

10.00 - 12.00 “Our Common Future”

High Level and Civil Society Plenary

Moderator - Dr Olga Tzortzatou Nanopoulou, Soroptimist International

Carolyn Handschin-Moser, President NGO CSW Geneva, Women’s Federation for World Peace, International

Tatiana Molcean, Executive Secretary, UN Economic Commission for Europe

Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda, Assistant UN Secretary General, Deputy Executive Director, UN Women

H.E. Ambassador Eldiyor Toshmatov, Mission Republic of Uzbekistan

H.E. Ambassador Vincenzo Grassi, Mission of Italy

Esteemed colleagues, distinguished guests,

It is an honor to address you today, as we gather to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, a historic and powerful milestone for advancing gender equality and women empowerment worldwide.

Over the past three decades, we have witnessed significant progress in the recognition and protection of women's rights. The commitment and tireless efforts of civil society, governments, and international organizations have led to transformative change. Yet, as we reflect on our achievements, we must also confront the reality that no country has fully achieved gender equality. The road ahead is long, and our challenges are complex.

Today, the Italian government reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the principles of the Beijing Declaration. In line with the outcomes of the recent G7 Ministerial Meeting on Gender Equality in Italy, we recognize the critical need for collective action to overcome the persistent barriers that prevent women and girls from fully realizing their rights.

In particular, I want to emphasize three critical areas prioritized by the current Italian Presidency of G7: combating gender-based violence, advancing women’s economic empowerment, and promoting women's leadership.

First, addressing gender-based violence is an absolute priority. Italy condemns all forms of violence against women and girls, whether in times of peace or conflict, and is committed to advancing these efforts and enhancing support services for survivors. Ending gender-based violence is a prerequisite for achieving true gender equality and requires a comprehensive approach - one that involves prevention, protection, and prosecution.

Second, enhancing women economic independence is a crucial component of the fight against gender-based violence. We are focused on reducing the gender pay gap and increasing women’s participation in decision-making roles across sectors. We believe it is essential to implement policies that support work-life balance, so that women are not forced to choose between their careers and their families.

Thirdly, women's leadership is indispensable for sustainable development. Women bring unique perspectives and innovative solutions to the table, yet they are underrepresented in leadership positions. We must do more to ensure that women’s voices are heard and their leadership recognized at all levels, from local communities to global forums. Italy remains resolute in its support of initiatives that advance women's roles in peacebuilding, environmental action, and political decision-making.

Moreover, gender equality must be pursued through an intersectional lens, recognizing that women’s experiences of discrimination are shaped by multiple and overlapping factors. Among the others, the

impacts of global challenges like the climate crisis and armed conflicts further exacerbate these inequalities, often hitting the most marginalized women and girls hardest. As natural disasters, resource scarcity, and geopolitical instability increase, women - particularly those in vulnerable communities - face amplified risks of violence, displacement, and loss of livelihoods. It is crucial that our efforts to advance gender equality address these intersecting forms of discrimination.

We are also deeply concerned about the rollback of women's rights in some parts of the world, where harmful gender stereotypes, discrimination, and regressive policies threaten hard-won gains.

As we look towards the future, let us remember that the empowerment of women and girls is a driving force for innovation, economic growth, and the achievement of sustainable development goals.

It is time to accelerate our efforts to advance the Beijing Declaration's agenda and Italy remains dedicated to working with all partners to this end. Among them, civil society has always been a driving force behind progress, and your voices will continue to be essential in shaping the policies that will lead us forward. We look forward to continued collaboration to build a world where gender equality is a reality for all. Thank you.

Tomas Lamanuskas, Deputy Secretary General, International Telecommunications Union

Belén Sanz Luque, Director, UN Women Europe and Central Asia

Yasmine Wilkinson Smith, Young Women's Alliance

Firstly, I'd like to say it's so evident how invaluable Forums like this are ; they allow us to bring our diverse perspectives, experiences, and expertise directly to the table. We need more spaces like this — that are inclusive platforms where all voices, including those of young people and marginalized communities, are not just heard but actively integrated into decision-making processes.

Something I appreciated about the workshops yesterday is how the understanding of how imperative it is that we translate these words into tangible actions was the central outcome. If effective policies and programs are to be crafted, they must be informed by the insights and lived experiences of such as those shared at the civil society forum.

A critical area where input is vital is youth engagement. Young people are not only the leaders of tomorrow; they are also crucial actors today. Their voices bring fresh perspectives and innovative solutions to the challenges we face.

As we advocate for these changes, we must also pay tribute to those who have paved the way for us. I want to take a moment to honor the women who have come before us and all of the resilience that they have shown to get us to this point. One such person is our friend and mentor, Zarin. Her unwavering commitment to progress and inclusion has inspired so many, including myself. We are building on the foundations laid by pioneers, and it is our responsibility to carry forward their legacy by fostering an environment where all voices are amplified.

In Northamptonshire -where I live- we are actively working on a local initiative to establish a local Young Women's Alliance. This group aims to critically assess the services available to women in our area and identify gaps in resources. By focusing on the specific needs of young women in our community, we will create a space that not only voices their concerns but also drives actionable change. Our work will involve collaboration with local stakeholders, and we will ensure that the insights from the civil society forum are central to developing effective, community based change.

In conclusion, it's clear that the Civil Society Forum has an essential role to play in the pursuit of gender equality and the creation of grassroots-informed recommendations.

As we continue to have these important conversations, I hope that we continue to create greater inclusivity, empower young voices, and continue to transform our knowledge into meaningful action. Together, we can work towards creating a world that reflects the needs and aspirations of all its citizens.
Thank you.

María Begoña Lasagabaster, Director, Gender Equality Division, Office of the Director-General of UNESCO - by video message

12.00 - 13.00 Best Practices and Vision for the Future

Interviewer: Paula Daeppen, Biovision Foundation

Prof. Reyhan Atasu-Topcuoglu, NGO Steering Group, Regional Civil Society Consultation

Tumu Johnson, Sisters of Freda

Ingrid Green, Director of Research and Evaluation at the Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA)

Brigitte Polonovski, ICW-CIF UN Permanent Representative, Regards de Femmes

Elena Bauchiero Graduate Women International, Youth Representative

Alice Pome, Youth Forum, Soroptimist International

13.00 - 14.00 Advocacy Tool

Ana Bonny-Hernandez, Latter-day Saint Charities

The history of the advocacy tool - Zarin Hainsworth OBE, Widows Rights International

In reviewing the work from previous consultations, our thinking for the process for B+30 was to replicate good practices and provide a tool that can be used productively from now on. Following extensive consultations with diverse stakeholders, the framework for activities was finalized in 2023 of four key pillars:

1. Working Groups on each of the 12 Critical Areas who were mandated to create a short statement with 3 action points - short, medium and long-term, plus a background paper with all the research that led to the statement. These were compiled and published in hard copy and shared widely as well as being available on the NGOCSW Geneva website. Short statements were also drafted in line with the agenda of the UNECE formal consultations that take place over the next two days and have been shared with UNECE for inclusion in oral statements. We will hear these at the end of today.
2. The NGO CSW Geneva organized a series of expert roundtables with Member States. This initiative built on the breakfast briefings with Ambassadors, which NGOCSW Geneva regularly convenes. In these Roundtable sessions topics such as health, education and training, the environment, and violence against women and girls were addressed, utilizing both in-person and virtual formats.
3. This in person conference with the workshops that took place yesterday. We have asked that the workshop notes include the perspectives of all participants. The purpose of the workshops was to look at how we can implement our findings from the work of the thematic working groups, not to create statements - as this has already been done over the past year. The workshops were also invited to come up with some advocacy tips that Pascale will share shortly.
4. Advocacy tool. Although we have given this title there isn't a single document. We envisage that those interested in a particular theme, will look at the B+30 pages on our website, that together create the tool-kit, and find the statements that they can use in their own lobbying and advocacy work, drawing on the advocacy tips created during the workshops and the background papers. These three elements together create the advocacy tool-kit.

We have already heard from activists that they are using the statements and the background papers already published on the website when writing to their MPs and other decision makers. We have also heard positive feedback from UN entities to whom we have given the published statements with the Chapeau statement that summarises the key findings. We hope that you will all be able to use what has been created through this process in your own advocacy so that by the time we get to B+35, more will have been achieved for the equality of women and men, girls and boys, and towards a more peaceful and prosperous world for all people and the planet.

Thank you for all your hard work so far and strength for all that you are about to do.

Advocacy Tips - Pascale Muylaert, Soroptimist International

What to say? ABC

Action oriented

Encourage accountability and **B**udget support

Collect and use disaggregated data

Engage (women) **D**ecision makers

Share lived **E**xperiences

Use existing **F**rameworks or strengthen them

How to say it

Be inclusive

Engage widely

Zoom in and out

Segment and tailor

14.00 - 15.30 Beijing on Trial

Judge - Berthe De Vos-Neven- LLM, Barrister, Soroptimist International

Counsel for the Prosecution - Patricia Elias LLM, Every Woman Treaty

Counsel for the Defence - Hon Jocelyne Scutt, Barrister & Human Rights Lawyer, Senior Teaching Fellow, University of Buckingham

Witnesses:

Poverty - Susan McKeller, Scottish Women's Convention

Violence Against Women and Girls - Anna Sofia Fernandes, Portuguese Platform for Women's Rights

Power and Decision Making - Shaila Rao Mistry, Graduate Women International

Armed Conflict - Marelle Manders, FAWCO

Education - Connie Newman, Medical Women's International Association

Emerging Issue AI - Tania Gomez, Soroptimist International Europe

Institutional Mechanisms - Dr Vanessa Rosser, WOLMI

Girl Child - Imogen Harley, Young Women's Alliance

Environment - Janet Schempf, Soroptimist International America

Human Rights - Connie Phlipot, FAWCO

Health - Marianne Haslegrave, Director Commonwealth Medical Trust

Economy - Hana Mosavie, Pomegranate House

The session was introduced by Zarin Hainsworth, with a formal opening by the Clerk of the Court - Sama Tania.

Judge

Undertaking a review of a wide ranging document such as the Beijing Platform for Action, including over 30 years and across 56 countries, is a huge undertaking. In order to gain an overview, the construct of a mock trial to unpack some key issues was used. The question asked by the trial was "Has the Beijing Platform for Action been effective?".

Witness statements

Poverty - Susan McKellar

Poverty and Education

What needs to be done to ensure that women and girls have equal access to education to help them overcome poverty and vulnerability?

CSW68 agreed conclusion 26:

Recognize the barriers that girls face such as feminization of poverty, child labour undertaken by girls, gender stereotypes, negative social norms amongst other challenges.

Despite gains in providing access to quality education, girls are still more likely than boys to remain excluded from education. In 2023 it was estimated that the number of girls and young women out of school globally will rise to 129 million. Globally in 2022, 32.1% of women aged 15 to 24 were neither students, employees, nor interns, compared to 15.4% of young men.

Poverty and the Environment

Global challenges and emergencies, including those related to health, energy and food security, natural disasters, geopolitical tensions and wars often disproportionately affect women and girls. What can be done to help women to overcome these challenges to stop them falling into extreme poverty?

Other environmental issues such as impacts of climate change and environmental degradation, biodiversity loss, extreme weather and natural disasters, poses challenges to the achievement of sustainable development and poverty eradication.

Poverty/Accountability of Every Individual and Governance

Governments have the primary responsibility for the follow-up to and review of the 2030 Agenda at the national, regional and global levels with regard to progress made.

How can we prioritize the sharing of agreed moral behaviors and values and ensure that governments, businesses and leaders in the community are held accountable so as women are consulted, their views heard and respected and embedded in all areas of society?

Challenges are that there is no legal binding for implementation of the agreed conclusions at a national level. We need to advocate for all states and governments to implement the agreed conclusions of CSW68 to eradicate poverty for all.

Despite the varied economic landscapes, women's poverty remains a persistent issue in the UNECE region.

Women in Power and Decision-Making - Shaila Rao Mistry

1. What are the specific barriers preventing women's effective participation in power and decision-making roles ?
2. How have governmental policies evolved since the adoption of the Beijing platform for action? What are the gaps?
3. What role do international organizations play in supporting women's empowerment? Has this helped?
4. How do mindset and cultural attitudes towards women influence representation in leadership positions? What are the cultural challenges ?
- 5 What matrices are used to measure progress towards gender parity in decision-making? Why has data measurement not been better employed?

Armed Conflict - Marelie Manders

It is clear from the Beijing Platform paragraph 131 that peace is intricately linked with the equality of women.

United Nations Resolution 1325, which recognizes this, plays a vital role in Women, Peace and Security.

United Nations Resolution 1325 requires of states to create National Action Plans to ensure women's equal and full participation as active agents in peace and and requires the increased participation and representation of women at all levels of decision-making. About 22% of states in the UNECE region have not created National Action Plans.

Similarly, the Beijing platform recognizes in paragraph 134 that women should be politically empowered and involved in all levels of decision making.

National Action Plans mostly fail because of financial constraints, and it is imperative that gender responsive budgeting should be ensured.

States and peace brokers need to ensure that peace processes are fully inclusive, that the appointment of women mediators and negotiators is supported and encourage inclusive delegations where women are absent or underrepresented.

Gender inequalities often become worse in times of conflict and crisis, with devastating impacts on women and girls' enjoyment of human rights (critical areas of concern E and I). In 2019, the Security Council found that more than 50 parties to armed conflicts around the world have committed or instigated sexual violence. Funds should be set aside for the compensation of women who are victims of war crimes. The capacity of witness support offices and other offices providing assistance for witnesses to war crimes should be strengthened. A clear prohibition of sexual violence under the law of armed conflict should be ensured and should be integrated into national law, military doctrine and training. Steps must be taken to amend national laws to ensure that sexual violence is designated a war crime and current Prosecutions for war crimes must be accelerated.

Education - Connie Newman

The 1995 Beijing Platform for Action recognized that lifelong quality education and training were powerful drivers of the development of girls and were an effective tool for reducing poverty, improving health, gender equality, development and peace.

The Commission on the Status of Women predicted the need for

- Lifelong learning for all women and girls
- Updating educational and vocational curricula
- Reskilling and upskilling

So what has happened in the past 30 years? We have seen some progress but not enough.

Three points:

- 1- Education is not adequate and can be of low quality.
- 2- Teachers need better working conditions, and lifelong training to adapt to new technologies.
- 3- Digital education, while essential, is not universal.

I would like to elaborate on Point 1, low quality education.

First, we see a shortage of teachers in the EU, the UK, the US, Canada and Australia, and in countries in Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan). In the European Commission Education and Training Monitor 2023 report, only Greece and Croatia did not report a lack of education staff.

Second, we have a shortage of qualified teachers. For example, a report about Quebec schools by Auditor General Guylaine Leclerc found that about 30% of teachers did not have teaching certificate or provisional qualification.

Third, reasons for teacher shortage include low salaries, bias against female teachers, under-financed school systems which therefore have limited resources and may not be safe.

Fourth, about 8% of girls globally and 6% of boys leave schools without literacy skills.

Fifth, barriers to girls' education include conflicts, pandemics, famine, natural disasters, migration, displacement, and remote geography.

Sixth and very important, school systems are under-financed and need much greater financial support by governments.

Elaborating on Point 2, teachers need better working conditions and lifelong training.

First, teachers do not always work in good conditions and are not necessarily trained in using and teaching digital technology.

Second, teachers face (as do female students) gender discrimination and stereotyping in their skills development.

Third, other challenges include lack of equal pay, difficult working conditions, poor safety in schools, undervalued status, and the need to provide quality and culturally diverse education,

Fourth, continuous training of teachers is needed.

Fifth, particularly troublesome today is the amount of misinformation in the media, including the internet, which detracts from learning and makes it much harder for teachers.

Third point, Education in the Digital Age:

Digital technology and services have proliferated in the past 30 years and education is essential for all.

However, quality digital education is rare. Thus women and girls are disadvantaged and unable to engage in online knowledge and information sharing, digital entrepreneurship and online work. We need continuous or lifelong learning opportunities to give people the necessary skills to navigate technology safely, identify risks, protect privacy and thrive in the labor market.

Cross-examination

The importance of education in the Beijing platform is clear. Education provides a foundation of general knowledge and skills, teaches people how to learn, think critically, solve problems, develop strengths and passions which can be used in any endeavor throughout life.

Yet despite some improvements in education globally, 30 years after Beijing we still have many challenges to address to improve 1) the quality of education and teaching for girls, 2) work conditions and lifelong learning for teachers, and 3) education on safe use of the internet.

--Resources for schools and teachers are inadequate and require more government funding.

--Education is still of low quality in many areas.

--Misinformation online is widespread and must be addressed.

--Today we face a shortage of teachers and qualified teachers.

--Lifelong training of teachers has not been implemented widely.

--Barriers to teaching include low salaries, gender bias, under-financed schools, and lack of safety in some schools.

--Despite the importance of technology and the internet for girls and boys, teachers are not necessarily trained in digital technology.

—Finally, the areas of deficiency in education and training that I have pointed out should be corrected if we want to achieve gender equality so that women and girls thrive in this technological society and are well prepared for the future.

The Impact of AI on the Lives of Women and Girls in the ECE Region - Tania Gomez

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA), adopted in 1995, serves as a critical framework for assessing progress in achieving gender equality. While Artificial Intelligence (AI) was nascent in 1995, the BPfA's principles remain highly relevant in evaluating the impact of this transformative technology on the lives of women and girls.

Has AI improved the lives of women and girls in the ECE region?

The answer is complex and multifaceted. AI has the potential to empower women and girls, bridge gaps in access to services, and create new opportunities. However, without careful and deliberate action, or without nurturing critical thinking it can also exacerbate existing inequalities.

Positive Impact:

- **Access to Information and Education:** AI-powered platforms can provide access to educational resources and information, potentially bridging gaps for all women and girls in remote or underserved areas.
- **Healthcare:** AI tools can improve healthcare access and outcomes, particularly in areas such as early disease detection and personalized medicine, which can benefit all women and girls.
- **Economic Opportunities:** AI can create new economic opportunities for women and girls by enabling remote work, facilitating entrepreneurship, and opening up new fields of employment.

Achievements of Member States:

- **Policy Frameworks:** Many Member States in the ECE region have developed or are in the process of developing national AI strategies and policies that address ethical considerations and promote

gender equality. As an example we can see positive steps on the regulation field, for example the EU AI ACT enforced last August.

- BPfA -all sections
- All CEDAW articles
- Capacity Building: Initiatives to promote STEM programs, also digital literacy and skills development for all women and girls are being implemented to bridge the digital divide and empower them to participate in the AI economy.
 - BPfA - Section L (Education and Training)
 - CEDAW articles: 3, 5, 10
- Research and Data Collection: Efforts are underway to collect gender-disaggregated data on the impact of AI and to promote research on gender bias in AI systems.
 - BPfA Section D (Violence Against Women)
 - CEDAW articles: 1, 2, 3

While AI holds immense potential to improve the lives of all women and girls in the ECE region, realizing this potential requires concerted efforts to address the challenges and ensure that AI is developed and deployed in a responsible and inclusive manner. Member States must continue to work towards creating an enabling environment for women and girls to benefit from AI while mitigating the risks of bias and discrimination.

| Document | Section/Article | Summary |
|----------|------------------------------------|--|
| BPfA | Section L (Education and Training) | Addresses the need for equal access to education and training, including in the field of technology, to ensure women and girls can participate fully in the AI-driven economy. |
| BPfA | Section K (Health) | Highlights the importance of accessible and quality healthcare for women and girls, which AI can potentially enhance through improved diagnostics, personalized medicine, and access to information. |
| BPfA | Section J (The Economy) | Focuses on women's economic empowerment and participation in the workforce, which can be impacted both positively and negatively by AI-driven automation and job displacement. |
| BPfA | Section D (Violence Against Women) | Addresses all forms of violence against women, including online harassment and violence facilitated by AI technologies. |
| CEDAW | Article 1 | Defines discrimination against women, encompassing any distinction, exclusion, or restriction based on sex that impairs the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms. |
| CEDAW | Article 2 | Obligates states to condemn discrimination and pursue policies to eliminate it, including in the context of AI development and deployment. |
| CEDAW | Article 3 | Enshrines the principle of equality and non-discrimination, requiring states to take measures to ensure women's full development and advancement. |
| CEDAW | Article 5 | Addresses the need to modify social and cultural patterns that perpetuate gender stereotypes, which can be amplified by biased AI systems. |
| CEDAW | Article 10 | Guarantees equal access to education, including in the field of science and technology, crucial for women's participation in the AI sector. |
| CEDAW | Article 12 | Enshrines the right to health and access to healthcare services, which AI can potentially improve but also may create disparities if not implemented equitably. |

Question from prosecution

While digital literacy programs exist and the participation in STEM programs is increasing, do they adequately equip women and girls with the advanced skills needed to thrive in an AI-driven economy, or do they primarily focus on basic computer skills?

Answer: While commendable, most digital literacy programs primarily focus on basic computer skills. To truly empower women and girls in the AI-driven economy, we must expand access to advanced quality education and training in AI development, data science, and machine learning. To be able to guarantee equal access and participation in the AI sector for all women and girls, at the pace of change.

Institutional Mechanisms - Dr. Vanessa Rosser

Defense:

In the Eastern and Central Europe (ECE) region, the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) has led to significant progress in improving the lives of women and girls, primarily through institutional reforms and legal frameworks. Over the past few decades, countries in this region have committed to the Platform's objectives, particularly in the areas of political participation, education, and gender equality in the workforce.

One of the key institutional advancements has been the establishment of national gender equality bodies and mechanisms that oversee and promote the rights of women. For example, countries like Poland, Hungary, and Romania have created gender equality offices that work in tandem with the European Union's frameworks on gender mainstreaming. This has enabled a stronger push for equal representation in political and economic spheres. Today, women hold approximately 30% of seats in national parliaments across the region, a marked improvement from the early 1990s.

Another area of progress is the enactment of laws against gender-based violence. Following the BPfA's strategic objectives, most countries in the ECE region have introduced domestic violence legislation and ratified the Istanbul Convention. This has led to increased protection for women and more robust mechanisms for reporting and addressing abuse. In Bulgaria, for instance, recent data shows a 40% increase in reported cases of domestic violence, illustrating not just the persistence of the issue but also the effectiveness of awareness campaigns and the legal framework.

Education has also seen significant improvement. Girls in this region now enjoy near-equal access to education, with gender parity achieved at the primary and secondary levels. In countries like Serbia and Croatia, over 55% of university graduates are women, contributing to their increased participation in the labor market.

However, challenges remain. The region still struggles with entrenched gender stereotypes, especially in rural areas, where patriarchal attitudes limit women's access to decision-making roles. Despite these hurdles, the institutional mechanisms established under the BPfA have laid a solid foundation for continued progress, ensuring that the rights of women and girls remain a priority.

In conclusion, the Beijing Platform has been a catalyst for meaningful changes in the lives of women and girls across the ECE region, driving both legal reforms and shifts in social norms. While more work is needed, the institutional mechanisms in place have proven to be a powerful tool in advancing gender equality.

Prosecution:

While the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) has led to progress in the lives of women and girls in the Eastern and Central Europe (ECE) region, there have been notable failures of institutional mechanisms that have limited its full impact. Despite some advances in gender equality, these shortcomings have hindered deeper transformation across critical areas such as economic empowerment, protection from violence, and political representation.

One major failure has been the lack of consistent political will and the weakening of gender equality institutions in some countries. In Hungary and Poland, for example, governments have rolled back support for women's rights, undermining national gender equality bodies. This has weakened enforcement of gender equality policies, particularly in economic empowerment and labor rights. Although women are

more present in the workforce than before, they still face significant pay gaps and glass ceilings, particularly in higher-paying sectors like technology and finance. In Poland, women earn on average 20% less than men, a disparity that persists despite institutional commitments to gender equity.

Another area of failure is the slow and inconsistent implementation of laws addressing gender-based violence. Although most countries in the ECE region have enacted domestic violence laws and ratified the Istanbul Convention, enforcement is often weak, particularly in rural areas. Many women face barriers to accessing justice due to insufficient funding for shelters, legal aid, and support services. For instance, Romania has one of the highest rates of domestic violence in the EU, but services for survivors remain limited, especially outside major cities. The lack of comprehensive and accessible services has prevented many women from escaping abusive situations or pursuing legal action.

In addition, the persistence of deep-rooted gender stereotypes continues to hinder the lives of women and girls. Despite improvements in education where girls often outperform boys at the secondary and tertiary levels gendered expectations about family roles and caregiving responsibilities still limit women's full participation in the workforce and decision-making roles. In countries like Slovakia and the Czech Republic, high maternal employment rates often coexist with inadequate child care policies, forcing women to balance professional aspirations with traditional caregiving roles. This gap between policy and practice reveals how institutional mechanisms often fail to address societal norms that perpetuate gender inequality.

Lastly, women's political representation, though improved, remains uneven across the region. While some countries have introduced gender quotas and have seen modest increases in women's political participation, the institutional mechanisms in place often do not address deeper structural barriers, such as party politics or cultural resistance to women in leadership. For example, in countries like Ukraine, women hold less than 20% of parliamentary seats, reflecting how political systems often fail to fully integrate women despite formal mechanisms.

In conclusion, while the Beijing Platform has brought progress in some areas, institutional failures in enforcement, funding, and societal change have limited its broader impact on the lives of women and girls in the ECE region. The gaps in political will, inadequate services for survivors of violence, and persistent stereotypes demonstrate the need for stronger and more accountable mechanisms to ensure that the goals of the Beijing Platform are fully realized.

The Girl Child - Imogen Harley

Importance of sex-disaggregated data

Tackling child marriages

Encouraging girls into leadership and decision making

Commitments to end child labour

Cross examination:

Dangers of media and social media

The girl child in conflict zones (Ukraine and Gaza)

Environment - Janet Schempf

The BPfA presents three strategic objectives:

- Involve women actively in environmental decision-making at all levels,
- Integrate gender concerns and perspectives in policies and programs for sustainable development, and
- Strengthen or establish mechanisms at the national, regional and international levels to assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women.

These three objectives are supported by specific actions to be taken by various entities, which are purposefully organized into responsible groups comprised of:

Governments, at all levels, including municipal authorities, international organizations, private sector institutions, regional organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector.

These objectives and recommended actions are made in the context of:
Recognized human rights, a fully functioning and productive natural environment,
of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programs that considers the effects on women and men before decisions are taken, and full compliance with relevant international obligations.

Since 1995, we have collectively made advances, for example:

Gender bias in education, training, and employment has yielded to allow individuals to have more education and career options, including those in science, technology, economics, and environmental management.

Health outcomes in some areas have improved, including a reduction in both maternal mortality and menstruation management has allowed girls to attend school.

Access to adequate supplies of high-quality water and to effective sanitation has increased.

Public awareness of concepts surrounding many topics made worse by environmental degradation, including certain non-communicable and communicable diseases, has brought these topics into day-to-day language.

The 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action remains the world's most progressive blueprint for advancing gender equality worldwide.

For cross-examination, to draw out what the gaps have been over 30 years

I want to be crystal clear with my message. I am not going to compromise my words.

The world is facing an existential problem of heat that was not widely appreciated in 1995. Now, permafrost is thawing, and glaciers and snowfields are melting, all at an alarming rate.

What happens in the Arctic doesn't stay in the Arctic, and you can expect more bad weather, more rain that comes at the wrong times or doesn't come and causes droughts, more debris flows and mudslides, more wind that blows apart your towns, more storm surges and higher tides that flood deep into your coastal zone, and even more harmful, contagious diseases.

To prepare ourselves for this new life, we need every objective and action of the BPfA to be fully funded priorities of Member States and the entities I previously mentioned.

The perspectives and voices of women are necessary for relevant and successful planning to protect, restore, maintain, and enhance our natural and built environments and for effective response to environmental degradation.

We have not realized full compliance with relevant international obligations, and this interferes with progress toward the stated objectives for Women and the Environment.

Human Rights - Connie Phlipot

Achievements:

Legislation in many countries re: corporate boards, equal pay, pensions, quotas for legislatures, laws against violence against women, anti-trafficking.

38 countries ratified Istanbul convention.

Especially significant progress for marginalized populations, e.g. LGBTQ+, disabled, indigenous peoples.

Not only BPfA responsible for progress: individual governments, civil society, cultural changes, internationalization.

The platform reflects the intentions of civil society and governments:

- Amplifies and multiplies actions and messages.

- Validates that message to rest of society and to governments.

- Gives smaller states more weight.

- Broad, international message stronger in changing mindsets.

Connection to SDGs, mainstreams issues, accessible to wider populations.

Current situation:

Laws still lacking in many countries, re: rape, violence

Roll back, restrictions on women in education, workforce, reproductive rights

Patriarchal system

In many parts of the world we see a weakening of democratic values and institutions. Women in power and decision-making is intrinsically linked with democracy. As BPfA indicates “goal of equal participation in decision-making strengthens democracy and promotes its proper functioning.

Achievements:

Overall roll back in democracy and overall human rights, e.g. freedom of speech , assembly, media,

BPfA is still valid; needed more than ever. Necessary to reaffirm the principles and to show that it is a “universal” good; not a Western, elitist idea.

Health - Marianne Haslegrave

The Declaration provides explicit recognition and reaffirmation of the right of all women to control all aspects of their health, in particular their own fertility, is basic to their empowerment; (para 17).

Article 12 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women prevents discrimination in access to health care services, including family planning, as well as pregnancy, confinement and post-natal care.

Beijing Platform for Action – ensures:

Right to highest attainable standard of health

Access to quality services that are affordable, acceptable etc.

Mental health services

Safe drinking water; nutrition

Specifically, supports ICPD Programme of Action on;

Access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, including access to contraception

Deal with health impact of unsafe abortion that are not against the law; all abortion should be safe

Reaffirms access to comprehensive sexuality education

Add issue related to sexual rights in para 96:

“human rights of women include their right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence”

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes two targets that relate to SRHR, in SDGs 3 and 5, namely:

Target 3.7 on sexual and reproductive health services

Target 5.6 on reproductive rights

Important move forward as 2030 Agenda has an indicator framework for monitoring progress and a reporting process through the VNRs.

Against this background, despite the impact of COVID-19, the financial and other crisis in recent years, the rise of populism it, and only 17% of the SDGs are on target for achievement by 2030, progress has been made in the UNECE region in improving health, for example:

- access to services in many countries free at the point of delivery
- access to contraception
- access to vaccines against cervical cancer, COVID-19...
- decreases in maternal mortality

While could always do better... it could be much, much worse.

Economy - Hana Mosavie

1. Wage Inequality and Gender Pay Gap

- Despite some progress, the gender pay gap remains persistent across the region, with women earning less than their male counterparts. Cultural expectations and caregiving roles often push women into part-time or flexible work, limiting their earning potential.
- Implement wage transparency policies and monitor enforcement of equal pay legislation to accelerate closing the gap.

2. Unpaid Care and Domestic Work

- Women continue to shoulder a disproportionate burden of unpaid care and domestic work, which limits their participation in the formal economy and their access to leadership roles.
- The need to recognize and redistribute unpaid care work by investing in the care economy, creating nearly 300 million jobs and improving gender equality in employment. This can enable a strategic approach to focus on the reasons why individuals want to be a part of a particular industry, using psychological tests at the beginning safeguarding people, and understanding their drive, will massively help the economic push from job creation and lower turnover/higher job satisfaction.

3. Digital Gender Divide

- A significant gap exists between men and women in digital skills and access to technology, further limiting women's opportunities in emerging fields such as AI and the digital economy.
- Prioritization of closing the digital gender divide, which could add over \$500 billion to the economy. The focus needs to be on safeguarding the development of AI and technology to allow women and girls to want to engage with the development, and the expected stereotyping of women from the AI coding.

4. Impact of Economic Policies (Austerity, COVID-19, Brexit, Further Crisis)

- Austerity measures, the financial crisis, and the COVID-19 pandemic have disproportionately impacted women, particularly in sectors like hospitality, healthcare, and retail where women are overrepresented. Some communities went back by generations of female empowerment, by having to be placed in the traditional role of care for the wider family.
- Ensure that economic recovery policies are gender-responsive and address the long-term impacts of crises on women's employment and income, opportunities, and timing. Climate change is expected to impact communities that hold 70% of the poorest women.

5. Access to Employment and Financial Resources

- Barriers to formal employment remain, especially in male-dominated industries, alongside challenges in accessing financial services, credit, and entrepreneurship opportunities.
- Promote gender-responsive policies that enhance women's financial inclusion, ensure equitable access to economic resources, and support their participation in high-growth sectors like technology and green economies.

6. Ageing with Dignity and Economic Security

- Close to 195 million people in the region are 65 or older, with a growing number of elderly women facing pension gaps and limited social protection. With varying countries policies shifting the accessibilities or stipulations to access these.
- To strengthen gender-responsive pension systems to ensure that ageing women have economic security and access to health services throughout their lives. These also include gender-sensitive economic policies, not allowing women must choose to stay at home to gain the benefits later. These are not choices, but government initiatives, that provide no choice but to pick these options.

7. Generational Changes of Norms

- Awareness and expectation of accessibility to bank accounts, financial independence, aspiring for jobs that were traditionally in the male field. Our current norms show how shocked and far we have come from previous knowledge of previous generational norms pre-1990s.
- When highlighting where we came from in the near past, the fear and shock in the younger generation's awareness of what our norms, aspirations, and accessibilities used to be for girls and women. Intergenerational mentorship programs could be helpful, pairing older women with younger generations to share experiences and drive continued change in norms and aspirations.
- These changing norms also include fatherhood: millennial fathers are more involved in caregiving, which impacts gender dynamics at work and home.

The court session ran out of time and was postponed to a future session for completion.

16.00 - 17.30 “Accelerating Progress”

High Level and Civil Society Plenary

Moderator: Zarin Hainsworth OBE, VP NGO CSW Geneva, Widows Rights International

As we close this in-person conference today, we have a panel who are not only looking forward but will offer some insights into how we can really make a difference. What can we all do to ensure that there is progress.

We deliberated about having an in-person event with all the challenges that presents, but we had a very positive response from all those we asked - they really wanted to be together in person and learn from each other. We all face challenges in our lives and we all continue to work for equality and justice in all the ways open to us. Sitting here and looking out at all those present here, there is certainly an energy and an enthusiasm. We learnt so much from each other yesterday in the workshops. And today from all the presentations that were provided. Now as we close the day, we look to our panel to offer some thoughts and insights into the beset way forward.

Lopa Banerjee, Director, Civil Society Division, UN Women

Sallie Chaballier, Executive Secretary, NGO CSW Geneva, FAWCO

It is an honor to be on this panel with such distinguished speakers. As for me, I am a retired political scientist and a member of the Executive Bureau of NGO CSW Geneva, representing FAWCO, an ECOSOC-accredited NGO.

Ten years ago I attended my first UN meeting, the Beijing +20 Civil Society review here in Geneva. I was inspired by the compelling words of so many women determined to work for gender equality, and I had an epiphany of where we all fit in to Civil Society at large. That meeting motivated me to get more involved in advocacy for women and girls and to attend the first of many annual CSWs at the UN in New York.

Little did I imagine that ten years later I would be part of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women in Geneva. The NGO CSW Geneva is not a large group, but we are a resourceful one and a very determined one. Over a year ago, we resolved to conduct a review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action as well as to hold a Civil Society Consultation, and we created a task force on the UNECE. We mobilized our networks across the vast UNECE region and formed working groups on the 12 critical areas of the Beijing Platform for Action across multiple countries and time zones. This project brought women together from diverse backgrounds, working together towards a common goal while overcoming challenges and differences of opinion. Our sustained effort over many months culminated in a strong and comprehensive analysis of the gaps and challenges that remain to achieve full rights for women and girls in these 12 critical areas.

I would like to salute my colleagues on the Executive Bureau of NGO CSW Geneva and in the “core group” of our UNECE Task Force. This Civil Society Consultation is a testimony to their ideals and their perseverance in attaining

them. NGO CSW Geneva realizes the importance of the UN office in Geneva with all the diverse agencies here. Civil society gives voice to the voiceless, and we have strived to ensure that the voice of women and girls are represented to all these different agencies. At NGO CSW Geneva we make ourselves available to the governments represented in Geneva, for example, through our Ambassadors Briefings and roundtables to discuss issues like education and training, the environment, Violence Against Women, and other pressing areas of concern.

This consultation has built upon our findings to turn our recommendations into tools for advocacy and action. The “tool kit” is intended to be used for advocacy anywhere by anyone, and the wealth of research behind our statements and recommendations has created a road map for those who will be working on

Beijing+35 five years hence. We hope that you have drawn inspiration and motivation from what you have learned in these two days and from the enormous trove of research that our working groups have produced. The energy created by all these determined women needs to be captured and built upon. It is our hope that this inspiration will sustain you and strengthen your resolve to advocate for the future of women and girls everywhere.

We all have made room in our lives for this advocacy work because it is important and meaningful. Part of my “aha!” moment 10 years ago was the realization that we are all part of civil society: every one of us, with each small step, helps to weave the fabric of civil society. And it is civil society organizations that come together to hold governments accountable, reminding them of their commitments and pushing for implementation.

Sabine Peters, NGO CSW Vienna, Zonta

Vienna is different, an important place in the history of women’s rights. It was here where the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action in 1993 first explicitly defined women’s rights as human rights and named gender-based violence as a human rights violation.

The UN Vienna is hosting more than ten United Nations entities.

Most important for NGOCSW Vienna is the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) with its two Commissions, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND).

Issues of the Commissions as principal policymaking bodies are crimes related inter alia to corruption, terrorism, drugs, virtual space, trafficking, money laundering and environmental degradation. Important Conventions monitored by the CCPCJ are UNTOC, the Convention on Transnational Organized Crime with its protocols on Trafficking in Persons, Smuggling of Migrants and Firearms and the Convention against Corruption (UNCAC).

Civil Society is involved and shares root experience in thematic discussions and constructive dialogues.

The CCPCJ reviews United Nations standards and norms and conformity with the UN Charter in these areas, including their use and application by Member States under full respect of human rights, dignity and freedom. Women and girls may be affected by all of these crimes, such as sexual and domestic violence, including in cyber space, femicide and as well trafficking and ecocide which are often related to transnational organized crime, money laundering and corruption. Women, especially survivors of violence, can support law enforcement by building trust with female victims to get testimonies on main offenders.

Participation of women in resolutions, guidelines and policies addressing these crimes is crucial, and regarding support of victims and survivors must be included.

Since the 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing, the situation of women and girls has improved in several areas, mostly due to the hard work of women’s NGOs and activists, not least of all from Vienna. However, we also observe a backlash on women’s rights and gender equality, looking at the high prevalence of violence against women and girls, harassment and discrimination, cyber violence and online hate crime, while they are often not mentioned as safety issues and impunity still remains high.

The Working Group on Gender-Based Violence as Torture inflicted by Non State Actors of the Alliance of NGOs on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice is focusing on these issues, promoting the New Optional Protocol to CEDAW and the Vienna Alliance of NGOs, and presented a Civil Society Declaration on the Implementation of UNTOC, highlighting gender aspects to all relevant topics and signed by countless NGOs.

CND supervises the International Drug Control Conventions including the availability of drugs for medical use, analysing the global drug situation, considering supply and demand reduction while keeping them compatible with human rights. This includes access to prevention, support and treatment and use of alternatives to conviction and punishment. All of these topics are connected to other issues that Vienna

Committees deal with, as human rights, crime, law enforcement, health and environment. Women are most affected by drug impacts, stigmatism and lack of special treatment, especially when pregnant. They get addicted faster, which can be used to force them to prostitution, often related to trafficking, and to committing criminal acts. As they can be caught more easily, they are often quickly criminalized, notwithstanding that they are rather victims than offenders. To support women in drug-related matters, gender-responsive and victim-centered approach has to be considered, as well as the aspect of gender medicine, regarding biological, socioeconomic and cultural influences.

The Vienna NGO Committee on Drugs also worked on the Global Civil Society Report for the 2024 Mid-term Review of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs presenting gender aspects to all topics with input from countless NGOs.

NGOCSW Vienna cooperates with UNODA, United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs. Part of its work is the Disarmament & Non-Proliferation Education Partnership, expanding minds for peace and development. UNODA monitors the TPNW (Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons) that started with strong impact from the State of Austria as a pioneer. Furthermore, Austria organized a Conference on the "Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons". Austria is also engaging in a Treaty on Autonomous Weapon Systems (ASW) and organized a conference on autonomous weapons "Humanity at the Crossroads".

Women are most effected in cases of conflict and war, so women's NGOs were strongly engaged in being part of disarmament activities such as ICAN (International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons). Despite all efforts, military spending is skyrocketing, the number of armed conflicts and the threat of nuclear weapons use is higher than ever. At the same time climate disasters are hitting people and the planet, most severely in parts of the world that did not cause them.

The amount of military spending in one year could fund 6,700 years of UN Women's work; more funding must be used to eradicate violence against women.

We need to stand up at this review conference and demand from our governments the end of the exploitation of people and the planet, to stop geo-political competition and fighting over patriarchal power and dominance, to work together in solidarity, empower women and involve them in decision-making, for the good of all people and to invest heavily in peace, democracy and women's rights and human rights, in economic, gender and climate justice!

Ivy Koek, Co-Chair NGO CSW New York, Representative to the UN, Soka Gakkai International

Prof. Dr. Reyhan Atasu Topcuoğlu, B+30 Civil Society Steering Committee for Europe and Central Asia, Flying Broom Foundation

Alice Jackson, Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse, Women's Equality Party, Strut Safe

Liliane Nkuzimana, Representative to the UN, Baha'i International Community, Member at Large, NGO CSW New York

How do we move forward? Sharing some thoughts from the BIC's statement to CSW

- Intro on resilience, peace and the private sphere - GPW
- Rise of conflict, complex geopolitical situation
 - and rise in misogyny are not coincidental
- Intergenerational sharing of knowledge
- Before becoming a Commission Committee - Vienna
- Share reflections at a Normative level
- Moment in history
 - Landmark BPfA
 - The Conference signalled widespread commitment to the principle of gender equality.
 - We wanted to address that

- The advancement of women as a prerequisite for peace must be embraced to bring about a harmonious future that goes beyond the cessation of violence.
 - But Hard-won gains are eroding, negatively impacting women and men alike.
- Core of our messaging this year
 - History demonstrates that institutional reforms are tenuous if not accompanied by more enduring transformation within mindsets and social norms.
- As we move forward with our work
 - Normative change is necessary: Patriarchal tendencies need to be replaced with collaboration, reciprocity, compassion, and a humble posture of learning.
 - Underlying causes of prejudice, embedded in societies' systems and structures,
 - will remain unquestioned until transformation takes root in mindsets and culture.
 - Patriarchal tendencies and self-serving ambition - which can be embodied by anyone regardless of gender
 - will need to be replaced with qualities like
 - collaboration, reciprocity, compassion, and a humble posture of learning in all settings.
 - Example from Bihar Sharif
 - What might it look like in practice for populations to commit to the principle of gender equality as a foundation for peaceful societies?
 - approach to social transformation: the means for constructive social change must be coherent with its ends.
 - Consultative gatherings were created where they were able to explore the uncomfortable truth that girls and women were not viewed as inherently equal within their societies.
 - Participants identified expectations, assumptions, and fears that reinforced this unjust reality:
 - That it was unsafe for girls to travel far distances to school → boys were often prioritized when deciding which child to send to school.
 - That the destiny of a daughter was to be married off → financial resources were directed toward a dowry rather than a daughter's professional development,
 - That women were considered "unclean" during menstruation → women were not permitted to enter certain settings, thus preventing their participation in decision-making spaces or leadership roles.
 - Lesson learned: The capacity to analyze the manifestations of inequality was an important driver for cultural transformation within the community.
 - Many boys and men began to openly interrogate long-held beliefs and examine the ways their mothers, sisters, wives, and daughters were impacted.
 - To have impacted across the whole community, universal action was required .
 - Participants have since been working collectively to remove the obstacles they identified, which has led to the evolution of a new culture.
 - This is of course an ongoing process of learning

Calls - New Agenda for Peace - dismantle patriarchy and oppressive power structures

- CSO - reflect and act on how are we/how can we pool our collective experience to contribute to normative change?

2 Calls to the UN

- The UN is well-suited to share experiences that promote women's advancement at various levels, and to identify methodologies that can be implemented by national governments.
- The UN is uniquely positioned to model, in its internal structures and operations, a culture that dismantles patriarchal norms and centers approaches that are inclusive and collaborative.

Prof. Valentina Bodrug-Lungu, President of Gender-Centru/Co-founder Platform for Gender Equality

It is an honour to speak today on behalf of Gender-Centru and the many women's organizations working on the frontlines of the humanitarian response in Moldova.

Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine in February 2022, Moldova has become one of the countries hosting the largest number of refugees per capita. According to UN agencies, women and girls represent 66% of Ukrainian refugees in Moldova. This reality has shaped both the scale and the nature of our response. Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine in February 2022, Moldova and Poland have hosted the largest number of refugees per 10,000 inhabitants. Moldova hosts 1,369 refugees per 10,000 inhabitants, while Poland hosts 516 refugees per 10,000 inhabitants.

From the very first days of the humanitarian crisis, women's organizations in Moldova mobilized all available human and financial resources, together with the support of our development partners, to assist refugees. The Government of Moldova established a single Crisis Management Center under the leadership of the Prime Minister, and civil society organizations played an active role within this national response framework.

Gender-Centru and our partners contributed to the development of the National Response Mechanism and worked closely within the Gender-Based Violence Working Group coordinated by UNFPA and UNHCR. At the same time, UN Women and the Gender Equality Platform coordinated the Gender Task Force, ensuring that gender perspectives were integrated into humanitarian action.

Through this collective effort, we developed effective working strategies with refugees. We focused on empowering refugee women and host communities through leadership academies, improving access to life-saving health services and gender-based violence response, and strengthening the institutional capacity of local public authorities through targeted mini-grants for crisis management.

We also supported women who are building peace and strengthening their local communities. Through the project "Feminist and Localized Humanitarian Action," small grants enabled women to implement innovative initiatives that promote peace, solidarity, and resilience. Women supporting women has proven to be one of our strongest approaches.

From this experience, several important lessons have emerged. First, strong and rapid mobilization of all human and financial resources is essential, along with transparency and accountability in their use. Second, all interventions must be grounded in gender analysis and a clear understanding of the diverse needs of different groups of refugee women. Third, refugee women must be meaningfully involved in decision-making processes related to humanitarian assistance and development programs.

We have also learned that women's resilience programs are most effective when they are based on feminist approaches. Local NGOs and public authorities need continuous training to work with refugees, including anti-burnout programs that support women human rights activists. Economic empowerment is equally critical. Partnerships between refugee women and local women are a key condition for economic security, and three-sided partnerships among local authorities, civil society, and the private sector can significantly strengthen women's economic independence.

Prevention of gender-based violence and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse must remain a central priority in all our actions.

Partnership is crucial. Dialogue and cooperation among state institutions, local public authorities, civil society organizations, academia, and the private sector are essential for effective responses, especially in the context of multiple and overlapping crises. International solidarity and cooperation remain vital to sustaining our work.

I would like to express special gratitude to our sisters from Ukraine, with whom we worked very closely and developed innovative tools together. I also thank our colleagues from Georgia, as well as RCEM ECE and

WMG, for their continuous support. My sincere appreciation goes to all our partners, including UN Women, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, and many others.

We are not asking for funding for the sake of funding. We are asking for investment in sustainable programs and for genuine partnership so that we can work together more effectively. I also want to thank my colleagues in Moldova for their dedication and tireless efforts. Only through common action can we achieve meaningful and lasting impact.

Finally, let us remember the real and urgent needs of refugee women: access to employment, psychological support, safe and affordable housing, financial assistance, retraining opportunities, language courses, medical services, and regular humanitarian aid.

Together, we have the power to change the world. Together, we can build peace.
Thank you.

Recommendations on what NGOs need to further this work:

- Develop employment support programs for refugee women (coaching, retraining, Romanian and English language courses).
- Provide training programs for local NGOs and Local Authorities (APL) to work with refugees.
- Support local initiatives and entrepreneurship for both refugees and local women.
- Empower economic independence through partnerships between refugee women and local women - a condition for their economic security!,,
- 3-sided partnership (LPAs/NGOs/Business) in women's economic empowerment
- Programmes to strengthen social and cultural cohesion

Main challenges.

- The political level: The challenging dialogue between Central Government (APC) and Local Authorities (APL) / resource issues / but APL provides local services.
- The humanitarian assistance level:
 - limited employment opportunities for refugees, especially in rural areas;
 - high mobility of refugees, making scheduled interventions challenging;
 - difficulties in accessing specialized medical services;
 - reduction in free accommodation options (closure of centers) but lack of resources for renting apartments;
 - temporary protection – without it, difficult access to services