

**CSW68 Recommendations for the Zero Draft**  
NGO CSW/NY Advocacy & Research Group  
15 December 2023

The NGO CSW/NY [Advocacy & Research Group](#) has prepared the following recommendations for inclusion in the CSW68 Zero Draft on behalf of women and girls in all their diversity<sup>1</sup>. As a result of consulting with our global, grassroots community, including members of the global NGO CSWs to understand their lived experiences, we have identified six critical concerns for *accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective*.

We note 1) women's poverty has been intensified by multiple crises of Covid-19, the climate crisis and rising debt crisis; 2) extreme poverty is increasing exponentially and the pandemic has shown that women's poverty is due in large part to unpaid care and domestic work they undertake for their families; 3) increased spending globally on debt servicing and militarization reduces spending on social protection systems, further pushing women and girls into poverty or keeping them in the cycle of intergenerational poverty. Women of all ages and girls must be included in the leadership and decision-making processes for the implementation of our six recommendations.

**Recommendations in brief:**

1. Social justice and poverty
2. Education and poverty
3. Intersection of women's poverty and climate change
4. Gender bias in economic policy
5. Debt crisis and its impact on women
6. Youth – Intersectional Recommendation

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**1. Social Justice and Poverty**

A just and equitable economic model that includes social justice and human rights to alleviate women's and girls' poverty is paramount. Governments should adopt programs and policies that recognize gender equality as a requirement for social justice and development, as well as addressing and eliminating the root causes of poverty. We emphasize that the persistent repressive backlash against women's human rights must be countered by eliminating harmful attitudes, norms and belief systems and addressing human rights violations and abuses targeting women and girls in all their diversity. Effective measures must be implemented to respect and protect their fundamental human rights and address all forms of discrimination including social, political and cultural economic marginalization in the law and in practice including revising and repealing harmful laws and policies.

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<sup>1</sup> Women in all their diversity includes under-represented, rural, grassroots and community based, indigenous, women and girls, older women and minorities, widows, women on the move, women with disabilities and LBTQI+ people.

## **2. Education and Poverty**

Promote gender equality and empower women and girls through a gender sensitive curriculum free of harmful gender stereotypes as well as making curricula and pedagogies relevant for today and for tomorrow, with a comprehensive and integrated system of education and lifelong learning for a world of uncertainty, which also ensures equity, access and inclusion in and through education. The poorest and most marginalized women and girls need to participate in the formulation, design and development of adequately financed policies and programs to eliminate the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination exacerbated by the Covid pandemic, economic crises, armed conflict and climate crises - that disrupts their education. The deeply entrenched patriarchal attitudes, policies, laws and infrastructure need to be changed, in addition to intergenerational and historic poverty, barriers to obtaining a quality education, including digital, financial, numeracy and climate literacy.

## **3. Women's Poverty and Climate Change**

With the consequences of climate change projected to get worse, further disrupting agricultural growing cycles, we recommend engaging the most impoverished and marginalized women and girls in effective and sustainable design and development of adequately financed policies and programs, including agriculture, in order to eliminate multiple and intersecting economic challenges. Climate change's multiplier effect on women's poverty is worsening and upending women's livelihoods, increasing food and water insecurity, malnutrition, climate-induced migration and displacement, and increasing women's and girls' high poverty rates, specifically in rural or remote regions. Climate finance, a just transition and access to land and technology are needed to support mitigation and adaptation efforts, and particularly the loss and damages in countries and frontline communities that face climate impacts first and worst.

## **4. Gender Bias in Economic Policy**

Gender bias in economic policy is the systematic discrimination and unequal treatment and opportunities faced by women in all aspects of economic decision-making policy formulation, implementation, and resource allocation; including areas of financial policy, banking, government economic policy, legislation, and access to health and education. A feminist, gender analysis needs to be incorporated into economic policies to include its differentiated impact on women, including the impact of colonialism. Closing the gender pay gap by equal pay legislation, pay transparency, and gender-balanced leadership needs to be advanced as well as promoting equitable access to financial services through non-gender discriminatory policies and practices. Invest in female-led businesses through targeted funding programs and investor education on gender biases. Improve data collection and analysis by disaggregating economic indicators by gender for evidence-based policymaking. Establish and enforce legislation that promotes gender equality in labor and to support immediate reform of the macroeconomic financial architecture.

## **5. Impact of Debt Crisis on Women's Poverty**

The global debt crisis exacerbates women's poverty by diverting financial resources to support social protection programs and mechanisms to service a national debt. Governments must recognize and address social services such as health, education, water and sanitation, among others, while lowering

the public and private debt levels that have been increasing to alarming, unprecedented levels. Donor countries must fulfill their commitment to 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) for Official Development Assistance (ODA), and further earmark funds for gender equality and women's rights organizations. Moreover, support debt cancellation for recovery from a global downturn while investing in gender-sensitive public services, the care economy and climate resilience.

#### **6. Youth intersectional recommendation**

Youth, adolescents' and girls' engagement is critical to formulating, designing, and developing policies and programs regarding poverty, financing for development, and the economic empowerment of women and girls and other marginalized communities. As a result, this demographic, in all its diversity, needs to be included in all aspects of consultation and decision-making. Through a social justice, gender, and youth perspective, intersecting issues that contribute to multigenerational poverty such as climate change, the debt crisis, gender bias in economic policy and access to education need to be addressed to ensure that young and future generations are not trapped in a cycle of poverty. Financing youth-led, adolescent-led and girls-led organizations and networks is long overdue and urgent action is needed.