

Concept Note

CSW Side Event

Multistakeholder Partnerships and Practices to Push Forward for Gender Equality, Human Rights and Democracy

20 March 2024, 3:00 - 4:15pm ET

Conference Room 4, UN Secretariat

UN Women is convening a high-level side event, in partnership with UNDP, UNFPA and OHCHR, to highlight how multistakeholder, issue-based coalitions at the country or community level can accelerate and safeguard gender equality gains.

Background

Global progress towards gender equality and the full realization of human rights has faced significant challenges. At the current rate of progress, gender equality is 300 years away and none of the Sustainable Development Goals indicators are anywhere near met. Opposition to gender equality and to women's and girls' rights activism is widespread, global, normalized and institutionalized. Long-established and universal human rights and women's rights frameworks and standards are being challenged and policy making spaces at national and international levels are marked by divisiveness and polarization.

Accountability for gender equality commitments is hampered as an increasingly fractured global community faces challenges in addressing evolving issues, jeopardizing its ability to advance women and girls' rights through setting norms. Hard-won women's rights gains in law, policy and services are at risk of regression and being repealed. Women human rights defenders encounter escalating hostilities, compromising their ability to advocate for meaningful change and equality, including limiting their capacity to demand accountability and, in line with the priority theme of the 68th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW68), action towards ending women's poverty.

Notwithstanding, women human rights defenders, youth activists, civil society, parliamentarians, policy makers and public servants at different levels within governments as well as in multilateral organizations, are undertaking innovative strategies and practices as they develop issue-based coalitions and multistakeholder partnerships to pushforward for gender equality in their communities and countries. A key reflection of the November 2023 Reykjavik Global Forum LeadersTalk co-hosted by UN Women, Open Society Foundations and the United Nations Foundation was that the ability of institutions to uphold and sustain gender equality and democratic values, rests on building political consensus across political parties and at community levels. Such consensus building is dependent on the ability and intention of leaders to have dialogues across party lines and to create the space for difficult conversations and honest dialogue.

2024 is a critical year for political transformation as more than 2 billion people in more than 60 countries head to the polls in national and local elections. The issues that affect gender equality, and women's rights are on the agenda of every election as countries grapple with compounding and interconnected crises. Yet with concerns that democracy and gender equality are backsliding, these elections represent a watershed for these very values. Different and pragmatic strategies are needed to ensure that gender equality, women's and girls' rights and the empowerment of all women and girls remain on the political agenda.

CSW68 will be followed by several intergovernmental and multilateral processes that are critical for accelerating and safeguarding gender equality and human rights gains, including but not limited to the 30-year review of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD30), the 2024 UN Civil Society Conference in Nairobi, the Summit of the Future, and the 30th anniversary and review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing+30). Different approaches and partnerships across sectors are required to maintain the centrality of gender equality and human rights and strengthen democratic institutions through these processes, including via their outcome documents and related initiatives.

This CSW68 side event will galvanise efforts to push forward for gender equality through amplifying such pragmatic approaches by shining a light on impactful multistakeholder alliances and coalitions at country and local level, that have demonstrated successful outcomes for pushing forward for gender equality, human rights and democracy.

Objectives of the Event

This high-level side event will highlight good practices from countries. It will be a space to acknowledge, amplify, learn from and increase awareness of good practices – case studies – from countries. Examples will focus on intersectional, intergenerational and multistakeholder partnerships and issue-based coalitions across governments and civil society that have developed to achieve change in their local and national contexts to uphold democracy and safeguard gender equality and women and girls' rights.

The practices and recommendations discussed will be collated in a knowledge product to further amplify examples.

Logistics: The side event will be held in Conference Room 4 within the United Nations on Wednesday, 20 March 2024 at 3:00 – 4:15pm. The event will be webcast on UN Web TV.

Format

- Moderated panel discussion highlighting country case studies that demonstrate how multistakeholder, issue-based coalitions evidenced clear outcomes for gender equality, human rights and democracy.
- Interactive dialogue among panellists and with audience, with the objective of highlighting concrete good practices
- Examples will highlight multistakeholder partnerships, intersectional approaches.

Panel

Speakers will include Member States, civil society actors and other actors, including UN agencies, to share case studies of collective action. The speakers will showcase the role of all actors within the partnership to highlight their contributions.

This event is a reflection of a joined-up UN approach to pushing forward for gender equality. The collaboration among agencies underscores the paramount importance the UN places on this critical agenda.

Moderator: Lopa Banerjee, Director, Civil Society Division, UN Women

RUN OF SHOW

Component	**Speakers**
Opening	• UN Women Executive Director, Sima Bahous • UNDP Assistant Secretary-General and Director of UNDP's Regional Bureau for Arab States, Mr. Abdallah Al Dardari • UNFPA Assistant Secretary-General, Deputy Executive Director (Programme), Diene Keita
Panel: Multistakeholder Partnerships and Practices to Push Forward – Country and community-level case studies	• Andy Yentriyani, Chair of the National Commission on Violence Against Women, Indonesia • Hon. Mgeni Hassan Juma, Deputy Speaker of The Zanzibar House Of Representatives, Tanzania • Anna Kulaya, National Coordinator, Women in Law and Development Africa (WiLDAF), Tanzania • Arundhati Sridhar, Research Lead, Gender at Work Consulting
Panel: Multistakeholder Partnerships and Practices to Push Forward - Global case studies	• H.E. María Fernanda Espinosa, Chief Executive Officer, GWL Voices for Change and Inclusion • H.E. Saša Jurečko, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Slovenia to the United Nations • Samira Asghari, member of the International Olympic Committee, former Captain of the Afghan Women's Basketball team • H.E. Isabelle Picco, Permanent Representative of Monaco to the UN, co-chair of the Group of Friends of Sport for Development and Peace
Q&A and Closing	Moderator: Lopa Banerjee, Director of Civil Society Division, UN Women