

“These experiences have reinforced my conviction that advancing women’s participation in science requires sustained cooperation between international organizations, national institutions, and grassroots initiatives,” says Marilena. “As a delegate, my priority is to ensure that STEM, quantum education, and women’s empowerment remain central pillars in UNESCO’s agenda and in the new IAW Action Programme.”

March brought further momentum. From March 8–10, **International Women’s Day** carried the theme “For ALL Women and Girls: Rights. Equality. Empowerment.” A highlight was the consultation “Art for All at the Heart of Tomorrow’s Cultural Policies.” On March 15, the **Run for Equality** gathered thousands in Paris to promote safer and more inclusive sport. On March 24, the **Global Education Coalition** marked its five-year anniversary with a focus on gender-responsive innovation.

In May, **World Press Freedom Day** addressed “Reporting in the Brave New World,” exploring media challenges in the digital age, while also adding the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Windhoek Declaration to UNESCO’s Memory of the World Register. “The announcement underscores international efforts to preserve fragile yet foundational documents that continue to shape humanity’s pursuit of dignity, justice, and equality,” says Sibylle.

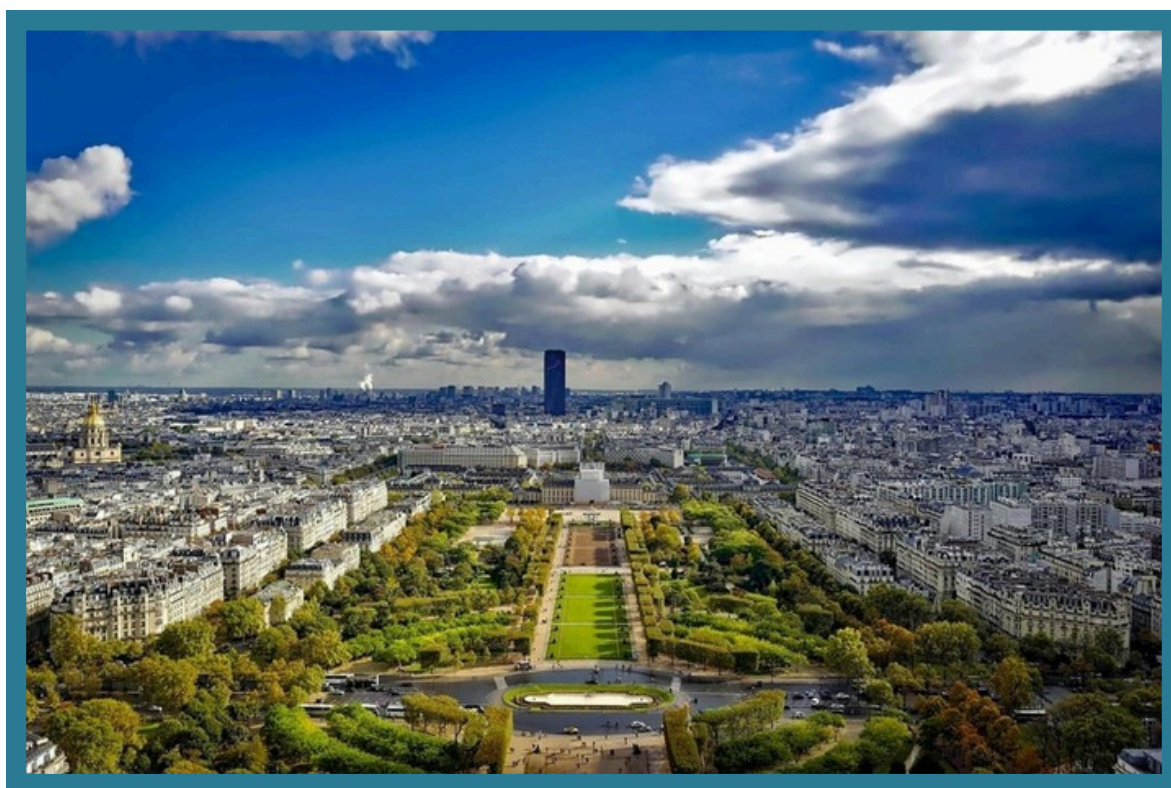
*The IAW is engaged at UNESCO for education,  
science and culture.*





June was marked by the **L'Oréal–UNESCO For Women in Science Awards**, which honored five outstanding laureates at Headquarters and offered inspiring role models. In July, we shared UNESCO's **Global Survey on Women, Culture and Emergencies**. These milestones, leading to the **Prize for Girls' and Women's Education** in September, illustrate how UNESCO links advocacy dates, policy dialogue, recognition, and public engagement to sustain equality and empowerment. The reporting period was completed by the **43rd General Conference of UNESCO** in November 2025, which reaffirmed gender equality as a core priority across UNESCO's mandate.

Looking ahead, we aim to strengthen IAW's visibility, deepen collaboration with accredited NGOs, and keep women's empowerment across all fields—culture, education, and STEM—at the heart of UNESCO's agenda. This first year has been both a learning journey and the start of renewed engagement. By combining observation with contribution, we are positioning IAW as a credible presence at UNESCO Headquarters.



*At the end of the Champ de Mars lies the characteristically curved UNESCO headquarters at Place de Fontenoy, a work by architect Marcel Breuer from the 1950s.*

## Un nouveau départ : l'AIW à l'UNESCO 2025

Depuis janvier 2025, un vent nouveau souffle sur notre représentation auprès de l'UNESCO. La Dre Sibylle von Heydebrand, la Dre Maria Longobardi et Kerstin Löffler ont été désignées pour représenter l'Alliance Internationale des Femmes (AIW) au siège de l'UNESCO à Paris. L'année s'est ouverte le 24 janvier avec la **Journée internationale de l'éducation**, placée sous le thème de l'intelligence artificielle et de l'éducation. « L'IA peut soit renforcer des stéréotypes de genre nuisibles à travers des données d'apprentissage biaisées, soit devenir une force au service de l'égalité en éliminant ces biais et en amplifiant la voix des femmes », souligne Sibylle.

Les sciences et les technologies ont été mises à l'honneur en février. Maria (dite Marilena) Longobardi a participé à deux événements majeurs au siège de l'UNESCO à Paris : la cérémonie d'ouverture de l'**Année internationale de la science et de la technologie quantiques** (AIQ 2025), une initiative mondiale soulignant le potentiel transformateur de la science quantique, ainsi que les célébrations de la **Journée internationale des femmes et des filles de science**, qui ont réuni scientifiques, décideurs et étudiants pour réaffirmer l'urgence de l'égalité dans les domaines STEM.

Au-delà de la participation, Marilena est directement impliquée comme organisatrice et formatrice dans le programme **UNESCO Empowers African Women in Quantum Science**, lancé cette année. « Cette initiative propose des opportunités d'apprentissage ouvert et de mentorat pour les femmes africaines en STEM, avec un accent particulier sur les technologies quantiques », explique t-elle. Le programme a reçu 900 candidatures pour seulement 50 places, illustrant la forte demande

pour ce type de formation. L'initiative répond aux données de l'UNESCO 2025 montrant que les femmes représentent moins de 30 % des chercheur·euses, seulement 20 % en IA et moins de 2 % dans le quantique.



« Ces expériences ont renforcé ma conviction que promouvoir la participation des femmes dans la science exige une coopération durable entre les organisations internationales, les institutions nationales et les initiatives locales », déclare Marilena. « En tant que déléguée, ma priorité est de veiller à ce que les STEM, l'éducation quantique et l'autonomisation des femmes demeurent des piliers centraux de l'agenda de l'UNESCO et du nouveau Programme d'action de l'AIW. »

Mars a apporté un nouvel élan. Du 8 au 10 mars, la **Journée internationale des droits des femmes** s'est tenue sous le thème « Pour TOUTES les femmes et filles : Droits. Égalité. Autonomisation. » Parmi les moments marquants : la consultation « L'art pour tous au cœur des politiques culturelles de demain ». Le 15 mars, la course **Run for Equality** a rassemblé des milliers de personnes à Paris afin de promouvoir un sport plus sûr et plus inclusif. Le 24 mars, la **Coalition mondiale pour l'éducation** a célébré son 5<sup>e</sup> anniversaire en mettant l'accent sur l'innovation sensible au genre.

En mai, la **Journée mondiale de la liberté de la presse** a abordé le thème « Informer dans le nouveau monde », explorant les défis médiatiques à l'ère numérique, tout en inscrivant la **Déclaration universelle des droits de l'homme** et la Déclaration de Windhoek au Registre Mémoire du monde de l'UNESCO. « Cette annonce met en évidence les efforts internationaux pour préserver des documents fragiles mais fondateurs, qui continuent à façonner la quête de dignité, de justice et d'égalité de l'humanité », déclare Sibylle.

Juin a été marqué par les **Prix L'Oréal-UNESCO Pour les Femmes et la Science**, qui ont honoré cinq lauréates remarquables au siège et offert des modèles inspirants. En juillet, nous avons partagé l'**Enquête mondiale de l'UNESCO sur les femmes, la culture et les situations d'urgence**. Ces jalons, menant au **Prix pour l'éducation des filles et des femmes** en septembre, illustrent comment l'UNESCO relie journées de plaidoyer, dialogue politique, reconnaissance et mobilisation publique pour soutenir l'égalité et l'autonomisation. La période de référence du rapport a été complétée par la tenue de la 43<sup>e</sup> **Conférence générale de l'UNESCO** en novembre 2025), au cours de laquelle l'égalité des genres a été réaffirmée comme une priorité centrale.



Pour l'avenir, nous voulons renforcer la visibilité de l'AIW, approfondir la collaboration avec d'autres ONG accréditées et maintenir l'autonomisation des femmes dans tous les domaines—culture, éducation et STEM—au cœur de l'agenda de l'UNESCO. Cette première année a été à la fois un parcours d'apprentissage et le début d'un engagement renouvelé. En conjuguant observation et contribution, nous positionnons l'AIW comme une présence crédible au siège de l'UNESCO.

# United Nations in Geneva

*Dr. Sibylle von Heydebrand, Main Representative*

## Preliminary remarks

The IAW Human Rights Team at the United Nations in Geneva is pleased to present its report on its activities during the calendar year 2025.

We report on the main activities that are directly related to the human rights of women and girls, as described in the IAW's Action Programme 2022 - 2025 in paragraph 2. Human rights of women and girls are at the heart of the activities and commitments of both the IAW and the UN Human Rights Team in Geneva.

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, MLaw Agne Seputyte, MLaw Simge Simsek.



*Appointed Members of the IAW Human Rights Team UN Geneva  
from left to right: Derya Akinci Briand, Agne Seputyte,  
Dr. Sibylle von Heydebrand (Main Representative), Simge Simsek, Dr. Laoura Alipranti*

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

On June 24, 2025, IAW's main representative Dr. Sibylle von Heydebrand invited IAW's HR Team UN Geneva to assist at an **internal in person team meeting**. We shared information about the institutions we monitor, defined the requirements for the annual report and updated the Action Plan, which we launched for the first time in 2022.

## 2. Human Rights Council (HRC), Report by Dr. Laoura Alipranti

The Human Rights Council is an intergovernmental body within the United Nations in Geneva and holds at least three regular sessions per year. In November 2025, a special session on the situation in Sudan was held.

### 57th Session (9 September – 11 October 2024)

The Annual Discussion on the Integration of a Gender Perspective focused on "*Enhancing gender integration in human rights investigations: a victim-centered perspective*." A key resolution on the elimination of domestic violence was adopted.

### 58th Session (24 February – 4 April 2025)

The Annual Full-Day Meeting addressed the *Rights of the Child* with a focus on early childhood development. Resolutions were adopted on women, diplomacy and human rights, and on protecting women human rights defenders in the digital age.

### 59th Session (16 June – 11 July 2025)

The Annual Full-Day Discussion was dedicated to women's human rights, with panels on gender-based violence in conflict and humanitarian settings and on women's leadership in peace processes. The session highlighted systematic oppression of women in Afghanistan, and adopted key resolutions on eliminating violence against women and girls, women's economic empowerment, and empowering women and girls through sport. A major report on sex-based violence was presented by the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women.

### **60th Session (8 September – 8 October 2025)**

The Annual Discussion focused on integrating women's rights across the UN system, with emphasis on gender perspectives in transitional justice. The session also included a panel on combating discrimination and violence against intersex persons.

### **38th Special Session (14 November 2025) – Sudan**

The HRC held a Special Session on the human rights crisis in Sudan, highlighting widespread sexual and gender-based violence, with women and girls identified as among the most severely affected through rape, forced displacement, and other conflict-related abuses.

## **3. NGO CSW Geneva, Report by LL.M MLaw Derya Akinci Briand**

IAW is a member of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women (NGO CSW Geneva) at UN Geneva, which brings together ECOSOC-accredited NGOs to advance women's rights, support UN goals, coordinate advocacy, and collaborate with UN Women, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), and sister committees in New York and Vienna. IAW is represented by voting member Dr. Sibylle von Heydebrand and her proxy, MLaw Derya Akinci Briand.

In 2025, NGO CSW Geneva held five meetings, including its Annual General Meeting on 23 April 2025, where Dr. von Heydebrand was reappointed as Financial Auditor on behalf of IAW. On November 12, the NGO CSW Geneva Committee held an extraordinary General Meeting. This was necessary due to the election of a new treasurer following the resignation of the previous one.

IAW representatives attended all meetings in person or in hybrid format.

Key events included:

**Consultation Day (4 March 2025):** Held prior to CSW69 in New York under the theme "Harnessing Civil Society to Implement the Beijing Platform for Action."

**HRC NGO Day (23 June 2025):** Provided space for NGOs to network and host events during the Human Rights Council session, outside the UN.

In 2025, seven organizations joined NGO CSW Geneva: La CLEF, Dyname, Lutheran World Federation, Silver Lining for the Needy Initiative, Swedish Women's Lobby, United Voices for Global Impact, and the World Council of Churches.

#### **4. Committee against Torture (CAT), Report by MLaw Simge Simsek**

The Committee against Torture (CAT) is a treaty body within the United Nations that monitors states' compliance with the Convention against Torture. It normally holds three regular sessions per year; in 2025, only two sessions were held, as one was cancelled due to the UN liquidity/ budget crisis.

##### **82nd Session (7 April – 2 May 2025)**

During this session, the Committee addressed issues affecting **women and girls**, including gender-based violence, access to justice for survivors of torture and sexual abuse, and the need for stronger protection mechanisms for women in detention and in situations of conflict and displacement.

##### **Planned Summer Session (14 – 31 July 2025)**

Status: Cancelled (due to the UN liquidity/budget crisis).

##### **83rd Session (10 November – 28 November 2025)**

The Committee placed strong emphasis on the situation of women and girls, highlighting concerns about sexual and gender-based violence, trafficking, harmful practices, and the lack of effective legal safeguards and victim support services, particularly for women in vulnerable and marginalized situations.

## **5. Human Rights Committee, Report by MLaw Agne Seputyte**

The Human Rights Committee is a body of independent experts that monitors the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It normally holds three regular sessions per year; in 2025, only two of its three regular sessions were held, as the planned third session was cancelled due to the UN liquidity/ budget crisis.

### **143rd session (3 – 28 March 2025)**

During its first session in 2025, the Human Rights Committee addressed the situation of women and girls in several States parties, with particular attention to gender-based violence, access to reproductive health services, and discrimination in family and personal status laws.

### **144th session (23 June – 25 July 2025)**

At its second session in 2025, the Committee examined States' compliance with the ICCPR in relation to women's political participation, protection against domestic and sexual violence, and harmful practices affecting girls, including early and forced marriage.

### **Third session planned for late 2025 (cancelled)**

The third session planned for late 2025, which would have included further reviews of women's rights issues, was cancelled, limiting the Committee's ability that year to follow up on persistent concerns regarding gender equality and the protection of girls under the Covenant.

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

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is a body of independent experts that monitors the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. It normally holds three regular sessions per year; in 2025, only two sessions were held, as one was cancelled due to the UN liquidity and budget crisis.



### **90th session (3 - 21 February 2025)**

During its first session of 2025, CEDAW addressed the situation of women and girls in several States parties, with particular attention to gender-based violence, women's access to sexual and reproductive health and rights, and discrimination in marriage, family relations, and nationality laws.

### **91st session (16 June – 4 July 2025)**

At its second session of 2025, 91st session (16 June – 4 July) the Committee examined States' compliance with the Convention in relation to women's political and economic participation, equal access to education and employment, and harmful practices affecting girls, including child marriage and female genital mutilation.

### **Third session planned for late 2025 (cancelled)**

The third session planned for late 2025, which would have included further country reviews and follow-up on women's rights obligations, was cancelled, limiting the Committee's ability that year to monitor progress on gender equality and the protection of women and girls under the Convention.

Arlesheim (Switzerland), February 2026

Dr. Sibylle von Heydebrand, IAW's Human Rights Main Representative to UN Geneva

**Nepal:** Recognized for constitutional gender-equality guarantees. Concerns: implementation gaps, child marriage, caste-based discrimination against Dalit women, and weak access to reproductive health services. CEDAW called for stronger enforcement and targeted protections.

**Democratic Republic of the Congo (RD Congo):** Noted adoption of some legal reforms. Raised serious concerns about conflict-related sexual violence, weak enforcement of gender laws, barriers to girls' education, and impunity for violations. Recommended urgent measures for protection and justice. The Committee also held a **half-day of general discussion on gender stereotypes** (17 Feb). UN liquidity constraints affected some ancillary meetings around this period.

- 91st session (16 June–4 July 2025)

**Afghanistan:** The Committee condemned the systematic rollback of women's rights under Taliban rule and called for international action to restore women's access to education, work, and public life.

Budget pressures during this period also disrupted some Optional Protocol working groups. Because of the **UN liquidity and budget crisis**, CEDAW had to reduce or cancel working group meetings, including the June 2025 Optional Protocol sessions on communications and inquiries. Some pre-sessional working groups were scaled back or cancelled, and one of the Committee's three annual sessions was lost. As a result, numerous State party **reviews** were postponed, delaying scrutiny of women's rights implementation worldwide.

## 7. Two remarkable November Days, Report by Dr. Sibylle von Heydebrand

In November 2024, I met with Lene Pind in Copenhagen to reflect on her leadership in the International Alliance of Women and explore how its legacy can be carried forward into the coming decades.

Soon after, I had the privilege of attending the Human Rights Concert at Victoria Hall in Geneva, at the kind invitation of Soon-Young Yoon. Held in commemoration of the **76th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, the concert culminated in the European premiere of *Everyone, Everywhere* by Daron Hagen. With remarks by Volker Türk, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and performances by more than 350 musicians and choristers, it was a profoundly moving celebration of dignity, equality, and our shared humanity.



*United Nations Office, Geneva*

# United Nations in New York

*Soon-Young Yoon, Main Representative*

*Alternate Representatives Jill Follows, Uzma Gul, and Jessica Pierson*

## **Report from Soon-Young Yoon, Main Representative:**

As the main IAW representative to the UN in New York, my primary activities involved organizing events during the CSW. I also am privileged to sit on the steering committee of the Coalition for the UN We Need (C4UN).

The main purpose of the C4UN is to open spaces for civil society at the UN and ensure that we have a voice on the Pact for the Future and UN reform. Our plan in the next year includes advocacy on UN Charter reform, convening regional meetings, and acceleration of the UN80 agenda.

My role, along with other feminists on the steering committee, is to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment as outlined in the UN Secretary-General's report on Our Common Agenda is aligned with the CSW mandates, notably the Beijing Platform for Action and CEDAW.

In addition to this, the New York IAW team has worked tirelessly to support "multilevel multilateralism" working with UN Habitat, UCLG, Metropolis on cities, and actively engaging with the Nigeria Cities for CEDAW coalition. Most important, the NY team has included attention to the UN General Assembly where major decisions are made that will affect the future of CSW and UN Women.

## **Key issues for IAW to consider:**

- We are entering a new era of Generative AI and Digital Technology. As feminist NGOs, if we do not keep up with this revolutionary technology, we will be left behind. As AnnaLina Baebok, President of the General Assembly, put it at the Global Dialogue on AI Governance, governments must act now to address the new digital technology and AI. Otherwise, all of humanity will pay a high price as AI takes a wrong direction.



This digital technology revolution at the UN is already happening. IAW representatives in New York are increasingly required to attend virtual meetings. Most events during the UNGA were hybrid. For example, I attended UN Women's virtual convening of experts to review UN80 reforms impact on our work. It also is noteworthy that for the last CSW sessions, about 15,000 were virtual participants. With hybrid meetings and the AI capability for real time translations on zoom and other platforms, meetings can be more inclusive and diverse than ever.

- The virtual reality at the UN is related to its financial crisis. The 2025 budget was approved for \$3.72 billion, but the expectation is for less income to materialize. This impacts our work, as budget cuts mean closed doors during evening hours — even during CSW. Also, this financial crisis will accelerate the transition from in-person UN Member States meetings to virtual ones. This is related to relocating UN offices to Nairobi, Berlin, Brussels, and other cost-saving locations. Rotation of the CSW to other locations is also under consideration, as well as shortening the CSW term to one week.

The WHO will cut its senior management staff about 20 percent. In addition, proposed structural changes include merging UNFPA with UN Women, and changes in the Women, Peace and Security. We need to follow these closely to make sure that we as feminists do not lose ground.

- Regional Economic and Social Commissions will gain greater visibility and strengthening, with more attention to regional economic groups such as the League of Arab States, ASEAN, etc. As these commissions also are the focal points for many of the CSW preparatory meetings, CSW reform also will likely be paying more attention to them. In addition, CEDAW has the potential to become a more integral part of the CSW at regional level.

- Cities and local authorities are given greater prominence in the UN80 agenda, as well as subnational groups such as parliamentarians. This is in line with the call for localization of the SDGs, including SDG5 on Gender Equality. Improved data and measurement of its targets in city as well as state and regional levels would be critical to strengthening UN's global monitoring, particularly with harmonization with AI platforms.



## Challenges and Recommendations for IAW

- We need to increase our membership to better cover multiple UN centers and adapting to the digital revolution, no longer requiring UN representatives to be physically present. This means reaching out to working and younger members, who may be reluctant if they think they must be physically present at the UN to contribute. In particular, IAW should recruit new representatives in Nairobi (UNEP, UN Women, UN Habitat etc.) as that center becomes more crucial to our work.
- More IAW representatives should attend the General Assembly in New York and possibly co-sponsor side events. The CSW is not the only gravity center for our issues. This year, I participated at events hosted by the ITU and WHO on Digital Technology and Health. Gender equality was a key topic at meetings I attended hosted by Zambia, Mozambique, and Nigeria. Zonta and Soroptimists sponsored an event on education, while numerous other events promoted ‘Madame Secretary General.’
- Consider applying for accreditation to the Department of Global Communications, which would increase the number of badges for IAW.





### **Report from Jill Follows, Alternate Representative:**

The United Nations headquarters is a wonderful place to reboot my enthusiasm for learning from others and recommit to respect all people. My favorite place of repose at UN headquarters in New York City is found in a hallway on the third floor. A beautiful mosaic made from Italian glass and called "The Golden Rule" fills the space.

As tourists and delegates admire the mural, I hear the harmony in their wishes for peace and understanding around the world.

My contributions to IAW's growing body of work are found in the IAW Journal and Newsletter or on the IAW website. They circle around the theme of civil society engagement with the United Nations and localization of UN principles, for the betterment and advancement of women and girls. I do my best to report on the side events and parallel events at CSW, Town Hall Meetings by the Working Group on Discrimination Against Women and Girls (WGDAWG), High Level Political Forums (HLPF) on Sustainable Development, and High-Level Meetings at the UN General Assembly. My reports are summarized below.

- Road to the Summit: The need for local cooperation is paramount to the success of the SDGs. Civil society inclusion is necessary to ensure implementation of the SDGs.

<https://womenalliance.org/road-to-the-summit-a-discussion-series-session-10/>



- Rescuing UN SDG #11: Rescuing the SDGs will require meaningful participation by all stakeholders. If we are to LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND, then all stakeholders must commit time and support to the implementation of policies that keep people at the center. Participation in policy making is the right of all people and a means to change the outcome. Participants need to devote time to listening sessions, storytelling and organizing to earn the trust of one another. <https://womenalliance.org/rescuing-united-nations-sdg-11/>
- A 2nd UN Charter-shall we reimagine a renewed UN? Civil society initiatives, such as climate change, should be fostered, before the clock runs out waiting for governments to take adequate measures and the UN to rewrite the Charter. [https://womenalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/IWNNews\\_Vol119\\_01\\_2024.pdf](https://womenalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/IWNNews_Vol119_01_2024.pdf)
- Child Poverty is a Country's Choice: Political will is necessary to make transformative changes. So, get to the polls and vote for women's human rights. The UN Women's Economic Empowerment Strategy calls for transformative actions to decrease poverty and provide social protections to 70% of women. It calls for investment in the care economy, gender responsive budgeting, reform of the global financial architecture and adherence to human rights. [https://womenalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/IWN\\_CSJW\\_2024-vol-120-no.-2.pdf](https://womenalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/IWN_CSJW_2024-vol-120-no.-2.pdf)
- IAW submitted an Intervention to the WGDAWG: The IAW supports the WGDAWG initiative to revive discussions on human rights and human dignity for all. As our name implies, the IAW is an alliance of women working in partnership with its organizational and individual members to secure the universal ratification and implementation, without reservation, of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). <https://womenalliance.org/iaw-submitted-an-intervention-to-the-wgdawg/>
- Reducing Inequities in Breast Cancer Survival Rates: From mobile mammography vans in Uganda to global initiatives, innovative solutions are transforming breast cancer care for women in underserved regions. (collaboration with Kathleen Montgomery and Savanna Mapelli) [https://womenalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/IWN-Vol120\\_No.1\\_2025-.pdf](https://womenalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/IWN-Vol120_No.1_2025-.pdf)

- Civil Disobedience and Women’s Empowerment: The Difference One Day Makes: How Iceland’s Women’s Day Off in 1975 reshaped the nation — and inspires new activism fifty years later. [https://womenalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/IWN\\_Summer-2025.pdf](https://womenalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/IWN_Summer-2025.pdf)
- *The Decline of Democracy*: In order to uphold the promise of democracy and implement the 2030 Agenda on sustainable development, it is critical to protect civic space, invest in women’s rights and democratic institutions, and foster inclusive cross-sector collaboration. (July 2025 HLPF on Sustainable Development, not published)

In addition, I served as a member of the CSW69 Task Force and coordinated a “tour” of UN headquarters for new delegates. I co-edited the Open Letter of IAW on Urgent Improvement of Peace Missions to Prevent and Eliminate VAWG by Peacekeepers. <https://womenalliance.org/open-letter-improvement-peace-missions/>

## **Report from Dr Uzma Gul, Alternate Representative:**

This year has been marked by active representation, policy engagement, and coalition-building for IAW. In my capacity as UN Representative, Executive Vice President, and Convener of the Health Commission, I have focused on advancing IAW’s mission to promote gender equality, strengthen women’s leadership, and integrate health and rights into global development agendas.

Throughout the year, IAW in New York maintained a strong focus on advocacy, partnerships, community engagement, and leadership. The organization actively signed and supported advocacy letters, petitions and statements, representing women’s perspectives in key dialogue forums and global decision-making spaces. At the community and grassroots level, IAW participated in local gatherings especially with the mayor and borough president’s offices along with grassroot NGOs to bridge global policy discussions with on-the-ground realities, highlighting the critical role of women’s organizations in fostering meaningful change.



CSW69 marked a pivotal moment in the global commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment. Deliberations culminated in a robust Political Declaration that reaffirmed the foundational commitments of the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. A notable focus was placed on closing the gender digital divide, ensuring women's access to technology and digital tools, and leveraging these resources to accelerate gender equality. Additionally, the Declaration underscored the importance of investing in care systems and promoting women's leadership in peace and security initiatives.

As a representative I was honored to attend, organize and host multiple events to advance dialogue on health, gender equality, and sustainable development. IAW's sponsored event, "Beijing Declaration & Platform of Action: 30 years review and future priorities for women in health and decision making," included panelists IAW President Alison Brown and the CEO of Global Health 50/50. The event highlighted the importance of inclusive engagement, leveraging digital platforms to maximize reach, and fostering collaboration between global health stakeholders to accelerate progress toward gender equality in health leadership.

In July 2025, IAW participated in a high-level forum at the United Nations, engaging with global leaders, policymakers, and civil society representatives to advance women's rights and gender equality. Through active participation, IAW strengthened partnerships, contributed to meaningful dialogue, and highlighted the critical role of women's organizations in translating global commitments into local impact.

In addition, I represented IAW and engaged in high-level dialogues and advocated for women's rights and health equity. Below I summarize key insights gathered during the 80th UN General Assembly (UNGA80) in September 2025.

- UNGA80 Ministerial Side Event –Women, Peace, and Security

Theme: “Advancing Women, Peace, and Security agendas; fostering global collaboration.”

Hosted by Japan and Norway with UN Women, this side event reaffirmed the centrality of the WPS agenda amid evolving global challenges. Speakers emphasized the need for innovation, adaptation, and accountability in advancing WPS commitments. Discussions focused on integrating WPS across all sectors of governance, elevating women’s leadership in peacebuilding, and mobilizing adequate resources to sustain meaningful implementation. The event marked 25 years of UNSC Resolution 1325 and reiterated the global community’s responsibility to protect and expand women’s role in security and peace efforts.

Key Takeaways:

- Focus on gender-responsive policies for peacebuilding and security.
- Strengthen regional and national WPS networks to implement SDG 5.
- Advocate for sustainable funding and leadership representation of women in security frameworks.

- UNGA80 Side Event – Nature, Peace, Security

Theme: “Exploring the nexus between environmental degradation, conflict, and stability.”

This high-level breakfast discussion, convened by Adelphi Global, WWF International, and the Permanent Missions of Slovenia and Germany, focused on the links between environmental degradation and conflict. Main speakers included Alexandra Fong (UN DPA), Turban Saleh (UNDP), and Matti Lehtonen (UNEP). The session called for mainstreaming nature-positive approaches into global security programming.

Key Takeaways:

- Nature loss is a multiplier of conflict and source of instability.
- Healthy ecosystems build resilience; conservation and nature-based solutions support peace.
- Strategic integration of environmental factors in security policies is essential.

- UNGA80 Ministerial Side Event – WPS Focal Points Network
- Theme: “Strengthening national and regional WPS frameworks for sustainable peace.”
- The event was organized by WPS Focal Points Network where they had Ministers from various countries, UN representatives, civil society leaders as the speakers.
- Key Takeaways:
- Emphasis on collaboration between UN, member states and civil society.
- Need for actionable commitments to enhance women’s participation in peace and security.
- Sharing of best practices and lessons learned to accelerate SDG 5 implementation.

Note: I also serve as Convenor of the IAW Health Commission, and additional reports from the UNGA80 related to Health appear in my report of the Health Commission.

Through its strategic engagements at the UN and related international forums, IAW successfully elevated its profile within the UN system and among key global partners. The organization played a pivotal role in advancing policy dialogues on women’s health, rights, and decision-making, ensuring that gender perspectives were prioritized in high-level discussions. These efforts strengthened collaboration with allied organizations, civil society actors, and grassroots movements, creating a broader network of support for gender-responsive initiatives. Collectively, these engagements reinforced IAW’s leadership role in promoting gender equality, health justice, and the meaningful inclusion of women in global policy and decision-making processes.

To drive meaningful and measurable progress, IAW recommends setting specific targets, such as achieving leadership parity and eliminating harmful practices that undermine women’s rights. Advocacy for gender-transformative budgeting and policy is essential to ensure resources and decision-making frameworks prioritize gender equity. Supporting capacity building and empowering grassroots actors strengthens the link between global policy and local realities. Enhanced monitoring and reporting using disaggregated data will allow for evidence-based assessment of progress, while reinforcing networks and multi-stakeholder coalitions with organizations such as WHO, UNICEF, ILO, and other partners will amplify collective impact and sustainability of initiatives.

IAW's work is informed by key global findings highlighting persistent gender inequalities in health, education, and employment. These trends underscore the urgency of IAW's advocacy for gender equity, health justice, and inclusive leadership. It is my hope that these insights will guide future advocacy, strengthen partnerships, and accelerate progress toward inclusive, sustainable, and resilient solutions on both local and global scales.



*United Nations Office, New York*



# UN Vienna

*Rosy Weiss, Main Representative*

The IAW delegation has now two young Austrian members, Aylin Ak and Clara Weiss, serving as liaisons to the Vienna International Centre and its many activities. Our members at large are President Alison Brown, Antonia Lavine and Ruhiya Yousuf.

As a reminder: IAW is a member of three **NGO committees** active at the UN Vienna:

- The NGO Committee on the Status of Women
- The NGO Committee on Sustainable Development
- The Alliance of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. See report 2024 (1)

Another reminder: **UNODC, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2)**– where we are accredited - services (among others)

- the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), its Commission and its Conference of the Parties (COSP) and the
- UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), its Commission and its Conference of the Parties (COSP).

Other areas of concern to IAW but not followed actually are family, drugs, ageing, peace, and industrial development (UNIDO). **Please let [iawunvie@womenalliance.org](mailto:iawunvie@womenalliance.org) know if you are interested in contributing to one of these important areas.**

**(1)**[https://crimealliance.org/resources/publications/12\\_ALLIANCE\\_ANNUAL\\_REPORT\\_2024\\_DRAFT.pdf](https://crimealliance.org/resources/publications/12_ALLIANCE_ANNUAL_REPORT_2024_DRAFT.pdf)

**(2)**See also its HR/Gender Strategy: [https://www.unodc.org/documents/evaluation/HumanRights-GenderEquality/Strategy\\_for\\_Gender\\_Equality\\_and\\_the\\_Empowerment\\_of\\_Women\\_2022-2026.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/evaluation/HumanRights-GenderEquality/Strategy_for_Gender_Equality_and_the_Empowerment_of_Women_2022-2026.pdf)



## Preparations for the 15th UN Crime Congress

a) The European Preparatory Conference took place in Vienna from 25 to 27 March 2025 (3).

Activities of the Youth Network in the lead-up to the 15th UN Crime Congress

A Youth Network GenJust was established by UNODC in April 2024 through an open call, bringing together young individuals passionate about crime prevention and criminal justice. The Network also aims to increase the substantive knowledge of youth participants on UNODC mandates on crime prevention and criminal justice issues, as well as the overall theme, agenda items and workshop topics of the 15th Crime Congress. The Youth Network members meet on a regular basis to plan their work and co-create GenJust activities. The GenJust Youth Network is composed of 50 people, 10 young people from each region (Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Western Asia). For more information on the Youth Network members, see (4). See also Recommendations from the GenJust Europe Regional Youth Consultation for the 15th Crime Congress (5).

b) The 34th session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) took place in Vienna from 19 to 23 May 2025. The 35th session is expected to begin June 2026.

An interesting thematic discussion is to be reported on addressing new, emerging and evolving forms of crime, including crimes that affect the environment, smuggling of commercial goods, and trafficking in cultural property. In all contributions, the essential role of multilateralism, international cooperation, and technical assistance in confronting complex and evolving criminal threats—from organized crime and corruption to terrorism — was highlighted. Central to this collective effort is the recognition that enduring solutions benefit from collaboration across all sectors of society.

**(3)**Report: See A/CONF.241/RPM.3/2

**(4)**[https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CCPCJ/genjust/GENJUST\\_GLOBAL\\_BLUEPRINT\\_01-08-25.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CCPCJ/genjust/GENJUST_GLOBAL_BLUEPRINT_01-08-25.pdf)

**(5)**[https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CCPCJ/CCPCJ\\_Sessions/CCPCJ\\_34/ECN152025\\_CRP4\\_e.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CCPCJ/CCPCJ_Sessions/CCPCJ_34/ECN152025_CRP4_e.pdf)

c) UNTOC Review Mechanism: Two online **Constructive Dialogues** are going to take place early October and will be followed by Antonia and myself:

- 8 October on Trafficking in Persons
- 13 October on Smuggling of Migrants.

The report will be published in one of the next Newsletters.

d) A briefing for NGOs on preparations for the 15th UN Crime Congress took place on 17 September 2025, organized by the UNODC Civil Society Unit in cooperation with the NGO Alliance on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the Secretariat to the Congress, followed by an Intersessional Meeting of the CCPCJ on the same topic on September 22.

An overview of the ongoing preparations, including the four agenda items, can be found at [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/crimecongress/](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/crimecongress/). Agenda item 1 “Advancing innovative and evidence-based crime prevention strategies towards social, economic and environmental development” will be accompanied by a workshop on “building resilient societies, with a focus on protecting women, children and youth – fostering engagement, education and the culture of lawfulness.”

Negotiations on the Abu Dhabi Declaration have already started. Deadline for registration of ECOSOC status NGOs is 10 January 2026 (they will receive invitations on December 2025), for individual experts is 5 December 2025. Hybrid 1-hour ancillary meetings and stakeholder labs (NGO labs, youth labs) will be made possible. Apparently, there also will be the possibility to organize online events. (Please contact the Secretariat beforehand and – if permitted - send the necessary data by 25 March at the latest to the Secretariat of the Congress). As usual, oral and written statements will be possible.

## Outlook:

Important meetings to be followed:

- 6-7 October 2025, 15th COSP to UNTOC: Working Group on Trafficking in Persons, Vienna
- 9-10 October 2025, 12th COSP to UNTOC; Working Group on Smuggling of Migrants, Vienna
- 15-19 December 2025, 11th COSP to UNCAC, Doha
- 25-30 April 2026, 15th Crime Congress, Abu Dhabi, with the theme “Accelerating crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law: protecting people and planet and achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the digital age.”



*United Nations Office, Vienna*

# World Health Organisation - WHO

*Ursula Nakamura-Stoecklin, former IAW Representative at WHO*



Like several other NGOs, IAW is no longer officially accredited by WHO, since 2019. Nevertheless, we try to maintain our existing contacts as best we can. As always, it is important to focus on those aspects that affect particularly the health of women and girls.

At first glance, this is often not apparent, as gender-neutral language is increasingly used within the WHO. So, often one only talks about “people”. However, when it comes to the actual content, it is clear that WHO continues to be very concerned about the health and well-being of the female population.

By browsing the internet or by personal contacts, we learn a lot about some WHO departments dealing with general topics such as immunization and vaccinations, mental health or antimicrobial resistance (against antibiotics).

It is remarkable that, after years of tough negotiations, WHO at its General Assembly 2025 has succeeded in pushing through a globally applicable **agreement** on measures to be taken in the event of a pandemic.

We know only too well that, with financial resources becoming increasingly precarious, it is essential to ensure that vulnerable persons in low-income countries can get access to rudimentary health care. So, WHO is particularly trying to reach the women and girls who are most affected, and it is often successful in doing so.

With One Health, WHO wants an integrated, unifying approach that aims to sustainably balance and optimize the health of humans, animals and ecosystems.

### **But now let's turn to female biology!**

WHO's efforts in this regard are best found under the WHO World Sexual Health Day on 4 September 2025. Especially in times when the sexual and reproductive health rights of women and girls (SRHR) around the world are under threat, undisputed medical research is needed more than ever.

Here, WHO makes a very important contribution with its recent fact sheets. They deal with female diseases that have not yet been extensively researched, such as endometriosis, polycystic ovary syndrome, bacterial vaginosis or candidiasis. It is to be hoped that these important findings on the health of women and girls can be put into practice.

Despite increasing patriarchal threats and fake news from various states and groups, WHO remains steadfast in its commitment to the sexual and reproductive health rights of women and girls.

### **The Family Planning fact sheet points out the following:**

- *Among the 1.9 billion women of reproductive age (15–49 years) worldwide in 2021,*
- *1.1 billion have a need for family planning; of these, 874 million are using modern contraceptive methods, and 164 million have an unmet need for contraception.*
- *Access to contraception supports the fundamental human right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of children. It also provides significant health benefits by preventing unintended pregnancies and reducing related health risks.*
- *Many different contraceptive options are available to prevent unintended pregnancy, including both temporary (reversible) and permanent methods.*
- *Only one contraceptive method, condoms, can prevent both pregnancy and the transmission of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV.*



Family planning allows people to attain their desired number of children and determine the spacing of pregnancies. It is achieved through use of contraceptive methods and the treatment of infertility. Access to family planning supports people's right to make informed choices about their sexual and reproductive health. It plays a vital role in achieving broader development goals by promoting health, advancing gender equality, and supporting education and economic opportunity, contributions that align directly with SDG 3.7, which calls for **universal access to sexual and reproductive health care, including family planning.**

WHO is also fighting for safe abortion methods on the one hand and, at the same time, against the again increasing risks of maternal death during childbirth.

Let us hope that WHO can pursue its fundamentally important goal of **One Health** also in future!





Reports of Regional Officers

Rapports des Officiers  
Régionaux





# Arab and Gulf Region

*Prof. Horeya Megahed, Regional Vice President*

Women in the Arab region, as well as the concerned authorities, have made significant strides in various fields, demonstrating their capabilities and determination, with several positive actions and initiatives dedicated to women's empowerment and recognition.

## **Legal and Parliamentary Aspects**

- The Egyptian state has enacted numerous laws supporting women in all fields: in July 2024, the law on the Care of the Rights of the Elderly. Additionally, the Unified Insurance Law (155 of 2024) approves the divorce risk insurance policy. This includes an unprecedented provision requiring the husband to pay an insurance amount under the "divorce risk insurance" clause, which the divorced woman receives according to the terms and conditions specified by law.
- In July 2024, Tunisia amended its maternity and childbirth laws, unifying maternity leave between the public and private sectors for three months with full pay, with an additional month of rest in the event of the birth of twins or more, or if the newborn is disabled, premature, or suffers from congenital anomalies.
- In September 2024, the UAE passed Law No. 13 (2024) to combat domestic violence.
- However, in January 2025, a major setback took place by the Iraqi parliament when it passed a law allowing girls as young as 9 to be married. This triggered national and international outrage, described as the “end of women’s rights.”
- Morocco hosted in December 2024 the first session of the Morocco-EU Women Parliamentarians Forum as part of the institutional twinning project between the Moroccan House of Representatives and the European Union.

The UN Women–ESCWA Report in 2024 shows that women hold only 18% of parliamentary seats in the Arab world. However, at the country level, some progress took place; for instance, in the 2024 Jordan elections, women got nearly 20% of parliamentary seats, while they got 14% before.

## **Executive and Governmental Aspects**

- In August 2025, Egypt and UN Women renewed and deepened their cooperation on gender equality. This included the launch of the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women in 2024.
- Egypt's National Council of Women, with the United Nations Population Fund, hosted a workshop for doctors on psychological support for survivors of gender-based violence, namely for healthcare providers. This activism takes place amid Egypt's interest in expanding women's mental health services. It's worthy of note that over 14,000 cases were treated in 2025.
- In December 2024, the UAE established the Ministry of Family, besides the Ministry of Community Empowerment and Wellbeing; both were added to the existing Minister of State for Happiness since 2016. All three ministers are women.
- In December 2024, Syria appointed its first female Minister for Women's Affairs, first female Central Bank Governor, and first female provincial governor (in Sweida). However, the women's representation was weak in the first Syrian National Dialogue Conference in February 2025 after the fall of the Bashar al-Assad regime.
- For the first time in the 2024 Algerian presidential elections, three women are running: Louisa Hanoune, Zoubida Assoul, and Saida Neghaza. They didn't win yet; they proved that women can compete at the highest level.

- At the first municipal elections after the fall of the Gaddafi regime in November 2024, women comprised 30% of candidates on electoral lists and 3% as individual candidates, while women comprised 30% of voters.

## **Sustainable Development Aspects**

Generally, the UN Women–ESCWA Report in 2024 shows that maternal mortality has dropped by 45% since 2000, and 29.4 million girls in the region were married before age 18.

Additionally, only 1 in 5 women participate in the formal economy, as unpaid domestic labour for women is 4.7 times the rate of men.

- In Egypt, the year 2024 witnessed the completion of the integration of women into the largest development programs, such as the “Decent Life Program,” the “National Project for the Development of the Egyptian Family,” and the presidential initiative “A New Beginning for Building the Egyptian Human Being.” In addition to the launch of the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women in 2024, which also represents an incentive to create more sustainable job opportunities, the Egyptian government places great emphasis on investing in girls. Aligning with this national policy, the National Council for Women has succeeded in issuing more than 1.3 million national ID cards for women, implementing door-to-door campaigns in Egyptian villages, and delivering awareness messages all over the country. Additionally, the government launched a presidential initiative for women's health, which has received much international acclaim for its proactive achievements in early detection of breast cancer, reducing the rate of late-stage cases, and shortening the diagnosis period.

In July 2024, Egypt launched a joint project, "Tahweesha" (the Arabic word for "saving"), which is the first country to implement a model of public-private cooperation in Africa and the Middle East that aims to bridge economic gender gaps, promoting digital savings and lending groups.

- In February 2025, a regional summit, “Shaping the Future of Care in the Arab Region,” was held in Jordan to discuss Arab policies about childcare, elderly care, and empowering women in caregiving industries.
- In November 2024, the Global Women's Forum was held in the UAE under the theme “the power of influence,” and it covered the role of women in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.
- In January 2025, the First MENA Regional Forum on Women’s Empowerment Principles (WEPs) was held in Morocco, where private sector representatives discussed challenges of gender equity in the workplace. Additionally, the “Male Allyship Toolkit” was launched, and the number of WEPs signatories from the region has been significantly increased.
- In 2024 Regional Gender Equality Index, the UAE got first place thanks to the increasing number of women graduates from universities (70%), occupying 46% of the job market, 25% of ministerial positions, and 10% of federal national council seats.

## **Economic and Innovation Aspects**

On International Women’s Day (March 2025), there was a global recognition of Dr. Rania Al-Mashat, the Egyptian current minister for National Planning and International Cooperation; she was selected among the Middle East's Top 30 Women Leaders of Change.

- The Top 50 Women Forum is the first platform in Egypt to work exclusively on empowering women professionals with the purpose of strengthening their contribution to development and decision-making processes. Additionally, Forbes Middle East recognized 20 Arab women in leadership positions in different fields.
- Lastly, the “Break the Ceiling Touch the Sky Summit: 2025 Middle East & Africa Edition” was hosted in Dubai on September 8, 2025. It also includes an award for the “Middle East's Most Inspirational Women in Leadership.”

## Cultural and Sports Aspects

- In February 2025, Aswan Governorate hosted the annual Aswan International Women's Film Festival, where Arab female actresses and filmmakers were honored.
- August 2025, Egypt's Farida Khalil won the U19 Pentathlon World Championship in Lithuania.
- To break male dominance in car racing sport, the UAE launched the "Arabian Gazelles" as the first all-women supercar club in the Middle East.

## Genocide and Conflict

- In November 2024, the UN Office for Human Rights declared that 70% of all those who died in Gaza were civilian women and children. By September 2025, the UN records and reports on casualties in Gaza show that since October 7, 2023, the death toll has reached 65,208 and is increasing, and more than 166,071 have been injured. Over 15,000 children have been killed.
- In addition to civilians, at least 217 journalists and 224 aid workers, including 179 UNRWA staff members, were killed by Israeli troops. This ongoing genocide aims to prevent food aid, causing more than 500,000 people to face starvation and 12,000 children to be acutely malnourished: war hunger is being used. As well as in Lebanon, with the Israeli war, UN Women Lebanon Office reported that nearly 900,000 people were displaced due to the conflict, 51% of whom were women and girls.
- The humanitarian crisis in Sudan resulting from civil war has been catastrophic, namely for women and girls. The UN Women statement in April 2025 highlighted that since the war's eruption in 2023, more than 5 million women and girls have been internally displaced. With the absence of documentation, violence against women has been a war weapon used by the militia of the Rapid Support Forces. Add to that the destruction of health facilities with an increase in food insecurity.

We do hope for the end of fights and disorder soon, for a better future in the whole Arab region.

# North America

*Regional Coordinator Jessica Pierson*

It has been an honor to serve as North America Regional Coordinator for the past triennium. This report will summarize my activities and feedback from members in the region.

Each year I have surveyed the North American membership about the most burning issues they are facing in their areas. This year, I received 13 responses. Women in North America identified urgent issues spanning safety and gender-based violence (including sexual assault, domestic violence, trafficking), the erosion of reproductive rights and access to abortion and birth control, and economic inequality reflected in the gender wage gap, pay equity struggles, and exclusion from opportunities. Respondents also emphasized the burden of rising costs of living, housing, childcare, and healthcare, alongside cuts to women's programs and limited maternal healthcare, particularly for women of color and rural populations. Broader threats include political underrepresentation, the rollback of human rights and protections under past administrations, systemic attacks on diversity, equity, and inclusion, and ongoing immigration-related harms such as family separation. Together, these concerns reflect both immediate threats to women's safety and autonomy and long-term structural barriers to equality and empowerment.

One member originally from Pakistan living in North America said the most pressing issues for women in Pakistan include economic exclusion, gender-based violence with a recent rise in honor killings, political underrepresentation, high maternal mortality rates in rural areas, and the impact of religious and cultural extremism limiting women's access to education, freedom of speech, and basic rights.

During my time as Regional Coordinator, I have been in touch with the membership to convey valuable information and invite them to the September 2024 international meeting. I also participated as a speaker for two events on CEDAW co-sponsored by IAW during CSW68.

Last year I reported that 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 United States to implement CEDAW at the local level. We were joined at the briefing by IAW Geneva representatives and Cities for CEDAW advocates. I am happy to report that this briefing resulted in CEDAW Committee Member Esther Eghobamien-Mshelia spearheading the launch of the first international Cities for CEDAW campaign in Nigeria, where every state in the country has committed to the principles of CEDAW.

Last year, I surveyed the members about what IAW should focus on over the next 3-4 years as part of the new Action Programme. As we lead up to the next Congress, I am including those responses again. 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.

Looking ahead, I remain committed to engaging with our North American members, amplifying their concerns, and ensuring their perspectives shape IAW's global agenda. Together, we will continue to strengthen our regional voice and contribute to advancing women's rights worldwide.





# South East Asia

*Regional Coordinator Ruhi Sayid*

All Pakistan Women's Association (APWA) is the premier National women's Welfare non-government organization, established in 1949. APWA is the result of the mission and vision of Begum Ra'ana Liaquat Ali Khan, the then Prime Minister's wife.

APWA National H/Q is based in Karachi; it has four provincial branches, Sind, Punjab, Baluchistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and a Liaison branch in Islamabad. Overseas branches in the UK, USA, and Canada, to strengthen and support its programs. Consultative Status with the government of Pakistan, category B Status with UN department of public information (DPI). Member Affiliate of (IAW), (ACWW), (GFWC), of the USA, and (IRENE).

APWA's contributions in every field for Women's empowerment are exclusive, whether in education, health, skill development, career building, violence against women and girl child, climate change, and efforts at all levels against any economic, social, and legal discrimination.



## **APWA National Karachi**

**President: Mrs. Dr. Tanveer Khawaja**

- **Education:** Six projects providing free/affordable schooling, merit-based scholarships, and climate change awareness.
- **Health:** Five centres offering cancer awareness, vaccinations, reproductive health education, and referral services.
- **Skills Development:** Jail rehabilitation project and a training centre that has empowered 250+ women and girls with vocational skills.

## **APWA SINDH PROVINCE.**

### **Chairperson Ms. Rukhsana Roohi**

- APWA Sindh has five multipurpose centres offering education, health, and skills in the following districts.
- Hyderabad, Sanghar, Sukkher, Nawabshah, and Mirpur Khas, Khairpur.
- Which are successfully operating according to the vision and mission of APWA.

## **APWA BALOCHISTAN PROVINCE.**

### **Chairperson Mrs. Nyma Usman**

- APWA Quetta has a very good English medium school for girls, established in 1979 as a primary school. It is now successfully offering studies up to High school and has 1200 plus girls' students from underprivileged areas. The result of the school is 95% every year, and 50 students from underprivileged backgrounds study on scholarships. School children are provided with uniforms free of cost. The skill center is empowering women and providing them with new business opportunities.



## **APWA Punjab Province**

### **APWA Lahore HQ**

#### **Chairperson: Mrs. Samia Zahid**

APWA Lahore HQ oversees 8 primary schools and 14 healthcare centres.

#### **1. Education**

- APWA Youth Degree College plans to introduce BSCS degree.
- 8 primary schools' beneficiaries 618 students this year.
- Adult Literacy Centres

## 2. Health

- Fourteen Family Welfare and Health Centres. (Estd.1985)
- Maternal and Child Healthcare (MCH)

## 3. Economic Empowerment

- Scholarship programs for deserving students.
- Four women's hostels at Lahore HQ house 170 residents.
- Daycare and nursery services provide early education and care for over 200 children, ages (0-3 to 3-5).

## 4. Skills Development

- Skill empowerment programs, supported by seven additional centers under Lahore HQ, offer both basic and advanced training.
- An additional 28 women have established businesses after training.
- Legal Aid Cell Provision of free legal aid, coupled with awareness campaigns and advocacy for women-friendly laws.

### APWA Punjab Activities

- Exhibition and sale of handmade products.

Navtec / APWA skill project "Industrial stitching machine operator" (ISMO) with transgender community.



- Fellowship drive for change with city Traffic police, trained 20 girls who secured license.
- Breast cancer awareness.
- MOU with Muslim Hands, construction of girls Toilets, incinerators, Menstrual hygiene awareness.

## **District Branches**

### **Bahawalnagar**

- Empowerment and skill centre run need-based programs.

### **Rahim Yar Khan**

- Operates Empowerment and skill Centre.
- Regular legal awareness visits to Central Jail.

### **Bahawalpur**

- Empowerment and skill Centre (1964), empowering hundreds of women.
- High schools (est. 1976 & 1989) and a degree College (est. 2011) fully functional.
- Multipurpose Health Center (est. 2018)

### **Multan**

- Empowerment and Skill center with regular training and capacity-building.
- Healthcare includes mobile dispensary, ambulance, and health camps.

Awareness drives on diabetes, smog, and breast cancer.

### **Faisalabad**

- Skill Empowerment Program
- First Aid Training for women and students
- Six-month diploma courses for need-based training

### **Jhelum**

- Hostel with 150 women residents
- Empowerment and Skill Center with 156 students (short & long courses)
- 2,076 patients checked at Wellbeing/Health Care Center (2024–25)

## **Sialkot**

- Education (Prep–Grade 5)
- Women’s Empowerment and Skill Center
- Women’s Hostel
- Health Center

## **Sargodha (est. 1957)**

- Two purpose-built schools (≈500 students enrolled)
- Women’s Empowerment & Skill Centre
- Short basic & advanced courses (3 months)
- Six-month course
- One-year diploma course

## **Sahiwal**

- Primary school (running at full capacity, provides free uniform & shoes)
- Empowerment & Skill Centre offering various skills and courses for women

## **Nankana Sahib**

- Primary school
- Empowerment and skill Centre

## **Gujrat**

- Empowerment and Skill Centre
- Health Centre serving women from nearby villages

## **APWA Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province (KPK)**

### **Chairperson Ms. Ruhi Zahir Shah.**

- An Orphanage Dar ul Afal (Est.1957) housing 95 children, providing Healthcare, food and clothing.
- The Children Are enrolled in nearby School funded by APWA KPK.
- Girls are taught skills such as stitching and Hing, and embroidery to earn their livelihood.

## APWA ISLAMABAD LAISON BRANCH

### Chairperson Mrs Nayyar Liaquat

- APWA Islamabad continues to run the school in the low-income area. Students between ages 3-12 years ranging from Nursery to Grade 5 and the student strength is 220.

## TESTIMONIAL

- **Shazia** (Beauty Course Participant):

“After training I opened a small saloon at home, earning enough to support my children’s education.”

- **Asmara** (Drive for Change Participant)

“I obtained a license and an eco-friendly scooter through APWA’s assistance and then secured employment in delivery services.”

- **Nazia** (Stitching Course Participant):

“I acquired professional stitching skills, opening the door to sustainable income generation.”

- **Sara** (Computer Literacy Course Participant):

“I gained computer literacy and now I am working as a freelance data entry operator.”

APWA is dedicated to broadening its reach and genuinely empowering more women to take charge of their futures.



# Affiliate Members

# Membres Affiliés





# ADF-SVF

## Swiss Association of Women's Rights

*Josiane Greub, President of ADF-SVF*

### **Change of presidency and evolution of our collaboration between sections**

According to the 2014 statutes, our Swiss association operates with a rotating presidency between sections, with changes voted on every two or three years. Since 1 January 2025, the Neuchâtel section has been at the helm of the ADF-SVF. Their role was clarified at an extraordinary general meeting in November 2024, with the coordination of actions being shared by a national committee comprising members from all sections.

### **Activities and networking at the national level**

(taking into account the IAW Action Programme AP)

### **Taking a stand against violence against women, particularly femicide**

Several petitions and working groups are addressing the serious problem of violence against women, particularly the exponential increase in femicide. Our association supports these initiatives, participates in and even initiates working groups on these issues, calling for reflection and coordination by the cantonal and federal authorities.

In collaboration with Solidarité femmes Neuchâtel, we have approached the State Councillor responsible for this issue in our canton to ensure that the resources allocated to the service responsible for domestic violence are adapted to the reality on the ground, which has been done. We have also contacted members of the Council of States and the National Council to monitor with them the serious increase in femicides. **AP 1**

## The issue of parental leave

A national coordination of women's organisations and a few political parties have launched a national popular initiative for parental leave after the birth of a baby, which will, in the long term, facilitate a more equitable sharing of tasks within a couple. The ADF-SVF supports this initiative while remaining vigilant about any abuses that could harm women. **AP 6**

### NGO Post-Beijing Coordination and CEDAW

Some of our members are very active in the Post-Beijing Coordination, fighting against the deterioration of human rights, particularly those of women.

## Responses to federal consultations

In Switzerland, various issues across a wide range of areas are submitted to the relevant organisations. This is the case for everything concerning women. The ADF-SVF is consulted regularly and considers its views to be important for Swiss policy. This year, we gave our opinion on:

**The promotion of employment** for people with 'S' status, reserved for Ukrainian refugees, which we are calling for to be extended to all refugees. **AP 6**

**Poverty is not a crime.** We emphasise that, in a rich country, many people live below the poverty line. This particularly affects women, who have lower salaries and/or lower employment rates, resulting in insufficient resources to live on, including during retirement. **A6**

**Assistance to victims of violence.** This is a partial revision of the law on victim assistance, primarily affecting women and their children. **A1 and A4**

## Participation in federal assemblies

We were invited by the Federal Office for Gender Equality to participate in a meeting of all the presidents of umbrella organisations in the field of gender equality, to get to know each other better and promote joint work. We highlighted the importance of balancing family and career, working to eradicate violence against women, and harassment of LGBTQI+ communities. **A2 and A7**

## 8 March – International Women's Day

On 7 March, the National Councillors invited feminist organisations in Switzerland to come together to discuss the themes of peace and security. Many of us responded to their call. **A7**

### ADF-SVF Delegates' Assembly

At the annual Delegates' Assembly, we had the privilege of welcoming two speakers representing the cantonal level: **Nicole Baur**, Vice-President of the City of Neuchâtel, who invited us to defend our autonomy.

At the national level, **Stéphanie Lachat**, the co-director of the Federal Office for Gender Equality, who resides in the canton of Neuchâtel, painted a picture of our achievements and, above all, highlighted what remains to be done. 'Are our achievements in danger?' There is a lot of work ahead for the ADF-SVF! **All AP**

### Delegations to international institutions

- Some of our members are very active in the Post-Beijing Coordination of Swiss NGOs, fighting against the deterioration of human rights, particularly those of women. **To all**
- A delegation from the ADF-SVF participated in the AIF international meeting in Bulgaria in September 2024, a very constructive and, above all, motivating exchange of ideas.
- Since 2025, we have been members of the European Women's Lobby (EWL).

### ADF-SVF website

Anyone wishing to find out more about ADF-SVF can now find a wealth of information here about ADF-SVF and women's political activities in Switzerland. **[www.feminism.ch](http://www.feminism.ch)**



*ADF-SVF Delegates' Assembly at Neuchâtel 24 May 2025*



*Stéphanie Lachat, Co-Director of the Federal Office for Gender Equality*

# All India Women's Conference (AIWC)

*Dr Manju Kak*

All India Women's Conference, a 98-year-old 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 the 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 grassroots 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. AIWC is reaching out to the underprivileged sections of society by introducing a variety of programs focusing on health, literacy, income generation and also awareness on various social and environmental issues.

## **Our Vision**

Emancipation, Education and Empowerment of Women.

## **Our Mission**

- Work actively for the progress and welfare of women and children.
- To work for a society where women are free from all types of violence, especially domestic violence and sexual harassment.
- To empower women and prepare them for taking up leadership roles.

The following programs were conducted during the F.Y. **2024-25**, benefiting a large number of beneficiaries.

- A 2-day POSH workshop (Prevention of Sexual Harassment at workplace) was held through a webinar on 21st and 22nd May, 2024.

- World Environment Day was celebrated on 6th June, 2024, by organising an event at the AIWC Creche, inside the Resettlement colony in Shahdara, North Delhi. Kalyani Raj, President of AIWC, inaugurated the program.
- Launch of waste plastic collection center at AIWC premises in collaboration with New Delhi Municipal Corporation.
- Symposium on Women's Reservation Bill - 19th June, 2024 was held at the AV Hall. It was attended by a large number of people. The speakers were well known academicians and journalists- Dr. Syed Mubin Zehra, Dr. Sushma Ramachandran, Ms. Prachee, Ms. Aditi Kapoor.
- AIWC Head Office organized a program on the horrific rape & killing at RG Kar Hospital, Kolkata on the 28th August, 2024 in the AIWC MCM Library. Terrifying incidents showing the vulnerability of women all over India continue unabated.
- The Shilpkala Utsav, an annual event organized by the All India Women's Conference (AIWC) at Aga Khan Hall. The Shilpkala Utsav is not just an exhibition; it is a movement that magnifies the idea of women's empowerment. By providing a platform for women artisans to showcase and sell their products, AIWC has successfully fostered economic independence and creativity. This year's event was a resounding success, with brisk business and enthusiastic participation, truly embodying the spirit of "Vocal for Local", supporting women artisans across India.
- On 6th January, 2025, American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS) Professors visited the AIWC Head Office, where they interacted with the Office Bearers, MIC, and staff. Following this, they went to visit Kadipur Centre, Gurgaon Gramin Mahila Mandal (GGMM) as part of AIWC commitment to showcasing impactful community development initiatives that empower rural women. The purpose of the visit was for AIIS professors from U.S. community colleges to gain insights into grassroots development efforts in India and understand community-level work focused on empowering rural women.
- On 10 January 2025, the **14th Book Club** session featured *"In a State of Violent Peace: Voices from the Kashmir Valley"* by Meera Khanna, followed by a stimulating discussion chaired by Prof. Malashree Lal, engaging members, guests, and youth in a meaningful exchange on women's experiences in conflict-affected regions.



### International Events:

- Secretary General, Dr Manju Kak, attended as Board Member and represented AIWC at the IAW meeting in Bankya, Bulgaria,
- The President and Treasurer visited the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Baku, Azerbaijan, from November 14th to 21st, 2024.

### AIWC Programmes for branches:

AIWC branches are implementing diverse programmes to empower women, youth, and communities. The **Udaan Project** (6 months) provides vocational training in tailoring, beauty culture, and computer skills, with 32 programmes sanctioned in 2024 benefiting 868 women and girls. The newly introduced **Financial Literacy Programme** (1–2 days) builds financial capability through basic and advanced modules, with 18 programmes in 2024 reaching 597 individuals, and nine more in 2025 for 384 beneficiaries. The **Life Skills Training Programme** (3 days) equips adolescents with knowledge on health, peer pressure, relationships, career choices, and digital responsibility, with nine programmes in 2024 (186 adolescents) and six more in 2025 (192 adolescents). The **Part-Time Dispensary Project** provides affordable healthcare through 5 ongoing centres serving 2,160 individuals, while the **Non-Formal Education Programme** supports 105 underprivileged and migrant children across five centres. **Innovative Projects** such as Karali & Yoga Training and Digital Literacy, along with **Safe Veggies/Kitchen Garden & Vermicomposting (GUCCI)**, are active from 2024, enhancing sustainability and skill-building. A **Value Education–Gender Sensitivity Programme** benefits 78 students in 2024–25. Additionally, under the **CSR initiative**, HPV vaccination camps supported by Clearwater Analytics were held at Sarvajani Mahila Mandal (Bardoli, Gujarat) and Human Touch Foundation, benefitting 53 women.



AIWC branches continue to strengthen grassroots empowerment through diverse awareness and support initiatives. In 2024–25, a total of **198 One-Day Awareness Programmes** reached 12,793 beneficiaries, spreading knowledge on key social issues, safety, and government schemes. The **Energy Efficiency Awareness Programme** (in collaboration with EESL) educated 181 participants across four sessions on sustainable practices, CO<sub>2</sub> reduction, renewable energy, and women's entrepreneurship in energy-efficient appliances. Healthcare remained a priority with **37 Health Check-up Camps** benefitting 2,445 individuals, and **36 Anaemia Detection Camps** screening 3,443 women, of which 1,315 were found anaemic and 480 recovered through follow-up care. To empower youth, the **Craft Programme** trained 40 young girls in entrepreneurship and digital marketing for traditional crafts, while the **Crèche Programme** supported 21 centres caring for 468 children of underprivileged working mothers. Additionally, under the **CSR Awareness Initiative** (supported by Clearwater Analytics), five programmes conducted in Pondicherry, Andhra Pradesh, and Kerala benefited 253 individuals.



# All Pakistan Women's Association (APWA)

*Ms. Charmaine Hidayatullah*

## Empowering Women Since 1949

### About APWA

Founded in 1949 by **Begum Raana Liaquat Ali Khan**, wife of Pakistan's first Prime Minister, the **All Pakistan Women's Association (APWA)** is the **oldest and most influential non-profit organization** in Pakistan committed to **women's empowerment and welfare**. For over **70 years**, APWA has led the way in **advocacy, social assistance, education, and economic development** for women—especially those from **marginalized communities**.

### Vision & Mission

APWA envisions a **just and equitable society** where women can:

- Lead **independent, dignified lives**
- Access **equal opportunities**
- Contribute meaningfully to **national progress**

Its mission focuses on:

- **Social assistance**
- **Gender equity**
- **Economic empowerment**



## Key Programs & Impact

### 1. Vocational Training & Economic Empowerment

APWA operates **49 vocational training centers** across Pakistan, offering skill development in:

- **Stitching and embroidery**
- **Beauty and grooming**
- **Basic and advanced computer literacy**
- **Handicrafts and home-based businesses**

Thousands of women have started **small enterprises** or secured **employment**, achieving **economic independence** and **self-confidence**.

### 2. International Partnerships & Humanitarian Aid

#### Support from the All China Women's Federation

- **20,000 face masks** donated during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Distributed to **hospitals, clinics, and frontline workers**

#### ICW-CIF Flood Relief (2022)

With aid from the **International Council of Women (ICW-CIF)**, APWA provided:

- **Food, clean water, and medicines**
- **500 water coolers, 300 cloth bags** with essentials
- **200 Razais (quilts)** to flood victims in Karachi
- **30 wheelchairs** to people with disabilities
- Coordinated with **Sindh Rangers** for effective delivery

### 3. Women's Empowerment through Community Projects

#### Cooking Classes in Malir (Ramadan 2023)

- Weekly training for **10 women with disabilities**
- Focused on **nutritious, low-cost meals**
- 2 participants began earning through **small-scale food sales**

## Health & Hygiene Awareness

- Sessions conducted by **medical professionals**
- Distribution of:
  - **Sanitary products, soaps, hand sanitizers**
  - **Warm clothing, Razais, and shawls**

## Painting Classes for Girls

- Training for **20 underprivileged girls**
- Taught:
  - Basic art techniques
  - Pencil-holding and drawing
- Built **confidence, expression, and inclusion**

## 4. Wheelchair Distribution & Financial Literacy

- **30 wheelchairs** given to elderly and disabled women
- Plans to **expand distribution** due to growing need
- **50 souvenir notebooks** given to physically challenged girls for:
  - Tracking **income and expenses**
  - Learning **budgeting** and **financial independence**

## Our Future: Sustained Commitment to Change

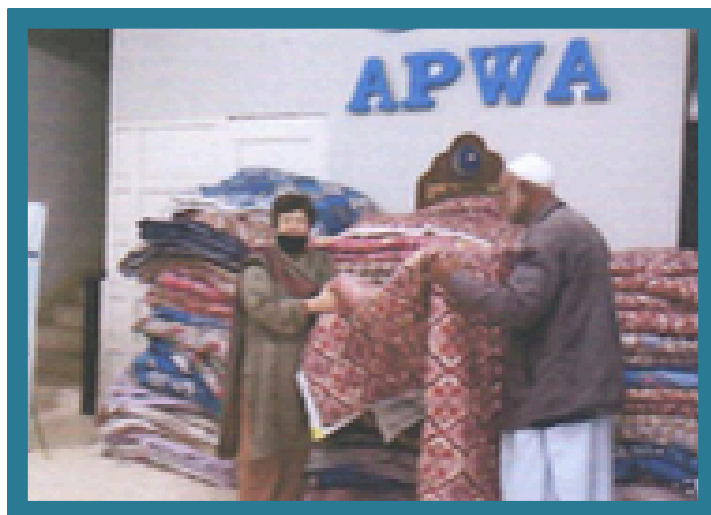
With a strong foundation in:

- **Advocacy**
- **Education**
- **Healthcare**
- **Economic support**
- **Disaster relief**

APWA continues to **transform lives** and **uplift communities**.

Through national and international partnerships, APWA remains a beacon of hope for countless women and girls.

Together, we can break barriers and build a future led by **resilient, empowered women**.



*Quilts distributed in Winter*



*Allocation of Wheelchairs*

# Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW-FCFDU)

*Linda Sestock*

## About CFUW

CFUW is a non-partisan, self-funded organization with 90 Clubs across Canada and over 6,700 members. Throughout our 106-year history, CFUW has worked to achieve a world where women and girls are educated and empowered to effect transformative changes in the world. In the work that CFUW does at the local Club level, regionally and provincially, nationally, and internationally, we focus on the following three areas to achieve results:





## Our Work in 2024-25:

Locally, many Clubs have ongoing community outreach projects, ranging from distributing period products and clothing/food drives to address poverty and homelessness, to fundraising for scholarships for post-secondary education, and offering social interest groups. Such interest groups include book groups, hiking groups, film nights, dining out, bridge groups, mahjong groups, and participating in the Coldest Night of the Year. Several Clubs celebrated significant anniversaries: Hamilton's 100th, Orillia's 70th, and Lethbridge's 80th. Lifelong learning events organised by Clubs included, but were not limited to, a Photo Tour of a High Arctic National Park, Child Sex Trafficking and How to Stop It, Pelvic Floor Health, Women's Brain Health, and Background on the Russian/Ukrainian War. Provincially, regionally, and nationally, CFUW members collaborate on issues that affect multiple clubs or specific populations, particularly women and children. For instance, this past year, a letter was sent to mayors in major cities across Canada requesting they declare 'Intimate Partner Violence' an epidemic in their community. This garnered a lot of positive responses. For the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, many city halls were illuminated with purple lights to signify their support for this cause.

The national Sub-Committee on the Environment and Climate Change presented a public webinar titled **"Global Warming Has Happened Before: What Have We Learned?"** comparing a million-year event with the current 100-year evolution of our climate. The Atlantic Council presented an environmental wakeup call with its webinar, **"Message in a Bottle"**. The Long-Term Care and Older Persons' Rights Study Group, on May 1st—Elder Action Day—hosted a public webinar **showcasing 2024 Survey Findings from the National Institute on Ageing**. This year, the Ontario Council presented public webinars on **"Affordable Housing - A Human Right"** and **"Women in the Skilled Trades"**. The Alberta Council presented a public webinar about **Coal Mining on the eastern slopes**. The Education Committee hosted an Indigenous speaker from Manitoba who attended the meeting with the **UN CEDAW panel** and provided a separate report to them on the state of discrimination and violence against Indigenous women in Canada.





The CFUW National Office made several submissions and communications to the federal government, including a submission for pre-budget consultations, a letter to all party leaders on the increasingly toxic nature of politics, and a brief on gender-based violence and femicides for a House of Commons Committee on the Status of Women study. CFUW National also supported a nationwide statement condemning the elimination of the Minister for Women and Gender Equality role, and sent letters to Prime Minister Mark Carney asking for the role to be reinstated. A federal election toolkit was provided to Clubs to support their nonpartisan engagement in the 2025 election. Additionally, the CFUW National President issued a statement condemning the recent actions of the Trump administration in the United States.

Internationally, CFUW is the largest affiliate of Graduate Women International, serves on its board and shares common interests in peace, security, and human rights. The North American affiliate members make up Canada, the US, and Mexico and work together under the banner of **CAMEUS** - with CFUW, WG-USA, and FEMU from each country respectively. CAMEUS focuses on migration and the implications for employment, education and violence associated with migration movements.

In 2025, CFUW sent 26 delegates to the 69th UN Commission on the Status of Women, which has ECOSOC status, and produced a written statement providing input to the political declaration. This year, the theme of CSW was a review of progress since the 1995 Beijing Conference and Platform for Action. Delegates attended many sessions and returned with a wealth of knowledge gained in the week. CFUW presented a parallel event, **"Educating Women and Girls: Advancing Their Empowerment and Equality"**. The following week, CAMEUS presented a virtual parallel event: **Recognizing Qualifications for Employment of Women Migrating to North America**.

**CFUW National Resolutions, which were adopted at the 2025 Policy Session, include:**

1. Addressing Period Poverty and Menstrual Inequity in Canada
2. Expanding Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health Services
3. Supporting 2SLGBTQ+ Rights
4. Strengthening the Awareness and Safekeeping of Individuals and Their Animals  
Experiencing Domestic Violence
5. Equitable Phase Out of Fossil Fuels
6. Archiving Select CFUW Adopted Policies
7. Affirming Housing as a Human Right and Social Good

CFUW local Clubs, provincial and regional councils, as well as alongside our sister organisation CFUW Charitable Trust ([www.cfuwcharitabletrust.ca](http://www.cfuwcharitabletrust.ca)), distributed more than \$960,000 in scholarships and bursaries for women and girls pursuing education in 2024-2025. The CFUW Charitable Trust supports women university graduates in furthering their postsecondary education. The Trust raises money to support annual Fellowships, Awards, and Grants for Canadian women pursuing advanced graduate studies and research in science, mathematics, engineering, home economics, education, visual arts, music, humanities, and social sciences.

The Charitable Trust receives funds from members, Clubs, and corporate sponsors. It administers an investment portfolio of over \$1 million for fifteen CFUW Fellowships and Awards, valued at over \$90,000 per year.



# Danish Women's Society

*Simone Melby*

2024-25 has been a dynamic and impactful period for Dansk Kvindesamfund (Danish Women's Society), marked by strategic initiatives, strong partnerships, and national visibility in the fight for gender equality.

## **Strategic Focus #1 - Youth and Equality**

With support from the Tuborg Foundation, the project *"Calling All Youth – New Paths to Democratic Participation in Gender Equality"* was launched. It empowers young people to participate in debates, write opinion pieces, and address everyday inequality. The initiative includes public events, educational materials, and a network of youth ambassadors. It promotes a broad understanding of equality, encompassing gender, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, age, and disability.

## **Strategic Focus #2 - Invisible Women: women's physical and mental health**

This area focused on two main efforts:

- **Women's Health:** Collaboration with Odense University Hospital has brought attention to the lack of research in women's health. A national women's panel with over 3,000 participants has helped elevate the issue, attracting interest from both media and government. The organization has also joined the *Alliance for Women's Health* to push for better care and national knowledge centers.
- **Mental Load:** In partnership with the University of Copenhagen and Ipsos, a nationwide study was conducted on the invisible cognitive labor often carried by women. The results will be presented at a conference in Parliament on Sept. 11th.

- **ADHD in women:** A conference is planned for September 2025 to focus on the immense gender gap that still exists when it comes to ADHD diagnosis, treatment and acceptance.
- **Female conscription:** An event was planned in June focusing on all the young women that will be forced to enroll following new legislation in Denmark. The event had to be postponed due to too few participants.

### **Strategic Focus #3 – Professional representation, equity and equal rights**

This team explored focus areas such as ethnic minority stress, representation, and gender-segregated education paths. The campaign “No Stress – We Solve It!” addressed workplace racism and inspired ongoing work on diversity and education’s role in workplace equality. The group has also contributed to discussions on the EU’s new pay transparency directive.



**Dansk  
Kvindesamfund**

## Strategic focus #4 – Domestic Violence and femicide

### Key projects include:

- **“Tell Someone”:** A counseling initiative for survivors of psychological and physical abuse, offering support services and group programs. Dansk Kvindesamfund’s crisis centers joined this initiative in collaboration with several organizations and local authorities.
- **StopChikane:** This project offers support for adults facing digital abuse, including cyberstalking and image-based violations. It is the only such service in Denmark and received renewed funding for three years in 2025. The issue is particularly critical for women in public life, such as politicians, and connects strongly to crisis center support.

On November 25, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, the organization hosted a public event with panel discussions and performances exploring the power of art to challenge taboos and give voice to survivors.

## Public Engagement

The organization actively contributed to public debate through media appearances and social media campaigns, addressing topics such as sexism in the music industry and high-profile sexual assault cases. Events at Denmark's political festival *Folkemødet* highlighted persistent inequality in the workforce and the need for structural change.

The theatre production “*We Roar*”, focusing on women's anger and injustice, premiered in March. Dansk Kvindesamfund participated as a knowledge partner, highlighting how art can drive social understanding and change.

## Advocacy and Partnerships

The organization contributed to legislative consultations, including a critique of mandatory conscription for all genders, arguing that military service should be voluntary and inclusive.

Long-standing partnerships, such as with fashion brand MUNTHER and the flower company Flowering, continued to raise awareness and funds through creative campaigns.

## Digital Development

A new website was launched, improving access to educational materials and content on feminism, abortion, and body ideals. It also strengthens the organization's visual identity and communication channels. <https://www.danskkvindesamfund.dk/>

## Organizational Focus

Internally, the leadership refined governance structures, onboarding processes, and defined three core values for the organisation to guide us during the ever changing climate within public gender equality and diversity and inclusion discussion:

- **Perseverance** – for long-term commitment to change.
- **Courage** – to challenge injustice and demand action.
- **Sisterhood** – for collective strength and inclusive solidarity.

In addition the organisations chair and co-chair decided to resign at the general assembly in may. A new chair (Louise Vinther Alis) and co-chair (Anja Radeka) has been appointed and are committed to keep on track and keep up the momentum and direction.

## Looking Ahead

This year's achievements have been remarkable, especially considering limited resources. The organization has grown in influence, visibility, and impact—laying a solid foundation for the future of gender equality in Denmark.

# Deutscher Frauenring (DFR)

*Marion Boeker, Chair of DFR-Committee for  
International Affairs*

After the COVID-19 pandemic, the DFR continued to work in a flexible style. Staff members work partly in home offices. The Executive Board and committees work mainly online together. The annual Board meetings, Federal Seminars and General Assemblies are always hybrid meetings.

Silke Schwenk, director of the DFR Federal headquarters since 2022, stepped down in January 2025. We do not have the budget to hire her replacement full time. The office is staffed by two or three student workers for 25 hrs a week or interns who stay for a half or whole year in charge.

Despite budget difficulties, the DFR since 2022 has increased its influence for changemaking through many national Networks and Alliances. This opens the path to regular dialogues, consultations and exchange with the government, and the advocacy ends more often in positive outcomes.

## **Campaigning for Parity of Women in all Parliaments and Decision-making Positions**

The DFR continues campaigning for 50% parity of women in all parliaments and decision-making. Following CEDAW's General Recommendation No. 40, the DFR's Munich/Bavarian section (*Verein für Fraueninteressen e.V.*/ Association for Women's Interests) and many politicians organized a protest before the Chancellery in Berlin and is now part of this new PARITY ALLIANCE. The new government will debate again on Gender Parity in parliaments by a new upcoming Commission on Electoral Law Reform of the German Federal Parliament.



## **2022 -2025 Various focus issues: Upvaluing Care Work, Ending Pay and Pension Gaps, Standing for Intersectionality, for SRHR, for Women's Health & Gender-based Medicine, Criminalizing and Ending Impunity of Femicide, Protecting LGBTIQ Rights**

The DFR still advocates under CEDAW and CESCIRE for many aspects of human rights by providing, together with its CSO women's alliances, alternative reports and participating in the UN review sessions and joint consultations and dialogues with the parliaments and governments on a national level. New in 2023 to 2025 is the DFR's advocacy for ending femicide. The DFR has established a new Anti-Femicide Committee, which sent a letter with demands to Federal Chancellor Merz. At the same time, the topic was regularly highlighted on social media channels, particularly through Instagram stories, where the current number of femicides in Germany was continuously made visible. Engagement with discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation was also an important part of public relations in 2025. Through Instagram, the DFR addressed issues such as homo-, bi-, inter-, and transphobia, supported Pride Month and Christopher Street Day, and used various action days to draw attention to existing inequalities and discrimination. In this way, socio-political concerns were made publicly visible. With the German Umbrella Organisation of Migrant Women, the German National Council of Women, the DFR established the Feminist Alliance for Intersectionality to promote this in accordance with CEDAW and the CSW's Agreed Conclusions. More new alliances in 2025 were established on the following issues: Alliance for Sexual Self-Determination, Alliance for Gender-Equitable Jobs Evaluation; Alliance for Maternity Protection for the Self-Employed; Membership in the Berlin Parity Welfare Association; Defending Democracy; and having a strategy to preserve and strengthen women's rights against the backlash.

## **DFR project partnership in West Africa, founded by Gudrun Haupter, continues**

Gudrun Haupter passed away in February 2024. The support of the West Africa projects, A.D.F. in Burkina Faso, and the Youth Education Center (CJDA) in Atigba, on the Danyi plateau, in Togo was taken over by Gudrun's mentee Julia Schiller in 2022. Julia works for a consultancy in France and often is in Burkina Faso or Togo, which makes it convenient for her to be in contact with our partners. And the DFR still collects donations for these projects, which are also under threat since the policies have become more conservative and fewer resources. For 2024, 2025 and 2026, the DFR pays their IAW fees. At DFR's Federal Seminar in Wiesbaden we collected donations as well.

## **Work under the international human rights conventions and legal framework for peace**

In May 2023 the DFR in the CEDAW Alliance of Germany went with the co-written Alternative report to the state review session to Geneva. The DFR and the **CEDAW ALLIANCE GERMANY** advocate for the implementation of the Concluding Observations and wrote an interim Alternative Statement in 2025. In the **German NGO Alliance for UNSCR 1325** in 2023 and 2024, the DFR was active for the Feminist Foreign Policy and consulted with the government in the Foreign office for more effective content of the upcoming **NAP IV on WPS 1325 (2024-2028)** with recommendations for improvement of the included gender budgeting. Unfortunately, the ad-hoc elections announced in February 2025 forced the Foreign Office to postpone the NAP IV.

But we are still in dialogue and we succeeded that the Agenda WPS was enshrined in the coalition contract and not cancelled, as the Feminist Foreign Policy was by the new Foreign Minister. The German CSO Network 1325 WSP had to cancel the online Parliamentary Breakfast with the UNSG SR Pramila Patten team on occasion of the 25th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 (2000). The Chair of the UN WOMEN Germany, the staff of some ministries, and members of the Federal parliament want to strengthen WPS and make Agenda WPS more effective in implementation and increase the investment in security of women.

I went with our CSO Network 1325 WPS for dialogues with the Foreign Office, and several other engaged Federal ministries in November and December 2025 to work on the draft NAP 1325 IV. We sent our drafted amendments and recommendations for the NAP to them and discussed Gender Budgeting.

## END FGM/C in Germany and beyond

Within the national NGO network INTEGRA and the National FGM/C Round Table, the DFR is still fighting to end FGM/C and for better protection, provisions and finances to assist women targeted for FGM/C. In 2024 the DFR, with INTEGRA and the Federal Round Table against FGM/C, submitted demands for the new candidates of the Federal parliamentary election in February 2025. The DFR prepares within these networks a policy and recommendation paper for the new government. The paper aligns with women's human rights, the WHO and the new European Directive against domestic violence and VAWG of 2023 for needed effective action by the government in enforcing gender and survivors' sensible treatment, especially of migrant women. In December we drafted an application for financial support of the INTEGRA network, which will be submitted after its General Assembly in April 2026.

## 2022- 2025 Ending Criminalisation of Abortion – For Free and Safe Abortion

This had been the focus of DFR advocacy with many other NGOs based on the recommendations of the CEDAW on the German restrictions. In summer 2022 the new government deleted §219a from the German Criminal Code, which eliminated the right to access safe abortion and criminalized those who provide the surgery. Now **§ 218 of the Criminal Code**, criminalizing women and control over women's right to self-determination and reproductive health, needs to be removed. See the DFR's [Position Paper](#). The DFR co-signed in June 2025 the [List of Issue Joint Submission](#) for CESCR, which argued for free and safe abortion. During 2023, 2024 the DFR signed, and convinced others through social media to sign, the European MY VOICE-MY CHOICE campaign, which had collected **1.2 million signatures** in favor of safe and accessible abortions in Europe. The signatures were presented to the EU-Parliament on 1 September 2025 in Brussels, with votes in favor in committee, and a vote in the EU-Parliament in Spring 2026.

## Annual Federal DFR Webinars 2022 - 2025

In **2022** the Federal Seminar was on **Climate Justice and Feminism**. The last government had to cancel its plans to fight climate change due to the Russian war, and new governments also abstain. The DFR and its networks still insist on the COP's outcomes.

In **2023** the DFR organised a Federal Seminar on **Democracy Under Pressure – Strengthening the Feminist Perspective for a Just and Inclusive Society** against hate speech, discrimination, anti-feminism with many famous speakers. Topics included new initiatives for democracy and services for victims targeted by anti-democratic aggression. The seminar was offered in hybrid format on 24-26 October 2023 in the Education Center Erkner near Berlin.

In **2024**, the hybrid Federal Seminar in October was on **Social Inequalities – Feminist Perspectives on Different Life Realities**. We have worked with Êzîdi women since 2014 and now include more women in the fight for equality and justice.

In **2025** our hybrid Federal Seminar in October was **The European Union: International Actor and Defender of Democracy** in Wiesbaden (Hessen). The documentation appears on the DFR webpage in the series called GREEN LINE. The lectures and discussions of our federal specialist seminar entitled, The European Union: International Actor and Defender of Democracy, have impressively shown how closely central European policy areas are intertwined and, at the same time, how much they are coming under pressure.



# Fredrika Bremer Association

*Camilla Wagner*

## Introduction

The Fredrika Bremer Association (FBF), founded in 1884, is Sweden's oldest women's rights organisation. Our mission remains as relevant today as when it was established: to ensure that women and men have equal power to shape their own lives and society. In 2024, our work focused strongly on economic equality, women's rights within the justice system, and advocacy against gender-based violence and discrimination.

Key Areas of Focus in 2024

## 1. Equal Pay – Lön hela dagen

FBF continued its active role in the national campaign Lön hela dagen ("Pay All Day"), a coalition of political women's organisations, trade unions, and civil society groups working for equal pay. The campaign highlights the gender pay gap by calculating the time of day after which women effectively "work for free". (A Swedish workday ends at 5 pm)

- In 2024, the symbolic clock moved backwards for the first time in the campaign's history: from 4:12 pm to 4:11 pm. This signals a setback after nearly 15 years of progress in closing the pay gap.
- FBF contributed through a public demonstration at Sergels Torg in Stockholm and co-authored opinion pieces, reinforcing the call for equal pay for equal work.

## 2. Lifelong Economy – Livslång Ekonomi

Our flagship project, Livslång Ekonomi, expanded in 2024, reaching women in socio-economically challenged areas across Sweden.

- The programme offers education and resources for women to enhance their financial independence throughout various stages of life.
- New materials were produced in clear Swedish and digital formats, making the programme more inclusive.

- In 2024 alone, 71 women received education, alongside over 200 participants already reached.
- The project was showcased at major events such as **Järvaveckan** and **Forum Jämställdhet**, motivating women and policymakers alike to see economic empowerment as a key part of equality.

### 3. Next Generation's Relationship – *Nästa generation's relation*

This project demonstrates how gender norms and economic structures influence young people's expectations of relationships and family life.

- It was showcased at **Forum Jämställdhet** and the **Gothenburg Book Fair**, engaging decision-makers, educators, and the wider public.
- Viral TikTok videos and workshops were utilised to engage young people directly, raising awareness about the ongoing issue of unequal expectations around care, career, and money.

### 4. Advocacy and Lobbying for Legal Reforms

FBF achieved a notable policy breakthrough in 2024. Following our persistent advocacy, the Swedish government decided to initiate a public inquiry into divorce legislation.

- Currently, financially stronger partners can delay property division (*bodelning*), resulting in situations of **economic violence** where women face pressure to accept unjust settlements.
- This legislative review marks an important step toward safeguarding women's economic rights in separation and divorce.

### 5. Gender Equality in the Financial Sector

FBF also examined gendered patterns in banking practices through the project **Equal Consumer Power in the Banking and Insurance Sector**.

- Our survey revealed that even bank employees themselves think women face disadvantages when negotiating mortgage interest rates.

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- However, Swedish banks are not required to provide gender-disaggregated data, making structural discrimination invisible.
- FBF is therefore pushing for mandatory sex-disaggregated reporting of financial data at least on an aggregate level, to enable accountability and reform.

## 6. White Paper on the Gender Income Gap

By the end of 2025, the Fredrika Bremer Association will publish a **White Paper on the Gender Income Gap in Sweden**.

- Despite nearly three decades of political commitments, the income gap between women and men has remained **unchanged for 30 years**, ever since the government began systematic measurement.
- To shed light on the root causes, FBF has commissioned leading researchers to analyse four central areas: **wages, capital income, transfers, and taxation**.
- The White Paper will serve as a **debate platform** ahead of the Swedish parliamentary elections in September 2026, aimed at pushing policymakers and business leaders to take decisive action to halve the income gap by 2030.

## International Engagement

FBF remains an active member of IAW. Our Vice President Europe, Yvonne Pokropek, *participates* in the EU project *ActEU*, focusing on citizens' trust in politics during times of crisis. The *final meeting will take place in February 2026*. FBF also contributed to international feminist dialogues, emphasizing economic equality as a **protective factor against gender-based violence** and as a prerequisite for women's human rights.

## Looking Ahead

Fredrika Bremer Association will continue to:

- Advocate for **economic equality** as a foundation of women's empowerment.
- Advocate for improved data on women's and men's asset ownership to tackle hidden disparities.

- Connect economic dependence with **the prevention of gender-based violence**, ensuring that women's financial independence is acknowledged as a key protective factor.
- Engage in cross-border dialogues on feminist strategies to counter the rising anti-gender movements in Europe and around the world.

## Conclusion

In 2024, the Fredrika Bremer Association strengthened its role as a reputable and powerful advocate for women's rights in Sweden. Through a combination of grassroots initiatives, public campaigns, and focussed lobbying, we aim to reduce the economic gender gap by half by 2030 and secure freedom from violence, control, and financial exploitation for all women.



# Naisasialiitto Unioni

*Eekku Aromaa, Secretary General*

## Key Activities & Impact (2022–2025)

### 1. Context & Strategic Direction

#### Organization Overview

Naisasialiitto Unioni (The Finnish Women's Association Unioni) is a feminist and antiracist NGO founded in 1892. Based in Finland, it promotes intersectional feminism to dismantle overlapping forms of oppression based on gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and other axes of inequality (Wikipedia).

#### Strategic Framework

Strategic Framework From 2021–2025, Unioni based its work on a vision of an egalitarian society, a mission of feminist ideological and structural transformation, and values centered around inclusivity and intersectionality. In 2024, a refreshed strategy for 2025–2030 was drafted, reaffirming its commitment to influence politics, foster feminist consciousness, and create safe, accessible spaces.

### 2. Major Activities & Initiatives

#### Feminist Budget Assessment (2024–2025)

In fall 2023 and fall 2024, Unioni published a feminist budget review, critiquing the Finnish government's 2025 budget for deepening economic inequalities.

#### Feminist Economics Education

During 2021–2024, Unioni hosted "Feminist Economic School" sessions together with the research project Femtie to strengthen feminist knowledge about the economy.

From 2021 to 2024, Unioni collaborated with the Femtie research project to host a series of *Feminist Economic School* sessions. These events aimed to build collective knowledge around feminist economic theory and practice.

## **Public Mobilization: International Women's Day March 2025**

- **Public Mobilization:** On International Women's Day (8 March 2025), Unioni co-organized a large march in Helsinki with UN Women Finland and Naisjärjestöjen Keskusliitto. The event began at Senate Square and proceeded to Kansalaistori, calling for equality, progress and rights protections. About 10,000 people joined the march. It will be an annual event in the future.

## **3. Ongoing & Structural Contributions**

### **Juristipäivystys (Legal Advice Service)**

Union continues its weekly free legal counselling (Wednesdays), offering immediate support for women's legal concerns—a longstanding direct service to individuals.

### **Publication & Feminist Media**

Unioni publishes *Tulva*, a feminist magazine acclaimed for its design and journalistic quality, fueling feminist discourse in Finland.

### **Spaces**

Unioni continues to rent out spaces for parties, meetings, and other events.

### **Organizational Presence & Membership**

Unioni remains connected internationally—as part of NYTKIS (Coalition of Finnish Women's Associations), European Women's Lobby, and International Alliance of Women. Membership remains around 3,000 individual members and three organizations.



# Vrouwenbelangen

*Artemis Westenberg, President*



## **The costs of doing business as a not-for-profit NGO without any government subsidies**

Since May 2024, I have been travelling far and wide throughout the Netherlands, as it turned out that the National Railways of the Netherlands offer an “off-peak-hours” unlimited travel pass per month for 120 euros, with a 65-euro reduction on that price for anyone over 65. Up until that moment, I was not aware that persons over 65 were offered this discount, which had made me hesitant to travel too much to meetings, symposia, and conferences due to the very high costs of railway travel and the hard-to-imagine high costs of gasoline for cars (2.35 euros per litre / 9.14 euros per gallon).

Why is this mentioned by me here? Well, once we realised that the 55-euro-per-month unlimited off-peak-hours travel by railway was available, my board and I decided to dispel any limits on my railway travel and thus my attendance at any and all women-related events to further women’s rights in any field or topic.

It brought two things to our organization:

1. The organization became the best-known women’s rights organization, working on any topic and with any other NGO or government.
2. The accrual of knowledge on an immensely wide range of citizens’ interests was possible, cross-pollinating one field with knowledge of another completely unrelated field, and thus furthering women’s rights in hitherto unlikely groups and corporations.

## **Female healthcare, a forgotten side of general healthcare**

In April 2024, I became aware of a new study on the effects of Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) on the overall health of women from peri-menopause till their end of life. Apparently, over 20 “old age diseases,” among them diabetes, dementia, colorectal cancer, breast cancer, arthritis, and urinary tract infections, to name just a few, can be kept at bay by applying the right amount of bio-identical oestrogen (oestradiol), progestogen (progesterone), and testosterone. This would accomplish two things:

1. The quality of life for women would improve immensely.
2. General costs of healthcare would go down considerably.

Hormones are relatively cheap, even when taken over a 40-year span of time. The same cannot be said about hip fractures (oestradiol and testosterone both keep your bones healthy) and their aftermath of needed care, or of the 20 years of care due to cognitive decline caused by dementia, etc., etc.

What is working against women here is that in 2001 a study was published in the USA (the Women’s Health Initiative) that suggested that hormone replacement would result in cancer, all based on faulty data and dingy research. The fact that three years later these conclusions were completely reversed never reached the medical profession or the patients. This resulted in 20 years of faulty medical advice and untold loss of health for a whole generation of women.

This made me whooping mad.

I was aware that healthcare for women in general is wholly inadequate in the Netherlands. Research on female health, unless aimed at birthing babies, is non-existent. The male body is the norm. Women are viewed as “small-sized men” or “men without a penis.” A scientific basis for treating women in most fields of healthcare is flawed. Only very recently has knowledge about how differently a heart attack manifests in women become more widespread.



Peri-menopause, menopause, and post-menopause knowledge is missing. Funding for health research on women in the Netherlands itself is lacking, and thus women in the Netherlands are stuck in a medical limbo once no longer of childbearing years.

Bio-identical hormones would be life-changers if applied to all women, taken not just for a few years, or until the age of 60 or 65, but for the rest of their lives.

As I am in that age bracket myself, I had a personal vested interest in providing such care not just to me, but to the 4.8 million women in the Netherlands over 40 years of age. This is over half the female population of my country, as there are about 9 million women in the Netherlands overall.

In the Netherlands, change in medical ideas, practices, and “protocols” (the standard of care) is very slow. Getting them to change would be an uphill battle—however, one I was willing to wage.

On the 14th of June, I asked a packed house of women’s rights organizations, gathered for the lustrum of one of them, whether they were willing to wage this battle with me. A resounding YES was their answer, and so I proceeded unbridled to get women in the Netherlands healthcare “beyond their childbearing years.” I scoured calendars to find meetings of any kind to find more compatriots, to gather information, and to confront government members, doctors, and for-profit companies about this neglect of women’s health.

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

The Netherlands Association for Women’s Rights, Female Labour and Equal Citizenship (est. 1894) is deeply vested in the Commission on the Status of Women and has been sending and sponsoring representatives for decades.





Leading up to CSW #69, I was part of the group of women allowed to rewrite or add to the Zero Draft. Just like last year, the NL Assoc. for Women's Rights (Vrouwenbelangen, VB for short) was a very active partner in the knowledge accumulation and writing of the Zero Draft of the Dutch government by September 2024. This year that went further than in 2023, as I kept fighting to use parts of the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action Operational Paragraphs (mostly from OP 101 and further) that pertain to older women, or even literally to "menopause."

With the wonderful assistance of Quirine Lengkeek (Mondiaal FNV = Federal National Union), again and again the needs of "older women" were wrangled into the Zero Draft of the Netherlands and then later on into the Zero Draft of the European Union. The assistance of the diplomats negotiating these Zero Drafts from the Netherlands and from the PM of the Netherlands in New York was instrumental in bringing the older-women and menopause paragraphs into the EU document.

I believe a little explanation is needed on the role of the non-diplomat Quirine Lengkeek. She was chosen as the NGO representative full partner in the diplomatic negotiations both beforehand and at the UN in March 2025. The Netherlands has been using non-diplomats as part of the negotiating team for decades, selecting someone from a field of NGOs every year. It brings the women/women's rights groups within the sphere of the government policymakers, which is a true bonus for women.

Regrettably, the paragraphs on older women and/or menopause did not make it into the worldwide Zero Draft. This was disappointing and meant that I had to "regroup" in how to further the plight of older women in the UN. In the end, I decided that I would go into CSW69 with the aim of grabbing the microphone to ask the hard questions about the needs of older women in each and every side event that I attended. And so it came to pass.



In order to facilitate my own (and everyone else's) visits to the side events, I worked four days to change the Word document containing all side events into an Excel spreadsheet, which stated time, place, number of available seats, title of side event, organizer, and, if available, documents per side event. The use of colour-coding and an established sequence of those rooms gave me a one-glance option for where to go next.

## **Working in the CSW69 to further the rights of older women**

The CSW69 ran from 10–22 March, with two side events by the Nordic Council of Ministers on the opening Monday in the ECOSOC room (568 seats). It was a packed house, where I was able to get the microphone and ask about female healthcare in the Nordic countries (Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark) pertaining to menopause, requesting their help in updating my Dutch government on such healthcare. My question struck a nerve among the NGOs. In all subsequent side events, I was able to question the impact of whatever subject of that event on older women.

Together with the fact that the ECOSOC Council had advised the UN to put a focus on older women in 2026, combined with the General Assembly UN resolution stating the same focus, 2026 will see that focus on older women.

The priority theme is “strengthening access to justice for all women and girls,” which is helpful for any and all problems women, older or young, might have in getting from their governments what they need. All we, women, now need to do is keep this older-women focus as part of the focus on women for the CSW in general.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action has a great number of good Operating Paragraphs that should be helpful in using the focus on older women to the maximum.

## **Dutch NGOs at the Commission on the Status of Women in New York**

2025 again saw a large group of women and some men from Dutch women's rights organizations and other NGOs travel to New York. As in previous years, the use of our WhatsApp group for the CSW served us well. It made keeping in contact in New York with the women there, and keeping in contact with those who stayed in the Netherlands but were following the proceedings of the CSW online, very easy.

Also, the Dutch government delegation again gave nearly daily briefings during the two weeks of the CSW69 to the NGO representatives at the PM of the Netherlands in New York. There were no Agreed Conclusions this year, but there were the themes of the next four years of CSW to hammer out. As in 2024, the Netherlands was again the facilitator of the CSW69 negotiations of the text and the themes for the coming years. After some deft manoeuvring, the themes were set, and the resolution of the UN GA / ECOSOC on "focus on older women" was adopted by the UN CSW committee.

## **Special parliamentary elections on 29th of October 2025**

The government fell, just 23 months after the last election, and new parliamentary elections will be held. The future of all government programs is uncertain. In general, the country is in turmoil.

It will take many months after the general elections to form a government. We do not expect a new cabinet to make its appearance until well into 2026.

This sets women back, as there is an urgent need for better policies.

The National Women's Health Strategy bears that out, especially since that strategy gives attention to women over childbearing age with exactly nine words—which, truthfully, is nine more words than handicapped women got.

Housing is still a big problem. Social housing, on which older women—and women in general—depend more, has waiting lists of over 10 years. Rents are exceptionally high and keep on rising. Food is very expensive. Costs of living in general are very high, and as women tend to have less money from work-accrued pensions, the high costs of transport and public transport make women lonely and disconnected from family and friends who might live elsewhere in the country.

In all, the need to keep fighting for women's rights and women's needs stays indubitably high. Vrouwenbelangen is committed to waging that battle until all women have truly equal citizenship in the Netherlands and elsewhere.



*ECOSOC meeting room, where Artemis asked questions about older women and menopause*



*Artemis telling the cabinet member in charge of Emancipation, Marielle Paul, that she is expected to be at the Menopause event in 2026 with the Nordic Council*

# Women's Electoral Lobby

*Amanda Keeling*

## **Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL's) Work - Australia**

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 organisation issued bi-monthly newsletters. WEL's work involves advocating for equality and justice for women over a broad platform currently encompassing ten major policy areas (see our current policy platform).

## **May 2025 Federal Election**

WEL's policy platform work marked 2025 in preparation for the Federal Election held on 3rd May 2025. The policy areas focussed on: Eliminating all Forms of Violence against Women and Girls; Health and Reproductive Rights; Early Childhood Education and Care; Housing and Homelessness; Gender Responsive Budgeting; Vocational Education and Training; Income Adequacy and Equality for Women; Representation and Leadership; A Human Rights Act for Australia and Climate Change and Gender with a set of 5 top demands. WEL wrote to all major parties to advise them of this platform and elicit their stance on these policy areas for the all-important WEL Scorecard, which assessed and rated all major party policy platforms for advancing women's equality.

WEL was pleased to see that the re-elected Albanese Labor Government has many talented and progressive feminists in positions to drive the Government's agenda for women's equality and the elimination of violence against women. Another cause for hope is that our most important economic institutions —the Treasury, the Productivity Commission, and the Reserve Bank —are now led by women.

WEL wrote to Ministers with portfolios directly relevant to achieving women's equality, outlining our policy platform and detailing our specific policy priorities for each minister's portfolio, as well as our interest in working with the government to advance these priorities.

The Government will continue to focus on Working for Women: A Strategy for Gender Equality, which was launched in March 2024, as the instrument to drive feminist reforms. This was reinforced in the Governor General's speech to open the first sitting of the new federal parliament, to 'drive national action to end gender-based violence and put women's economic equality at the centre of what they do'. WEL has noted that this strategy has some critical shortcomings, such as the areas of human rights and climate change, and will be lobbying to recognise the fundamental importance of these issues for women's safety and equity.



## Policy Work and Activism

In connection with the Working for Women: A Strategy for Gender Equality, in December 2024, the Federal Government funded the establishment of 5 National Women's Alliances: the Working with Women Alliance which has two portfolios National Women's Safety and National Women's Equality and Economic Alliances and the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance, The National Rural Women's Coalition, Women with Disabilities Australia and the Australian Multicultural Women's Alliance.



The previously funded national women's rights alliance, Equality Rights Alliance, to which WEL was affiliated, was wound up in late 2024. WEL is affiliated with the Working for Women Alliance. Engagement occurs through formal online working groups and consultations. The Working for Women Alliance has undertaken several online engagements and produced numerous submissions and policy statements; however, the much-valued, direct, dynamic, and interactive engagement processes used by ERA are missed, as they provided a greater sense of women's activism across Australia. WEL has been reviewing and converting its election policy platform into an ongoing policy platform.

WEL lobbied and supported the adoption by the NSW Parliament of the amended Abortion Law Reform Amendment (Health Care Access) Act 2025, which enables the expansion of rural, regional and remote women's access to reproductive health services, including abortion. The key provision of the Abortion Law Reform Amendment (Health Care Access) Act will allow registered midwives and nurse practitioners to prescribe MS2 Step (Mifepristone) for women seeking early abortions. (GPs can already prescribe the drug). WEL has also supported action in response to proposed amendments to South Australian legislation to reduce access to abortion healthcare.

WEL was pleased to see the establishment of the *Select Committee on Reproductive, MaternalH, and Paediatric health Services in Tasmania*, supporting a submission to this inquiry. This Inquiry had an extensive remit, tasked with making recommendations for State Government action to ensure reproductive, maternal, and paediatric health, as well as perinatal mental health services, that meet the needs of Tasmanian parents, families, and children. Of particular concern was the broader availability of birthing choices and addressing the serious inequities in women's reproductive (including maternity) health services in rural and remote Tasmania. All these issues have ramifications across Australia. This committee was prorogued and re-established following two Tasmanian State elections in 2024 and 2025 and is now expected to report in March 2026.





WEL submitted to Australia's Fourth Universal Periodic Review of Australia's record and commitment to Human Rights. WEL has advocated for the full incorporation of Australia's human rights obligations into domestic law through a Human Rights Act for Australia.

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## Governance

The year has been marked by embedding WEL as a national organisation, establishing a national profile and membership. The environment is highly competitive, with many groups, such as Women's Agenda, Fair Agenda, and government-funded Working for Women's Alliances, providing strong, diverse public feminist voices in Australia. The second National Coordinating Committee (NCC) was established in 2024 after the inaugural AGM and meets bi-monthly via Zoom. Three working groups were initially established: Policy, Communications and General Management. This arrangement was modified with the May 2025 Federal election to focus on the development of WEL's National Election Policy Platform, the Election Scorecard, coupled with more intense social media communication about WEL's policies during the election period. WEL is now reviewing and converting this platform to an ongoing policy.

Following WEL's major federal election campaign earlier this year, the WEL National Coordinating Committee (NCC) commenced a central review of WEL's work to determine WEL's future directions, consider where our lobbying activities can achieve the greatest positive impact and decide what we need to put in place to make this work. To advance this, the NCC will meet in July 2025 to consider its work program in the 2025-26 financial year.



# Women Empowerment and Human Resource Development Centre of India (WHI)

*Dr KG Vijayalekshmy*

## The Organization

The Women Empowerment and Human Resource Development Centre of India (WHI), registered under the Travancore–Cochin Scientific, Cultural and Charitable Societies Registration Act XII of 1955, envisions a women-empowered society where women contribute equally to national socio-economic development.

Since 2014, WHI has held Special Consultative Status with the UN-ECOSOC and **is affiliated with the International Alliance of Women (IAW)**, the European Union, and the International Women’s Peace Group (IWPG), South Korea. It also has FCRA and 80G exemptions. More than 240 NGOs are affiliated with WHI, which provides guidance, linkages, and support through community development centres across Kerala. WHI’s doctrine emphasizes dignity, self-reliance, and sustainability—ensuring internal community resources are maximized before external support is introduced.

## Programme 1: Youth Enrichment and Empowerment (2024–25)

**Location:** Trivandrum (Urban-4) | **Partner:** Women & Child Development Department, Govt. of Kerala

**Reach:** 965 youth and 265 anganwadi teachers across 156 centres

The programme promoted leadership, civic responsibility, and digital competence among adolescents and young mothers. Alongside youth sessions, WHI conducted focused trainings for teachers and helpers, creating collaborative learning environments.

### Highlights:

- 23 awareness sessions on health, hygiene, drug abuse, cyber safety, legal aid, environmental protection, and financial literacy.
- Over **1,100 participants** engaged in structured activities.
- Community-based initiatives included beach cleaning, organic farming awareness, and communal harmony sessions.

## Programme 2: Health & Social Intervention Initiatives

WHI organized health camps, awareness drives, and dispensary services, particularly in underserved coastal and tribal areas.

- **General Medical Camp:** 278 beneficiaries received consultations, medicines, and preventive advice.
- **Anaemia Interventions:** 5 screening camps with Hb testing, nutrition sessions, and iron supplementation; follow-ups ensured adherence.
- **Health Facility Centre:** Served 80+ patients monthly, focusing on lifestyle diseases (hypertension, diabetes, anaemia).

**Impact:** Increased preventive healthcare uptake among women, youth, and the elderly; established community trust through continuous follow-ups.

## Programme 3: Suraksha – HIV/AIDS Prevention & Migrant Health

In partnership with the Kerala State AIDS Control Society, WHI has implemented the *Suraksha* programme in Trivandrum since 2010, focusing on migrant labourers.

**Team:** 7 professionals, including counsellors, outreach workers, and M&E staff.

**Services:** Risk assessments, HIV/STI screening, counselling, TB testing, condom distribution, and awareness sessions.

### 2024–25 Achievements (April–March):

- **Migrants contacted:** 39,384 | High-risk identified: 9,726
- **Counselling provided:** 5,013
- **HIV tests:** 3,167 | STI tests: 551 | TB tests: 157

- **Cases detected:** 6 HIV reactive, 3 STI reactive — promptly referred and treated.

**Impact:** Improved health-seeking behaviour, better awareness of HIV/TB among migrant workers, and early detection of cases.

## Programme 4: Counselling Services (2025)

Community-based counselling centres supported children, adolescents, women, and families across Trivandrum and Wayanad.

- **Beneficiaries:** ~525 in 3 years; 110 in 2024–25 alone
- **Types:** Individual, family, group therapy, youth guidance
- **Focus Areas:** Domestic violence, family conflicts, trauma recovery, substance abuse, career stress, and child/adolescent wellbeing.

**Impact:** Family counselling and violence-related interventions produced the strongest outcomes, linking psychosocial support with legal aid.

## Programme 5: Internship Programmes

WHI partners with national and international universities, including St. Gregorios College of Law, Trivandrum.

- **2024–25:** 26 interns engaged in coastal community surveys (waste management), school drug-awareness studies, and stress-management research among women in the IT sector.
- Each year, ~75 students are supported, creating a pipeline of socially sensitive young professionals.

## Conclusion

In 2024–25, WHI strengthened its role as a catalyst for community transformation—empowering youth, improving healthcare access, supporting migrant populations, and nurturing psychosocial resilience. Its collaborative approach with government, NGOs, and academic institutions continues to multiply impact, ensuring that women, youth, and marginalized groups are at the centre of development.



# Associate Members

# Membres Associés



# Bali Women's Union of Farming Groups (BAWUFAG)

*Rebecca Juga, Representative*

## 1. Introduction

The **Bali Women's Union of Farming Group (BAWUFAG)** continued its humanitarian mission in 2025 with a strong focus on **empowering underprivileged communities**, especially **internally displaced persons (IDPs)** affected by the ongoing crisis in Cameroon. Our initiatives this year addressed both **livelihood empowerment** and **health/hygiene education for adolescent girls**.

## 2. Key Achievements

### 2.1 Livelihood Empowerment & Capacity Building

On **December 6, 2024**, BAWUFAG organized a meeting with members to discuss economic activities and explore partnership opportunities with **CAMFAS – Cameroon Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services**.

- **Economic Activities Discussed:**
  - Poultry, pig, fish, cassava, and maize farming
  - Skilled trades such as building, welding, sewing, hairdressing, and carpentry
- **Identified Needs:**
  - Training on local feed production for poultry and pigs
  - Machines for cassava processing
  - Financial resources to sustain and expand activities
- While CAMFAS did not fulfill its promise to provide training, BAWUFAG encouraged members to **share knowledge and skills among themselves**, fostering resilience and community-driven support. Despite the setbacks, members have continued their activities with determination.



## 2.2 Water and Pad Project – September 24, 2025

Held at **Akam Bilingual Academy**, this flagship program continues to have a remarkable impact on the lives of adolescent girls.

- **Activities:**
  - Menstrual health education sessions
  - Interactive discussions allowing girls to share experiences and challenges
  - Training to build confidence in addressing menstruation openly
- **Support Provided:**
  - Educational materials
  - One packet of sanitary pads per student
  - A fruit for each participant to promote healthy nutrition
  - Reminders on the importance of hydration during menstruation, supported by the **water reservoir installed in 2024**
  - Upgrading of the girls' toilet facilities to ensure cleanliness and dignity
- **Impact:**
  - Increased confidence among students, especially returning participants
  - Parents' testimonies confirming positive behavioral and hygiene changes
  - Growing acceptance of menstruation as a natural part of development among the girls

## 3. Challenges

Lack of external technical support: CAMFAS did not provide the promised training.

- Limited financial resources for capacity building in trades and agriculture.
- Persistent stigma and shyness among new students regarding open discussions on menstruation.

## 4. Recommendations & Lessons Learned

- Strengthen peer-to-peer learning within the group to compensate for absent partners.
- Build new partnerships with reliable agricultural and vocational training institutions.

- Expand the Water and Pads Project to additional schools to maximize reach and impact.
- Mobilize financial resources to provide more tools, machines, and start-up support for IDPs.

## 5. Future Plans (2026)

- Develop **structured training modules** for farmers and tradespeople.
- Seek strategic partnerships with NGOs and donors in the fields of **food security, women's empowerment, and education.**
- Extend menstrual health and hygiene education to at least **two additional schools.**
- Strengthen **monitoring and evaluation systems** to better document impact and accountability.

## 6. Conclusion

- Despite challenges, **BAWUFAG has remained resilient**, empowering displaced persons with hope and supporting young girls with menstrual health education and dignity. We are deeply grateful to the **International Alliance of Women** and other partners for their continued support
- Together, we are creating a future where **women, girls, and displaced communities in Cameroon can rebuild their lives with confidence, dignity, and opportunity.**



*Students receiving resources*



*Participants of the Water and Pads Project*

# CEFAP – Ladies Circle, Cameroon

*Anne Pelagie Yotchou, Representative*

## **Overall Objective**

Supporting, with a dual empowerment approach, 200 rural women towards an ecological transition in agriculture, environmental protection, and the agricultural value chain for better resilience to climate change.

## **Water and Pads for Girls Project**

Our organization aims to do a remarkable job in the field, restoring confidence of schoolgirls. This initiative helps dismantle barriers that prevent girls from going to school during their menstrual cycle. Education and awareness-raising were organized for girls and boys on menstrual hygiene, puberty, and reproductive health.

Sessions were facilitated by qualified and experienced trainers.

Washable sanitary pads and reusable products were distributed to girls, who are beneficiaries of the project. The towels have been designed to be comfortable, convenient, and easy to use.

## **Training and Integration Assistance Programme**

Targeted for women in distress, without income, and young girls who have dropped out of school. Programme includes training in trades and help finding employment, and business creation, leading to income-generating and empowerment. The initiative aims to make women and girls in distress less vulnerable to violence, while helping them to become the main actors of their development.





# Frauennetzwerk für Frieden e.V. Women's Network For Peace Germany

*Clara Jöster-Morisse, Heide Schütz, Charlotte Walde*

In 2025, the Women's Network for Peace continued their political and advocacy work focused on feminist and women's peace activism. At the end of the year, a new board was elected, with more than half of the previous members continuing in their roles. Founded shortly after and as a direct result of the 4th World Conference on Women, our organisation enters 2026 — a significant year marking its 30th anniversary — with renewed energy and commitment.

Our Mission Statement was and still is: Wars are made by people. So is peace. Most of our work is carried out by the voluntary engagement of board members, individual members, and interns. Elise Kopper has served as the organisation's Executive Director for over ten years. She is employed on a part-time basis, as our financial resources do not allow for a full-time position. The organisation relies primarily on membership fees and donations.

Throughout 2025, we were able not only to sustain our existing activities but also to expand them and initiate new projects centred on feminist peace work.

## Political Discussion Rounds

During 2025 and the beginning of 2026 we hosted five public events, bringing together members and interested participants to engage with issues at the intersection of peace, feminism, and global politics. The topics included discussions on sports and human rights, debates on compulsory military service and its implications for women in Germany, perspectives on peace with nature drawing on insights from Colombia, and reflections on civil society resistance in response to political developments in the United States under the Trump administration.

## Peace Trail Bonn

The “Peace Trail Bonn”, developed together with the Network Peace Cooperative in 2023, continued to grow in 2025 and received increasing attention. We conducted six guided tours during the year 2025 and the beginning of 2026. In addition, an English-language brochure was produced to make the project more accessible to an international audience. The first stations of the Peace Trail have also been included on the English-language website “Discover Peace”, which presents peace trails in several European cities ([www.discoverpeace.eu/de/bonn](http://www.discoverpeace.eu/de/bonn)).

## Women, Peace and Security (UNSCR 1325)

In 2025, UN Security Council Resolution 1325 marked its 25th anniversary. In Germany, the federal government is currently working on the fourth National Action Plan for its implementation. We continue to be part of the civil society network on UNSCR 1325, which advocates for its implementation by the German federal government. In October 2025, we also signed the annual open letter of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security to the UN Security Council. The letter calls on the UN and its member states to better protect the rights of women and girls in situations of crisis and armed conflict.



## Visions for Peace: Imagining Feminist and Demilitarised Futures

In 2025, we started a new project titled *“Visions for Peace: Imagining Demilitarised and Feminist Futures”*. The project is funded by the Maypole Fund, a UK-based fund that supports feminist and anti-militarist initiatives worldwide. As part of the project, we are developing a zine that presents visions of a demilitarised and feminist future across four thematic areas: nuclear weapons, the military, the climate crisis, and positive peace. The aim of the project is to offer alternatives to dominant militarised thinking. It also seeks to inspire new ways of thinking and encourage feminist peace engagement and activism.

## Inauguration of the new Global Office of UN Women in Bonn, Germany

On 21 October 2025, Women's Network for Peace was invited to participate at the official inauguration of UN Women's new Global Office in Bonn. Chair Annegret Krüger and honorary chairwoman Heide Schütz attended the event, and on that occasion, they presented Executive Director Sima Bahous with a copy of the Peace Trail Bonn as a welcome gift.



*Annegret Krüger (left) with Sima Bahous (right) at the inauguration event of the Global Office in Bonn after presenting her a flyer of the Bonn Peace Trail.*



## Farewell to the Bertha von Suttner-Tram

In August 2025, we said goodbye to our “Bertha tram” as it began a new journey to Poland. The project was originally launched in September 2019 together with the Network of the German Peace Movement to honour Bertha von Suttner, the first woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize in 1905. 2019 marked the 70th anniversary of the Bertha von Suttner square in Bonn, a traffic and footpassenger hotspot. After almost six years of service in Bonn, the tram is now in use in Eastern Europe. The farewell ceremony took place at the public utility company in Bonn and was attended by many supporters, including our honorary chairwoman Heide Schütz. Guests also included representatives from UN Women Germany and the Civil Peace Service, as well as many members and supporters.



*Farewell to the Bertha von Suttner tram in Bonn*

## **Reading and Workshop on Strengthening Feminist Activism**

In cooperation with AMICA e.V. and supported by the INTA Foundation, the Women's Network for Peace Germany organised a workshop aimed at empowering women and gender-marginalised activists in October 2025. The workshop responded to the challenges posed by anti-feminism, right-wing populism, and militarisation. Participants shared experiences, reflected on challenges, and explored ways to stay active and engaged without losing energy. The aim of this workshop was to provide supportive tools for long-term activism and to support one another to continue to be loud and active together without losing the energy for sustainable activism. The workshop on feminist solidarity and sustainable activism was complemented by a reading from the book “Zuversicht jetzt” (“Hope Now”) by author and climate activist Sara Fromm, who is committed to sustainable activism and aims to foster solidarity among women and gender-marginalised activists. The reading took place at the Women's Museum Bonn.

## **Nomination for the International Peace Prize 2025**

In December, Heide Schütz, our honorary chairwoman, was nominated for the International Bertha von Suttner Peace Prize 2025 that was inaugurated five years ago by the Georgian Peace Institute for Progress and her founder Salome Adamia, supported by the Women's Network for Peace Germany.

It was rewarded for the first time at the Peace Palace in The Hague on December 10, 2025. Elene Rutsetskaia was rewarded with the prize for her Peace Work in Georgia and across the South Caucasus.

# Solidarité des femmes pour le Développement, Environnement et Droit de l'Enfant au Congo

## SOFEDC RDC

*Anuarite Muyuwa, National Coordinator of SOFEDC*

### Context

The DRC has been facing conflicts for over a decade, causing violence, death, displacement of individuals and destruction of property. As a result, many women and children are exposed to multiple risks of violence, disease, abuse, and exploitation. There are therefore many needs, both individual and collective. With a view to helping improve everyone's living conditions, SOFEDC has planned activities in various areas, including those covered in this report.

| Activities planned                                                                                                                                          | Activities implemented                                                               | Results                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Raising awareness in the North Kivu region</b>                                                                                                           |                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Training of 20 members of displaced communities, including 10 women and 9 men, on the concepts of gender-based violence and techniques for reporting cases. |  | 20 members of displaced communities, including 10 women and 9 men, were trained on the concepts of gender-based violence and techniques for reporting cases in the Nyiragongo territory, North Kivu, DRC. |

| Activities planned                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Activities implemented                                                               | Results                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Water and Pads Project at Kinshasa</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Raising awareness among 300 pupils, including 150 girls and 150 boys, about menstrual hygiene in schools and distributing 300 booklets, including 150 on becoming a woman in confidence and 150 on menstrual hygiene.                                                                                   |    | 300 pupils, including 150 girls and 150 boys, were educated about menstrual hygiene in schools. 300 booklets were distributed, including 150 on becoming a woman with confidence in Kinshasa, at La Puisette school, with the financial support from the IAW. |
| <b>Raising awareness among women in the North Kivu region</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Raising awareness among displaced women and girls about their involvement in protecting the rights of displaced women in camps (the right to be elected as a leader, the sexual and reproductive rights while living in the camp, the inheritance rights for widows who are victims of conflict, etc.). |  | 1,123 women and girls were made aware of the issue, 13 women became block leaders and 9 became camp leaders in the Rusayo camp. 17 women who were victims of rape received medical care at the SODERU health centre in Kiziba.                                |



| Activities planned                                                                       | Activities implemented                                                               | Results                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Raising awareness among women and men in the North Kivu region</b>                    |                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Raising awareness about the traumatic effects on the health of women, girls and children |    | 591 people, including women, girls and men, were made aware of the issue; 17 women received psychological support in the Mudja camp in the Nyiragongo territory, North Kivu, DRC.                                                |
| <b>Raising awareness among men in the North Kivu region</b>                              |                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Forum for men and women to express their views on positive masculinity                   |  | Three out of five men have decided to work for equality and fairness regarding their behaviour towards girls and boys, and to work for fairness in favour of women in the Mujoga camp in the Nyiragongo territory of North Kivu. |

| Activities planned                                                                                                                  | Activities implemented                                                              | Results                                                         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Support for child victims in the South Kivu region</b>                                                                           |                                                                                     |                                                                 |
| School kit support for children affected by armed conflict in the municipality of Kadutu in South Kivu, Bukavu                      |   | Each of the 26 children has received 20 writing pads and 4 pens |
| Support by offering school kits for children affected by armed conflict in the Nyiragongo territory, Mudja group, village of Kiziba |  | Each of the 20 children has received 20 writing pads and 4 pens |

## Challenges and recommendations

Security and financial challenges have been major obstacles preventing several other activities from being carried out. Support in fundraising is our key recommendation for the coming years.

# International Alliance of Women Annual Report 2025

*Alliance Internationale des Femmes Rapport  
Annuel 2025*

**International Alliance of Women Annual Report 2025**, is an open Forum for information and opinion on matters of importance to women. It is published by the International Alliance of Women.

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