



**GENERATION EQUALITY**  
**FORUM**

IWD 2021

08 March 2021

***IWD 2021: Women in leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world  
on the way to the Generation Equality Forum  
March 8, 2021***



**Action Coalition on Gender-Based Violence  
Statement delivered by Ms. Faith Kasiva, Secretary Gender,  
State Department for Gender, Kenya**

COVID-19 has highlighted significant inequalities both within and between countries. The pandemic has also shone a spotlight on the long-standing shadow pandemic of gender-based violence and discrimination against women and girls.

In almost every country of the world there are increased reports of all forms of gender-based violence. This includes an increase in harmful practices such as female genital mutilation and child early and forced marriage which threaten to reverse hard won gains on gender-equality

Financial and political investments in ending all forms of gender-based violence against women and girls are needed urgently. Importantly we must invest in women's rights organizations and movements working on the front lines to prevent and respond to gender-based violence so that they are enabled and empowered, we must invest in evidence driven prevention strategies and in police, justice, health and social services for survivors.

The action coalition on gender-based violence presents an important opportunity for diverse stakeholders to get on board and to make game changing commitments which will accelerate progress and drive the world forward toward the achievement of the sustainable development goals. The complementarity of work of the action coalition on GBV with the work of the other five action coalitions also represents a unique opportunity for the acceleration of an integrated cross sectoral approach to gender-based violence.

As a leader of the action coalition on gender-based violence the Government of Kenya stands in solidarity with all other leaders (governments, civil society organizations, international organizations, youth-led organizations and the private sector) in its commitment to the key actions agreed upon by the leaders and outlined as needed to drive much needed change to create a world in which women and girls in all their diversity are able to live lives free from all forms of gender-based violence.

These key actions include;

- That .... "more states and regional actors ratify international and regional conventions and public and private sector institutions strengthen, implement and finance evidence-driven laws, policies and action plans to end gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity. In so doing, 550 million more women and girls will live in countries with laws and policies prohibiting all forms of gender-based violence against women and girls by 2026"
- Scaling up implementation and financing of evidence-driven prevention strategies by public and private sector institutions and women's rights organizations to drive down prevalence of gender-based violence against women, adolescent girls and young women in all their diversity including in humanitarian settings. In so doing, we hope to see an

increase by 50% of the number of countries that include one or more evidence-driven prevention strategies on gender-based violence against women and girls in national policies by 2026.

- Scaling up implementation and financing of coordinated survivor-centered, comprehensive, quality, accessible and affordable services for survivors of gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity including in humanitarian settings. In so doing, more women and girls will live in countries with multi-sectoral action plans on GBV which include provision of police, justice, health and social sector services by 2026.
- Enhancing support and increasing accountability as well as quality, flexible funding from states, private sector, foundations, and other donors to autonomous girl-led and women’s rights organizations working to end gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity. In so doing, we will progressively improve and increase international funding by 50% to Women’s rights organisations, activists and movements including those working to address gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity by 2026.





## Action Coalition on Technology and Innovation for Gender Equality

### Statement delivered by Ambassador Jarmo Sareva, Finland

Excellences, ladies and gentlemen,

Technology and innovation has transformed our world, how we work, how we learn, how we communicate with each other. The digital revolution represents one of the biggest opportunities for women and girls but also includes risks if we don't ensure this change enhances gender equality. With COVID-19, many gender divides, including the digital one, are increasingly at risk to widen. The time is now not only to reverse these trends, but also to boost efforts to accelerate progress, by doubling investment in gender transformative solutions and halving the gender digital divide by 2026.

We, co-leaders of this action coalition, envision a world in which in 2026 women and girls in all their diversity have equal opportunity to safely and meaningfully use, lead and design technology and innovation. Where women and girls have equal access to digital technologies and universal digital literacy. Where more women and girls are studying STEM, also encouraged by inspiring role models.

Therefore, we envision a world where the proportion of women working in technology and innovation has doubled, including by setting up networks that connect talents and ensure a better representation of women. Finally, where increased investment into feminist technology and innovation will allow us to better respond to women and girls' most pressing needs and to support women innovators.

Crucially, we want a world free of online and tech-facilitated gender-based violence and discrimination. This will not be possible without Governments and big tech companies implementing the necessary policies and solutions. The role of the private sector is essential to uproot the scourge of online gender-based violence and misogyny from our digital commons. We cannot afford one-half of the humanity leaving the digital space for fear of intimidation, or worse.

To achieve the vision described above, we need a structural change, a cultural change. Harmful gender stereotypes must be eradicated, and in this, the engagement of men and boys is crucial. We need men as allies. We also have to pay special attention to women and girls in vulnerable positions and situations.

The current efforts to bridge the gender digital divide cannot afford to stall now. We must be united because moving past the COVID-19 pandemic will require extraordinary collaboration and solidarity – among people, organizations and countries. We call for collective awareness and responsibility from all actors to take action now.

It is time to innovate for gender equality.





## **Action Coalition on Bodily Autonomy & Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights**

**Statement delivered by Ms. Sivananthi Thanenthiran, Executive Director of the Asian-Pacific Resource & Research Centre for Women (ARROW)**

Our vision is to work together with all partners, including strong leaders from young peoples', women's and feminist organizations and movements, to ensure that girls, adolescents and women in all of their diversity are empowered and supported to exercise their sexual and reproductive health and rights and make autonomous decisions about their bodies free from coercion, violence, and discrimination.

Whilst some progress has been made towards achieving global commitments to sexual and reproductive health and rights, it is a stark and terrible truth that everyday around the world, girls and women face practical barriers, discrimination and stigma when seeking to fulfill these basic human rights. In some areas we see backlash and regression in access to essential, high-quality SRHR services. SRHR and bodily autonomy remain the unfinished agenda of the Beijing Platform for Action and can accelerate action in all other areas of gender equality.

To truly realize bodily autonomy and SRHR, 4 principles must infuse our work as a global community.

First, a rights-based approach—fulfilling the right to health means that comprehensive SRHR services must be available, accessible, acceptable and of high quality.

Second, an intersectional approach means meeting the holistic needs of diverse girls and women without any form of discrimination.

Third, intercultural approaches protect the rights of Indigenous people to their traditional medicines, health practices, and co-design of health services BUT do not support denying girls and women their bodily autonomy, sexual and reproductive health and rights or any other human right in the name of culture or tradition.

Fourth and finally, we must leave no one behind. Inequality and discrimination — based on age, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, ability, class amongst others — negatively affect access to care and services and result in poor sexual and reproductive health outcomes. And these inequalities have only deepened during the COVID-19 pandemic. Urgent action is needed!

Over the past 9 months, our multi-stakeholder leadership team, comprised of governments, women's, feminist and youth-led organizations, international organizations, and the private sector, has worked to identify the most urgent gaps and evidence-based, scalable, game-changing tactics to accelerate action.

First, all stakeholders must increase delivery of comprehensive gender-responsive, human-rights promoting sexuality education in and out of school with the aim of reaching 50 million more children, adolescents and youth by 2026.

Second, within a comprehensive SRHR framework, we want to increase the quality of and access to contraceptive services for 50 million more adolescent girls and women; and support removal of restrictive policies and legal barriers, ensuring that by 2026, 50 million more adolescent girls and women live in jurisdictions where they can access safe and legal abortion.

We also want to act for the 55% of adolescent girls and women who can't currently make their own decisions about having sex, contraception or seeking healthcare. We must enact legal and policy change, transform gender and social norms and increase knowledge of rights, so that 260 million more girls, adolescents and women are empowered to make autonomous decisions about their bodies, sexuality and reproduction and to end harmful practices like FGM and child marriage and unions.

Finally, to make our common vision a reality, it is essential to increase accountability to, participation of and financial supports available for autonomous, feminist and women's rights organizations (including Indigenous organizations, girl-led organizations, human-rights defenders and peace-builders) who are working to promote and protect bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights.



Argentina



Burkina Faso



Denmark



GLOBAL FINANCING FACILITY  
WORLD BANK GROUP



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S HEALTH COALITION



IPPF International Planned Parenthood Federation



YOUTH CO-OP 2030



CHILDREN'S INVESTMENT FUND FOUNDATION



France



North Macedonia



UNFPA



UN WOMEN



arrow



CIP



ECMIA



Clue



## **Action Coalition on Economic Justice and Rights** **Statement delivered by Ms. Rosita Najmi, Senior Director and** **head of Global Social Innovation at PayPal**

Our global economy does not work for women and girls, despite the commitments made 26 years ago in Beijing. Evidence shows how women continue to be excluded from participating in economic opportunities on an equal footing with men and that today's economies and institutions are currently failing to benefit from the full potential of women. By the data, women are disadvantaged on multiple fronts:

- Women all over the world still spend triple the amount of time as men performing unpaid care and domestic work and continue to subsidize the entire economy. Women's unpaid care work estimates US\$10.8 trillion annually;
- Women's labor force participation gap remains at 31 percent and has stagnated for the past 20 years
- While 71 percent of the world's population lacks access to social protection, women are particularly disadvantaged in social protection systems, experiencing lower coverage rates and substantially lower benefit levels;
- Today, 740 million women globally work in the informal sector, where job insecurity, low earnings and harsh working conditions and hours are prevalent;
- One-out-of-three women are deeply impacted by violence and harassment in the world of work
- Young women (ages 15-29) are 3 times more likely to be outside the labor force and not in school than young men.

These disappointing figures may now be worse. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated structural inequalities and potentially erased decades of progress on gender equality. By the data:

- Women's jobs globally have been 1.8 times as vulnerable to the COVID-19 crisis as men's jobs
- Women's caring burden increased by a further 30-40% since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, and
- By end of 2021, around 435 million women and girls will be living on less than \$1.90 a day — including 47 million women pushed into extreme poverty.

The insufficient and fragile progress made towards gender equality, women's human rights and economic empowerment over the past 26 years, combined with the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19, requires urgent and bold action if we are to meet the gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment targets of the SDGs.

This is what jolts the Economic Justice and Rights Action Coalition into making an ambitious global call to action. We urge economic institutions and all actors to once and for all respond to these injustices. We strongly believe that these challenges can only be tackled together — in shared responsibility to

guarantee economic justice and rights for women and girls. Civil society groups, feminist movements, citizens, Governments, businesses, international organizations, and researchers must do their part.

We call upon leaders from across the globe to join us, the Action Coalition on Economic Justice and Rights. Let us make it our core commitments to urgently:

- Design and implement measures to recognize, reduce, redistribute unpaid care and domestic work, ensure representation of women care workers, and reward paid care work, including through adequate investments in quality care jobs;
- Expand equal opportunities for women and girls and improve the quality of work for women, including the fundamental rights to organize and bargain collectively, by realizing decent work in formal and informal economies, while preparing girls adequately for the world of work;
- Ensure women’s and girls’ economic justice and rights by expanding access to and control over productive resources and strengthening women’s entrepreneurship; and
- Design and implement gender-transformative economic plans, budget reforms and investment plans that promote women’s economic empowerment to transform an unequal and unfair global economic and financial architecture, towards one that promotes the wellbeing of people and our Planet.

No one cannot dispute the inequality data - it is clear, but so is the evidence base for the opportunity gender equality can bring. Taking immediate action to counter COVID-19’s gender-regressive effects alone would result in \$13 trillion in global GDP gains by 2030.

Inspired by this year’s theme on women’s leadership, the next generation of women and girls, who will be leading economists, CEOs, heads of state and at the helm of social justice movements, will be doing the accounting on the SDGs. While they will see the pronounced dip in progress in 2020 because of COVID, they will also trace their fingers upward along a steep growth in progress that reflects the rapid acceleration made possible by the commitments we make in the coming months. We hope you will join us to ensure both an accelerated recovery and still faster ascent.





## **Action Coalition on Feminist Movement and Leadership Statement delivered by Ms. Kavita N. Ramdas, Director of the Women's Rights Program, Open Society Foundations**

The Open Society Foundations is very privileged to co-lead the Action Coalition on Feminist Movements and Leadership with our colleagues from civil society, member states, international organizations and the private sector. We are collectively putting forward a vision for transformative feminist leadership that builds and shifts power, and which ensures the full and equal participation of women and girls in all aspects of public life.

It all starts with us exercising our Voice, Agency and Power. Voices that have long been silenced or shushed need to be heard. Agency speaks to our ability to act for ourselves to make decisions for ourselves. Power is innate in each of us - it is what allows us to speak, act and lead.

For me, the Action Coalition is all about the fierce 4: Intersectional Power, Money, Space, and Leaders

1. **Intersectional Power:** First, women and girls are reclaiming the power of our own bodies so we may have power in the body politic; we are lifting up the power of care and caring economies and the labor that nurtures communities and the planet and that offers just sustainable economic systems; and we are strengthened by the power of our coming together as a collective to challenge the status quo and to push for long-lasting change. How do we do it? Audre Lorde reminded us that we do not live single issues lives, and therefore our struggles and our solutions, are by definition, intersectional. We are women, yes, but also Black, Brown, Indigenous, Working Class, Queer, Trans, Asian, African and a myriad of other powerful identities. Our issues also intersect – we know achieving economic justice requires the freedom to live free from violence, decision-making power over our bodies, and political voice and participation. Similarly, political freedom and voice requires just economic structures that reject market fundamentalism and acknowledge the care work on which all other economic activity and the health of the planet is predicated. Finally, we do not live isolated from our fellow beings or the earth thus our ability to be agents of change and drive transformation requires both individual freedom and collective action.
2. **Money makes the world go around –** Resilient feminist activism deserves and demands stable and flexible financial capital and resources that allow movements and actors to respond nimbly to opportunities and challenges. Our Action Coalition proposes to prioritize increased direct funding and support for feminist and women-led organizations, activists, and movements, in all our diversity, especially in partnership with women's funds. We also seek to dedicate specific, flexible financial, technical, and other resources for adolescent girls and young feminist leaders.
3. **Space:** Women are reclaiming our space – we are building supportive environments for vibrant and influential feminist movements – in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, this requires us to take up more space in all our diversity. We intend to expand and protect civic space (physical public space, online

space, policy space) ensuring all people can advocate for human rights and gender justice in both public and private spheres.

4. Leaders: Women and girls in all our diversity have to meaningfully participate—and lead—in all aspects of public life. To do so, we must ensure more power and equality in our private lives so care-burdens are equally shared within households. We need feminists leading not only in government, but also in the private sector, in civil society and in public institutions. We are done with token appointments. We want gender parity by 2030 and full participation by all, and we claim institutions with strong gender mainstreaming mandate and capacity. We are ready to build partnerships that can ensure gender-transformative, inclusive, feminist laws, policies and social norms.



Canada



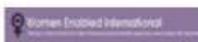
The Netherlands



UCLG



WPL



Women Enabled International



Asamblea Nacional Política de Mujeres Indígenas



IWDA



GUCCI



Malawi



UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS



UN WOMEN



ECLC EURO-CENTRAL ASIAN LESBIAN COMMUNITY



crea



GENDER LINKS FOR EQUALITY AND JUSTICE



OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS



## **Action Coalition on Feminist Action for Climate Justice Statement delivered by Ms. Joanita Babirye, Programme Director of Girls for Climate Uganda**

Feminist action matters for climate justice because equality for women and girls will strengthen our collective ability to solve the climate crisis. Women and girls have always been at the forefront of movements demanding climate and environmental justice, and their leadership can change what it means to be an effective leader.

Climate justice recognizes that the fight for environmental sustainability is not separate from the fight for social justice. Climate justice centralizes the needs of people who are the most marginalized—the most impoverished, rural indigenous women, for example—who live directly on the land and take care of families and are most impacted by natural disasters. Women and girls are more vulnerable to climate impacts but are already creating and leading solutions at all levels. Their unique knowledge and skills can help make the response to climate change more effective and sustainable. This is why defending women's and girls' rights should be at the center of our climate activism.

This action coalition intends to increase political, advocacy, and financial support for the real solutions already being proposed and enacted by women and girls at the front lines. Through its actions and commitments, the Feminist Action for Climate Justice coalition will support a just transition to a green economy that is led by women and girls, that recognizes that climate change is not separate from gender justice, and protects and amplifies the voices of grassroots and indigenous communities, including frontline defenders, across social and political arenas.

We will work to increase direct access to financing for gender-just climate solutions, in particular for organizations led by women and girls at the grassroots and rural level. Financing institutions and the donor community will prioritize women's organizations as priority partners and be held accountable to shift capital to support resilient societies and investments in gender-just climate and ecosystem-based approaches.

Women and girls need equal access to technologies and knowledge; equal access and control over natural resources for management and protection, including through securing land rights and ownership. We need to equally and meaningfully participate in decision-making processes at all levels to develop climate responses that center human rights.

Finally, to achieve our goals, we need to be practical as well as visionary. We have to make women's and girls' needs and abilities visible in all climate and environment policies and plans by producing and using sex-disaggregated data on the gender-environment nexus. Increasing the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data would lead to climate policies that enable women and girls to fully benefit from them while making sure such policies do not exacerbate existing inequalities.

The Feminist Action for Climate Justice invites all stakeholders to join us on this path to make our vision of justice for all people and a healthy planet a reality.



Costa Rica



Maldives

