



Key messages and recommendations from Feminist and Women's Rights CSOs in Western Balkans & Turkey for the CSW66

The upcoming 66th session of the CSW, with its priority theme “Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes” carries great importance towards mitigating the climate crisis and mitigating the adverse effects of this crisis and the increasing natural disasters on gender equality, and on the lives of women and girls.

It has been well established that the climate crisis and disasters women and girls disproportionately, and further affects their lives in an intersectional manner. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), in its Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) (IPCC, 2014), states that this disproportionate impact derives from the social norms and discriminatory power dynamics that govern women’s and girls’ roles, responsibilities, and access to resources.

Women and girls, especially in the Global South, and especially those who are affected by multiple and intersectional vulnerabilities are further disproportionately impacted, and the pre-existing inequalities and discrimination they face in normal times are deeply exacerbated in the face of the climate crisis, natural disasters and environmental degradation. Therefore, efforts to elevate the consequences of the climate crisis and natural disasters should take these disproportionate impacts from the planning.

While addressing the consequences, we also need to understand the root causes of these intersecting crises and disasters. The current systems we live in, based on profit, rather than the lives of people and the planet need to change and the global economic and governance systems need to be transformed to those that are gender responsive and have human rights and gender equality at their center.

We also ask member states to recognize that women, girls and LGBTQI people are not just adversely affected groups from these crises, but at the same time, they are the agents and drivers of change. They contribute to climate and disaster solutions locally and globally, based on their respective experiences, knowledge and expertise both to address the root causes and to mitigate and adapt.

Further, as a prerequisite for environmental, economic, social development & justice integrated with gender equality, peace has to be established and maintained. The effects of war and conflict are disproportionate on the lives of women and girls in all their diversity. The increasing militarization has been diverting vital funding from services that could have supported the lives and livelihoods of women, men, girls and boys in all their diversity.

As the COVID-19 pandemic has shown us, for global disasters we need comprehensive, whole of society approaches in decision making, implementation, monitoring and review where women's needs, expertise, views and perspectives are taken into account. Feminist movements, women's rights organizations and their intersectional analysis are placed at an important point to reflect the needs and priorities of the communities to these processes.

In light of the above, we as the feminist, environmental and women's rights organizations in Western Balkans and Turkey, outline our priorities for this year's CSW as below:

Gender responsive and inclusive decision - making

- A. Experiences of youth, woman and girl child should be heard first-hand, and they should have a seat on the table in which their future is the question. Their participation should be resourced, effective and meaningful in all the decision-making mechanisms from the local to the global.
- B. New challenges require new and innovative solutions that emerge in communities, and these are often designed by women. Yet, empirical and research evidence indicates that opportunities are missed to recognize the contributions of women to crisis and disaster management and mitigation from household to national level. Governments should have clear mechanisms for the engagement of women to the processes for the search for solutions.
- C. For evidence-based decisions regarding the climate crisis and disaster risk reduction, we need to ensure inclusive gender and sex disaggregated data collection and analysis at all levels of response, as well as disaggregation based on other characteristics, such as ethnicity, language, age, etc., as detailed in the SDG indicator framework.

Gender Responsive Financing

- D. Gender responsive budgeting for gender transformative interventions must be made available for climate mitigation and adaptation measures to succeed. Gender responsive budgeting should also guarantee the participation of women and girls, CSOs in all phases of budgeting and priorities processes in order to ensure adequacy and gender equality in the action.

- E. There is a huge problem with funding feminist and women's organizations, especially when it comes to youth and adolescent-led initiatives. We need accountable, transparent and trust-based funding systems. Member states will benefit from investing in ecofeminist movements and organizations, as well as youth and adolescent-led movements, in order to resolve the climate crisis and create more just societies.
- F. Our region is one that has experienced the devastating effects of war and militarization only in very recent history. Gender responsive early warning mechanisms should be established. Moreover, moving funds away from militarization is an important step to invest more resources in climate action and gender equality, for a just transition benefiting people and the planet.
- G. Small and medium sized, local agriculture and consumption cycles should be supported through subventions, grants and capacity building support.

Gender Accountable Implementation

- H. We need a just and equitable transition from fossil fuel and high-risk energy sources, moving towards low-carbon, renewable energy sources, taking into account the needs of and the consequences on women, girls and LGBTQI+ individuals.
- I. The corporate takeover of local resources as a result of corrupt activity leading to resource grabbing and environmental degradation is threatening the lives of our communities. The privatization of essential services, such as water, gas and electricity results in the prioritization of profit over people, causing these services to be non accessible for many. We need stronger regulations on the activities of the transnational and national corporations and the public-private partnerships on essential services, based on human rights and the health of the planet.
- J. CSW66 Agreed Conclusions need to reaffirm and encourage the full implementation of the UNFCCC's Gender Action Plan. The most comprehensive agenda for sustainable development we have, namely Agenda 2030, gives us a framework and a review mechanism, however its implementation at the national and local levels should be accelerated. Member states should have comprehensive, specific and budgeted plans to implement the outcomes of international multilateral meetings and standards on gender equality and climate change (i.e. CSW66, COP26).
- K. We call for full application of CEDAW General Recommendations No.37 on the gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change (2018) which "underscore the urgency of mitigating the adverse effects of climate change and to highlight the steps necessary to achieve gender equality, the realization of which will reinforce the resilience of individuals and communities globally in the context of climate change and disasters". We ask for "coherence, accountability and the mutual reinforcement of international agendas on disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, by focusing on the impacts of climate change and disasters on women's human rights".
- L. Member states should reaffirm the Human Rights Council resolution (48/13) recognizing the "Human Right to a Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment" and include this perspective

in all their climate crisis and disaster risk reduction responses, with a focus on their gendered impacts.

- M. We suggest comprehensive results oriented review of a progress of implementation of CSW66 agreed conclusions at the forthcoming climate/environment/disaster reduction related international/global conferences, including COP27, regular sessions of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (including GP2022, May 2022), and also at B+30 progress review.
- N. All measures implemented towards furthering gender equality in our sub-region, should take into account the intersecting realities of women and girls on the ground, and should follow special & specific measures for their contexts, including for women and girls with disabilities, Roma women, older women, young women and adolescent girls, among others. These measures should be informed and be in compliance with the related international conventions such as CEDAW, CRPD, CRC, Twin Covenants, CMWR among others.

Evidence based feminist climate action

- O. We need feminist solutions to the climate crisis. We need to dismantle false solutions that are based on nonexistent, less developed, unproven or high-risk technologies, such as net zero and nuclear energy, and prevent transfer of dirty technologies to developing countries. We need ecosystem-based approaches that work in harmony with the ecosystem.
- P. Gender equality, human rights, comprehensive sexuality education and ecological education should start from childhood, and should be integrated parts of age-appropriate school curricula.
- Q. Feminist research should be supported in climate change and disaster risk reduction related fields.
- R. The evidence-based actions on climate crisis and disaster risk reduction should include and mainstream a human rights-based approach that includes sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).
- S. As already manifested consequences of the climate crisis, drought and food insecurity affect women and girls disproportionately throughout the world. National and local action is necessary to elevate these consequences, and support access to water and strong food systems. Stronger social support networks should be established to ensure they do not become chronic.
- T. Increased support is needed for rural development in our region, which would strengthen local and national food systems, reduce irregular migration, and increase the welfare of women and girls living in rural communities.
- U. We need to promote the protection of healthy ecosystems and support Indigenous Peoples and local communities in their traditional, ecosystem-based approaches in protecting ecological food systems and global ecosystems.