

News in Brief

Volume 6, Issue 3

June 2026



Photo by [Meizhi Lang](#) on [Unsplash](#)

President's Message

Dear members,

The Human Rights Council has just celebrated its 20th anniversary on June 19 with a very significant High-Level discussion during its 62nd session. I met the former Mexican Ambassador who steered us through the transition from Commission to Council — in one very intense year — and other nostalgic civil servants and NGOs who were part of this history. There was much salvaged from the former institution, but also significant necessary new elements added. Frank assessments and forward-looking proposals for improvement were offered in a spirit of solidarity.

I am very passionate about the Human Rights Council, for the gathering of great minds and dedication to humanity that it attracts, year after year. It may not be perfect, and its legacy will ultimately not be defined by its good intentions, but by the problems mitigated through its decisions. With each session, I introduce curious and bright minds to its opportunities, hoping that they will go on to continue to engage, revise and revive this,



the best of our global Human Rights institutions. Please come, make it better, add your footprint!

Warm greetings from Geneva,
Carolyn

C. Handschin



Photos:

Above: Carolyn Handschin with Ambassador De Alba of Mexico, the first President of the Human Rights Council

Left: Vice Presidents Berthe De Vos-Neven and Brigitte Polonovski (fourth and fifth from left, first row) at the annual Human Rights Council full day discussion on the human rights of women.

UN News

UN Activities

1. Geneva:

- a. HRC, 62nd session (15 June - 07 July 2026) - <https://hrc62session.sched.com>
- b. UNECE, Compliance Committee under the Protocol on Water and Health (16 June 2026) - <https://unece.org/info/Environmental-Policy/Water-Convention/events/409055>
- c. CEDAW, 93rd session (22 June – 6 July 2026) - CANCELLED
- d. World Summit on the information Society (WSIS) (6-10 July 2026) - <https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2026/en>
- e. ITU: AI for Good (7 - 10 July 2026) - <https://aiforgood.itu.int/summit26/>

2. NY:

- a. **UN Women & Civil Society Meeting on CSW**. The meeting was on **Monday, 22 June 2026**.
 - b. "Civil Society Informal Dialogue on the Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN) on UN Security Council Reform" (June 17th)
 - c. UN Charter Day (26 June 2026) - <https://www.un.org/en/observances/un-day>
 - d. High Level Political Forum (HLPF) (7-15 July 2026) - <https://hlpf.un.org/2026>
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Member News

Biovision Foundation

Caring Food Systems — For People, Environment and Climate

Invisible care work sustains food systems with women playing a crucial role in food security, ecological resilience and community wellbeing, often without recognition or compensation. Biovision contributed to the latest issue of FemFem – the journal of the Feminist Science Association Switzerland. Our article examines **how agroecological initiatives can strengthen women's access to resources, income opportunities and decision-making structures** in east Africa, while supporting more resilient food systems. Read the article in French: <https://bit.ly/4xExcBm> or German: <https://bit.ly/4vfmVtr>

Also - Biovision's latest magazine "**Paths Through Uncertain Times**" available in German and French, <https://lnkd.in/eJWZ7CYq> with articles on;

- A dairy cooperative in Tanzania creating income through local processing.
- Why the lupin is named the superfood of 2026 on an agroecological farm in Switzerland.
- How the stewing hen makes use of resources, contributing to more sustainable farming systems.

BPW International

BPW International Side Event – CND 69, Vienna, 12 March 2026

"The Unrecognized Burden: Sex-Specific Adverse Drug Reactions in Women"

This side event highlighted a critical systemic gap in medical research: the historical focus on the male body as the default model, resulting in significant consequences for women's health worldwide. Experts from Austria and Nepal examined the gender data gap, the gender pain gap, and structural barriers to women's participation in clinical trials.

The discussion emphasized the need for:

1. Mandatory collection and reporting of sex-disaggregated data.
2. Reform of drug approval and regulatory frameworks.
3. Recognition of women's health as a fundamental human rights issue.

<https://www.bpw-international.org/2026/04/17/bpw-international-at-the-69th-session-of-the-commission-on-narcotic-drugs-cnd/>

CLAFG
CENTRE DE LIAISON DES
ASSOCIATIONS FÉMININES
GENEVOISES

UN ATELIER DYNAMIQUE
DE LEADERSHIP

Atelier: Filles et Garçons, ensemble pour l'égalité

Deviens l'allié du changement

Plus besoin de se comparer pour se démarquer.
Viens explorer lors d'un atelier dynamique
comment ton attitude peut devenir un
moteur d'égalité.

DATE AU CHOIX
19 ou 26 JUIN 2026
17h – 18h

60 MINUTES

PARC DES BASTIONS
Devant le Mur
de la Réformation

INSCRIPTION
contact @clafg.ch
076 358 55 91

FRAIS : GRATUIT

TU VAS :

- Comprendre les bases
de l'égalité et ses enjeux
- Travailler en équipe et
t'écouter avec respect
- Développer ton leadership
et ton esprit d'initiative
- Construire ton avenir
avec des bases solides

**OUVERT AUX
FILLES & GARÇONS
DE 12 À 17 ANS**

Le leadership, ce n'est pas un titre,
c'est une action.
Agis dès nous et
fais la différence !

ATELIER ANIMÉ EN FRANÇAIS
ET INTERVENTION EN FRANÇAIS

TON LEADERSHIP. TON IMPACT. TON AVENIR.

www.clafg.ch | Suis-nous !

Centre de Liaison des Associations Féminines Genevoises (CLAFG)

CLAFG Advances Leadership, Youth Engagement, and Community Building

This trimester, CLAFG continues to expand the impact of its Academy of Leadership, equipping women with the skills, confidence, and networks needed to lead and create positive change.

Our Association is also launching a new youth workshop, "Girls and Boys Together for Equality," promoting inclusive leadership and gender equality among young people.

In addition, CLAFG's Café Partagé will bring together members and partners for networking, knowledge sharing, and celebration of the organization's growing community.

FAWCO

Ayuska Motha, FAWCO's UNFCCC rep, attended the June climate meetings (64th meeting of the Subsidiary Bodies -SB-64) in Bonn, Germany from June 8th-18th. The first 8 days held multiple events mandated by the 9 year Gender Action Plan, adopted in Belem, Brazil in November 2025 at the last Conference of the Parties (COP30), the UN Global Climate Summit. Events included a full day Expert dialogue on relevant issues in gender and age-disaggregated data and gender analysis; a 2 part in-session workshop on best practices and tools for strengthening the role of national and gender climate change focal points (NGCCFP); as well as an Interactive dialogue on progress in the delivery of gender responsive climate finance. Ayuska was also able to attend Women Environmental Human Rights Defenders and the Belem Gender Action Plan at the nearby Bonn Climate Camp.

FAWCO's Cultural Volunteer program offers high-school age children of FAWCO members an opportunity to gain volunteer experience as well as learn about another country's culture and history. This June, the International Women's Club of Moldova hosted five young people for a memorable week including visits to villages, a boat ride across the Dniestr river, a meeting with parliaments, assisting humanitarian organizations, participation in UNHCR's Human Rights Day and ample opportunity to sample Moldova's rich cultural and food heritage.



Graduate Women International (GWI)

On June 12, Graduate Women International (GWI) observed World Day Against Child Labour by highlighting the critical role of education in preventing and reducing child labour. GWI marked the day with an infographic presenting key global statistics, the causes and consequences of child labour, and actions individuals, governments, and organizations can take to address the issue. The infographic reinforces GWI's commitment to the safe access to quality education as the best means to eliminate child labour. (Link: <https://graduatewomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/World-Day-against-Child-Labor-2026-ENGLISH-FINAL.pdf>)

Make Mothers Matter (MMM)

MMM is among the supporters of the (former) UN Special Rapporteur on *Poverty's Roadmap for eradicating poverty beyond growth*, a major milestone in development discussions, which was launched in April. We also contributed to this roadmap, and our call was heard: care is recognised as “foundational economic infrastructure”. The roadmap’s **toolbox of policy proposals** also includes some of MMM’s recommendations, beginning with care systems and universal social protection. Read [our take](#) and discover [our contribution](#).

MMM also participated in the 114th International Labour Conference, whose general discussion focussed on gender equality at work. We drew attention to the specific forms of discriminations, obstacles and challenges that women who are mothers face in the world of work and called for the motherhood penalty to be recognised, measured and addressed. More [here](#).



Soroptimist International (SI)

- Became a Partner of EPIC, part of the Social Justice Collaboration of the ILO (<https://www.equalpayinternationalcoalition.org/en/members/soroptimist-international>) and since June 15th, 2026, became a partner of EQUALS of ITU.
- On June 15th, 2026, SI sent out an “**Urgent Call to Safeguard UN Women and Address the United Nations Financial Crisis**” [letter](#), including a [summary report](#) on “*The United Nations Liquidity Crisis and the UN80 Reform / UNFPA–UN Women Merger: Consolidated Findings*” to member states, UN entities and CS. Executive summary [here](#).
- As an accredited member of the Commonwealth (<https://thecommonwealth.org/organisations?page=8>) and having an elected partner at the Independent Forum of Commonwealth Organisations”(IFCO - <https://ifco.online/people/>) SI was able to contribute to the submission to CHOGM – Antigua & Barbuda 2-4 November 2026: <https://ifco.online/submissions-to-chogm/>
- SI is participating in the WSIS Forum and AI for Good Summit (July 6th-10th) in different events



- July 6th:
 - “All women and girls are architects of a safe digital future”- hybrid (<https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2026/Agenda/Session/485>)
 - High-Level Speaking Opportunities – date & hour TBC
 - “Repository of Women in Tech” – date & hour TBC
- July 7th: “Startup Accelerator Program: Build trust: safety and ethics for AI startups” (<https://aiforgood.itu.int/event/startup-accelerator-programme-2026-day1/#> - <https://aiforgood.itu.int/speaker/sarah-barnbrook/>)
- July 8th:
 - “Startup Accelerator Program: Innovating with equity in mind “ (<https://aiforgood.itu.int/event/startup-accelerator-programme-2026-day2/> - <https://aiforgood.itu.int/speaker/margherita-pillan/>)
 - “Women in AI: leadership, Innovation and growth” – different sorooptimists (<https://aiforgood.itu.int/event/women-in-ai-leadership-innovation-and-growth/>)
- July 9th:
 - Network of Women (NoW) in ICT Breakfast (<https://aiforgood.itu.int/event/women-in-ict-breakfast/>)
 - Leadership Circle Lab: Gender AI Standards (<https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2026/Agenda/Session/391>)
 - “Startup Accelerator Program: (<https://aiforgood.itu.int/event/startup-accelerator-programme-2026-day3/>)
- July 10th: “Startup Accelerator Program: The next generation: an exit strategy” <https://aiforgood.itu.int/event/startup-accelerator-programme-2026-day4/> - <https://aiforgood.itu.int/speaker/tania-gomez-herazo/>)

Women’s Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI)

WFWPI has a strong advocacy team at the HRC62 daily; three young professionals and our UN Office representatives, writing articles, and conducting interviews with experts for a video reflection at the 20th Anniversary of the HRC. Two written statements, co-sponsored by committee members have been submitted: Women in Diplomacy and Domestic Violence. WFWPI has co-sponsored two side events and three parallel events. WF has, or will be speaking at: "IT and access to education in Africa" on June 19 and, "Gender based Violence during Conflict" on June 30 Rm 11, 11-12:00.

WFWPI co-sponsored an impactful event at the UN Geneva on Global Day of Parents with the participation of 24 governments, other committee members, and the SR VaW.

UNODC Crime Commission in Vienna June 2 event on "Educating Youth for Crime Prevention" with government sponsorship.

UN NY prepares for HLPF with environmental and permaculture trainings. Right to Development submission. See other recent activities: wfwpi.org and <https://www.facebook.com/wfwpi/>

Co-organized events - members:

- MMM and NGO CSW Geneva were among the co-sponsors of a side event at HRC62 on June 25 on ""The Maternal Gap. How systems fail mothers and what must change." Recording link: <https://ungeneva-vc.webex.com/ungeneva-vc/ldr.php?RCID=a158c72ae689e915af5f87ab7bebd55> Password: mRC8pXqD
- SSI, MMM, WFWPI and NGO CSW Geneva are organizing a side event during the HRC 62nd session: "Advancing Women's Financial Health & Pension Security" - Wednesday July 1st, 2026 Room XI at 11h00 - in person.
- BWP, IFBPW, FAWCO, NAWO, SI, WFWPI, NGO CSW Geneva and WRI are organizing a side event during WSIS Forum 2036: Global Dialogue on AI Governance (Fireside Chat & Roundtable): **The Uncanny Valley of Equality: A Feminist Lens on Trustworthy AI** – Tuesday, July 7th, 2026 – Expo - hybrid



Focus

Challenges and opportunities for advancing women and girls' financial health, economic resilience, and pension security throughout the life course.

Panel Discussion

- Ms Adriana Quinones - Chief, Human Rights and Non-Discrimination Section, UN Women
- Mr Alejandro Bonilla Garcia - Chair, NGO Committee on Ageing, Geneva, and IFA Representative
- Ms Valerie Bichelmeier - Vice-President, Make Mothers Matter
- Ms Cordula Niklaus - Co-President, NGO Coordination Post Beijing Switzerland
- Ms Martina Bo - Young Ambassadors Society, Representative Inclusion Team

Moderated by Stacy Ciulik - Soroptimist International Representative to the United Nations, Geneva

Organised by Soroptimist International. With the support of: International Federation on Ageing; NGO Committee on Ageing, Geneva; Make Mothers Matter



Next News in Brief

The next issue of the News in Brief will appear in late September. Please send your BRIEF (75 words maximum) news items to Sallie Chaballier by September 15th.

NGO CSW Geneva Executive Bureau

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Thank you for reading!