

# Africa Disrupt

Africa CSW66 Newsletter

Issue No.02 16th March 2022

Climate Financing: African women's lived experiences of loss and damage

Mudanças climáticas que afectam as mulheres em Moçambique

Women on Land and Environment issues

What does it mean to be part of history making?

[#AfricaDisruptCSW66](#)

[#CSW66](#)

[#CSW66Africa](#)

*CSW66 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*



*FEMNET is convening the Africa CSW66 event in Nairobi from 14th - 17th March 2022, as a model to test and demonstrate how a meaningful investment for regional in-person convening would look like and mean for many activists, feminists and advocates who are unable to join the in-person CSW66 in New York. With limited resources, we will be convening 60 representatives from 20 African countries, who are following, engaging, contributing and disrupting CSW66 events.*

***Follow/ Engage***  
***#AfricaDisruptCSW66***

# Contents

OH !! AFRICA , MON AFRIQUE, BERCEAU DE L'HUMANITÉ... **4**

Climate Financing: African women's lived experiences of loss and damage! **5**

Mudanças climáticas que afectam as mulheres em Moçambique **6**

African Women and Girls Are Best Placed Addressing their Problems in a Relatable Environment **7**

Women on Land and Environment issues **7**

The Pride of Africa **8**

Building a Gender-Just Response to Climate Change; A Critical Approach to Achieving Sustainable Development **9**

Pastrolisim My Identity and Livelihood **10**

Is Epistemic Freedom Forbidden for African Feminists? **11**

Pictorial **12-13**

My Story: African Women For Africa **14**

Connecting with The Roots of my Feminist Belief African **15**

What does it mean to be part of history making? **15**

My CSW Story **16**

AFRICAdisruptiveCSW66 **16**

Women Arising **17**

To the woman... **17**

CSW66: How Nigeria can record more success on Gender-based issues with VAPP law **18**

What have you done for us **18**

African Women - The Custodians of Indigenous Seeds **20**

Digital Conversations **18**

Dear CSW **22-23**



## Editorial team

- Marvel Powerson
- Carina Ubisse Capatine
- Wambui Wambugu
- Rachel Kagoiya

Published by:

**African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET)**

12 Masaba Road, Lower Hill

P.O. Box 54562 - 00200; Nairobi, KENYA

Tel: +254 20 2712971/2; Cell: + (254)725.766932 Fax: +254 20 2712974

[www.femnet.org](http://www.femnet.org)



Femnet Secretariat



FemnetSecretariat



@femnetprog

**Disclaimer:** The views and opinions expressed in this Newsletter are those of the authors and writers and do not necessarily reflect the views or positions of the organisers of CSW66 nor any sponsors or entities they represent.

Design & Layout: James Chunguli [jameschunguli@gmail.com](mailto:jameschunguli@gmail.com)

# OH !! AFRICA , MON AFRIQUE, BERCEAU DE L'HUMANITÉ..

ANGÈLE JACQUELINE NDOUMBÉ  
SERVITAS CAMEROON

OH !! FEMME D'AFRIQUE !!  
FEMME VERTUEUSE, POUR-  
QUOI PLEURES TU ?  
POURQUOI TE LAMENTES TU ?



TA RÉSILIENCE AU COVID 19  
TA RÉSILIENCE AUX INÉGALITÉS  
SOCIALES  
EST UNE PREUVE DE TA GRAN-  
DEUR !!!

LÈVES TOI ET BRILLE CAR TON HEU-  
RE A SONNÉ..

LÈVES TOI, FEMME BATTANTE, FEMME DE  
FOI, FEMME DE CONVICTION.

LEVES TOI ; LE MOMENT EST LÀ !!! PRENDS  
TON DESTIN EN MAIN....

TA RÉSILIENCE AUX VIOLENCES

TA RÉSILIENCE AUX GUERRES

TA RÉSILIENCE AUX CHANGEMENTS CLIMA-  
TIQUES

TA RÉSILIENCE A LA PAUVRETÉ

TA RÉSILIENCE AUX DISCRIMINATIONS

TA RÉSILIENCE AUX INJUSTICES

TON ENGAGEMENT

TA DÉTERMINATION

HOO !! DE TON AMOUR ....

HO !! FEMME AFRICA LEVES TOI ET BRILLE.

NE PLEURES PLUS

REJOUIS TOI.....

LEVES TOI ET PRENDS TON DESTIN EN  
MAIN COMME CE JOUR HISTORIQUE À LA  
CSW66 À NAIROBI AU KENYA.....


OH !!! FEMME AFRICA !!

LES VALEURS QUE TU INCARNENT SONT  
DIVINES !!!



# Climate Financing: African women's lived experiences of loss and damage

By Faith Lumonya

 Like an angry patriarch, a greedy capitalist, and a condescending colonialist, climate change has wedged rifts through our hopeful hearts for gender equality. This crisis threatens to set us decades back into gender inequality.

The climate crisis is a societal challenge with ethical and human rights impacts occurring alongside a number of already existing inequalities based on gender, social-economic status, race, ethnicity, nationality, ability, sexual orientation, and age.

As we join CSW66 from the first-ever Africa CSW hosted in Nairobi, Kenya, I reflect on the theme and acknowledge that its framing is not only timely but it is also pertinent. This theme around climate justice is an acknowledgement that the climate crisis disproportionately affects women and girls. It is also a recognition of the role that women and girls in the Global South have played for centuries, with their bodies and knowledge to preserve and conserve forests, water resources, and the land because of the connection that exists between them and the earth. They have strived to protect the earth against the excessive effects of the extractive and exploitative nature of decades of capitalism and colonialism. The theme is also a recognition that if the climate crisis is not addressed in a just and inclusive way, a larger majority of people who are not responsible for causing it will continue to unfairly bear its effects.



The science from the latest IPCC report shows us that further delay is untenable. Therefore, as CSW66 meets this year, the delegates in New York should call for reforms of global climate financing. Some of the losses and damages arising from climate change can't be mitigated because they are permanent. This financing should be targeted for adaptation because African women and girls are at the center of both economic and non-economic losses and damages. Financing loss and damage must be fully recognized as the third pillar to addressing the climate crisis, alongside curbing emissions and adaptation to climate impacts.


*Faith Lumonya, Economic Justice and Climate Action Officer,*  
*Kina Mama Wa Africa*



**This financing should be targeted for adaptation because African women and girls are at the center of both economic and non-economic losses and damages.**

# Mudanças climáticas que afectam as mulheres em Moçambique

By Anabela, Mozambique

 Moçambique é extremamente vulnerável as mudanças climáticas, as mulheres e raparigas estão entre os grupos mais afectados pela pobreza. Quanto mais o clima muda, maior é a sobrecarga de trabalho para as mulheres, que são obrigadas a percorrer distâncias longas em busca do precioso líquido para uso diário doméstico.



Quando o ciclone Idai atingiu Moçambique em Março de 2019, mais de 90 unidades de saúde na parte central do país foram danificadas, impactando gravemente o acesso aos serviços de saúde e produtos que salvam vidas, incluindo contraceptivos. Isso, por sua vez, aumenta muito a probabilidade de morte materna sem acesso a cuidados que salvam vidas ou gravidezes indesejadas e não planificadas.

No meio desse desastre a fome tomou conta, os fornecedores de alimentos naquela região assolada obrigavam as mulheres a manter relações sexuais em troca de alimentos. As mulheres eram sexualmente violentadas.

Na provincia de Maputo, mais especificamente nos distritos de Boane e Matutuine, as mulheres sentem na pele as mudanças climáticas, porque é uma terra seca, difícil para pratica de agricultura, sem acesso a água potável perto.

De acordo com o Instituto Nacional de Gestão e calamidade, Moçambique é o

“  
Participando do primeiro encontro CSW66 em Africa, vejo que não é só Moçambique que está nessa situação, mas sim todo o continente.”

terceiro país mais afectado pelos desastres naturais em Africa, e segundo na Africa Austral.

Participando do primeiro encontro CSW66 em Africa, vejo que não é só Moçambique que está nessa situação, mas sim todo o continente. Outras mulheres partilham relatos dos desafios que enfrentam em Senegal, no Chade, Zimbabué e vários outros cantos do continente.

Acompanhei um encontro virtual que falava do engajamento da mulher na mitigação dos desastres induzidos por mudanças climáticas e percebi que a luta é a mesma, os nossos governos devem criar mecanismos de mitigação desse mal, criar as condições a inclusão das mulheres nos processos de desenho de estratégias de cação de mitigação para as mudanças climáticas.



# African Women and Girls Are Best Placed Addressing their Problems in a Relatable Environment

By Dorothy Otieno, Kenya

 For 66 years, African women and girls have struggled to access the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) conference in New York. The CSW is the principal global inter-governmental body exclusively mandated to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. Unfortunately, this space has not been convenient to the African women and girls who continue to bear the brunt of inequalities. Stringent visa approvals, expensive flights and costly accommodation remain a nightmare. In addition, for the few who manoeuvre, their participation in the space is dormant.

This year, through FEMNET, African women and girls have disrupted the norm by convening the first ever Africa CSW in Nairobi, Kenya. The historic




one-week event has brought together Women Rights Organizations from 50 African Countries to actively contribute and shape the global policy standards on gender equality and empowerment of women in the context of Climate Change.

As African Women and Girls continue to demonstrate their capacity to self-organize and address their home-grown challenges, all they are asking the policy makers and governments is to allocate adequate resources based on authentic and inclusive data, document the data in a simple and relatable language, develop gender-responsive policies and more importantly to avail flexible funds for women rights organizations and activists to address climate challenges that continue to ravage women's livelihood. This convening is therefore a wake-up call to the conveners of CSW in New York to re-think strategies of domesticating policy advocacy.

## Women on Land and Environment issues

By Esther Lamet Iselenken, Kenya

 I am glad to be part of the first CSW to be held in Africa, to voice out the inclusion of women in land and environmental issues.

Sand harvesting in Kajiado has become a disaster. It causes early school dropout as young men look for work sand harvesting; the pregnancy rate amongst schoolgirls has raised, and it is causing acute water shortage.

Our culture excludes women of issues pertaining to land and environment, while they are the one most affected by environmental issues. Paradoxically women are more active in these issues, they play a major role in food security and health interventions.

In Kajiado women travel long distances in search of water for domestic use limiting them



from concentrating on other economic development programs. Stopping sand harvesting would reduce this burden and give women a chance to concentrate on other economic development activities.

Environmentalists and policy makers neglected the opportunity to explore the linkage between gender, land and environment and we are therefore reminding policy makers and environmentalists that, the inclusion of women in decision making processes on issues pertaining to land and environment can make a massive impact in eliminating future induced climate disasters and enabling economic development. GIVE IT A TRY AND SEE!

*Esther Lamet Leipah, Iselenken collective Action Network, Kajiado*



# The Pride of Africa

By FOKOU Hilux, lamMifali, Cameroon

For many years until now we've been called the dark continent!

Our resources are stolen away from us without anyone to stop it!

For many years until now we have been excluded from the critical spaces which affect us the most!

For many years Women and girls are forced to stay silent.

Women are kept in the darkest alleys with no one to hear their call for justice and consideration.

*When is this stopping?*

*Where is the button to stop this?*

*Who shall give them their rights?*

They are our mothers, sisters, and friends!

Don't let them fall!

Undergoing all forms of violence but still pure and kind to us.

Who can tell me her fault?

Please tell me her fault!

Why is she not given access to better education?

Why is she not given access to her own spaces?

Why is she not given opportunities to intervene in the decision-making process?

Why must she be raped and brutalized by those who are claiming to love her?

*When is this stopping?*

*Where's the button to stop this?*

*Who shall give them their rights?*

Why all these collections of data for decades, but nothing done after?

Why are you changing our stories?

Why are you cutting down our roots?

Who are you? Show me your face!

Where were all these patriarchs when all these happened?

Where were they when our sisters and mothers were perishing in the wars which they created?

Women and girls shouldn't be considered collateral damages!

*When is this stopping?*

*Where's the button to stop this?*

*Who shall give them their rights?*

This will never stop until we all stand to fully claim justice and equality!

There's no button to stop this!

You are the only one to stop that.

Today FEMNET is breaking the barracks, they are giving us a big part of the space which we have always been denied!

We are Africa, we are one!

**#AfricaDisruptCSW #GenEgaliteECCAS #lamMifali**





# Building a Gender-Just Response to Climate Change; A Critical Approach to Achieving Sustainable Development

By Grace Gara



The impacts of climate change are not felt equally. Women and girls are always first to be affected by climate change and usually worse hit by its impact. Despite this, women and girls are often sidelined in climate decision making processes and actions. Current data and analysis show that in reality, climate change responses are far from employing gender perspectives.

To fully address the climate crisis, it is critical to ensure the full participation of women and young people in climate processes at all levels. African women have been taking care of, and preserving their environments and have a wealth of inherited knowledge and expertise around adaptation and mitigation. This knowledge must be recognized and utilized in development and implementation of climate responses to ensure that the voices and needs of women and girls are reflected in climate policies.

Additionally, there is need for gender data disaggregation and analysis to quantify loss and damage especially as experienced by



women and girls. Research processes should provide opportunities for women to share their losses from their own perspectives and connect how these losses affect other facets of women's lives.

It is also clear that there are strong interconnections between other development issues and climate change. Climate change has huge negative impact on women and girls' access to education, health and livelihoods. It also exacerbates gender-based violence and harmful practices such as early marriage. There is therefore need to understand these interlinkages and consider them during development of climate interventions to ensure that intersectionality is applied in interventions.

Finally, we must shift the power dynamics that exist and understand that achieving a just, equitable and sustainable world is only possible when no one is left behind.

#AfricaCSW66

#AfricaDisruptCSW




Climate change has huge negative impact on women and girls' access to education, health and livelihoods.



# Pastoralism My Identity and Livelihood

By Irene Katete Nairowua, Kenya

 It is such an honor and a privilege to be of this powerful and informative conference #AfricadisruptCSW66.

As a pastoralist woman, I identify with the effects of climate change that have changed our way of life.

Pastoralism is a successful strategy to support a population on less productive land and adapts well to the environment.

Grazing herds on the savannas can ensure the biodiversity of the savannas and prevent them from evolving into scrubland. Pastoralists may also use fire to make ecosystems more suitable for their food. Animals Biomass of the domesticated and wild animals was increased by a higher quality of grass.

Pastoralists depend on livestock products for food and during the droughts would hunt for Wildlife in a sustainable manner. The more the herd the higher the social status. Pastoralists have always co-existed with wildlife within the eco-system, this way of life promoted a Communal way of life, exhibited unity and security. Within the eco-system, beautiful species of birds would sing and as they weave their nests while young boys herding will imitate them whistling.

Over the years, the grazing land for both livestock and wild animals have been reducing because of industrialization and urbanization hence less pasture, water



“ Pastoralists depend on livestock products for food and during the droughts would hunt for Wildlife in a sustainable manner. The more the herd the higher the social status. ”

and slowly diminishing of both domestic and wildlife. Additionally Community disorientation and increased poverty levels can be felt.


How I miss drinking fresh flowing water from the streams/wells which are now polluted and poisonous. I miss the traditional herbs which had no side effects and were abundantly available but now diminishing because of afforestation. Our daughters, sisters losing their fetus due emission of poisonous gases and their sexual reproductive health is affected.

*Irene Katete Nairowua -Iselenken Collective Action Network, Kajiado, Kenya.*



# Is Epistemic Freedom Forbidden for African Feminists?

By Imali Ngusale

 The feminist epistemic freedom in Africa is a perennial intellectual struggle for African women and girls, who by the nature of being female must endure so that they can “fit” the universal intellectual spaces. Thus, epistemic freedom is a forbidden fruit denied by the patriarchal systems so as to disempower women intellectually. The struggle for epistemic freedom is therefore an intellectual battle. A battle that seeks emancipation from imperial and racially inspired patriarchal intellectual forces.



These forces freeze the rights of women to think freely, theorize radically, or interpret liberally. Epistemically, women’s acceptable intellectual prowess has to be accredited by patriarchalism. Put simply African women are not allowed to be intellectually free. Hence, they are slaves of epistemic injustice manned by patriarchal mentalities of oppression.

Surprisingly, women who fight for epistemic freedom are often perceived as unnecessary rebels who refuse to obey the demands of patriarchalism. As if prejudicial intellectualism is a virtue, epistemic freedom is outrightly denied as a universal norm. Particularly for African women and girls who are more often than not deemed illiterate if not intellectually

shallow. Epistemic injustice is so grave to an extent that it is common for women to be denied accreditation for novel ideas, technologies, or even suggestions.

Historically epistemic freedom has been mutilated by social, economic, and political injustices that are surprisingly constructed as universal norms. To put this into perspective, socially women are expected to be second-class citizens breadwinners. They traditionally have to play two roles in a family and should be glad to do so without question.

Economically, women are expected to work twice as much as men for half the amount of pay, and they should be glad that they get to work in the first lane because it is not a right but a privilege. Politically women can only attain positions of power only if they are endorsed by male-dominant figures. Should they not be endorsed then they qualify to be openly disdained if not battered and abused publicly.

All of the aforementioned are social products of the absence of epistemic freedom. Women and girls must therefore rise above this invisible enslavement to procure their rightful intellectual space against epistemic justice.

“

These forces freeze the rights of women to think freely, theorize radically, or interpret liberally. Epistemically, women’s acceptable intellectual prowess has to be accredited by patriarchalism.



# Africa CSW66 Pictorial




# Africa CSW66 Pictorial



# My Story: African Women For Africa

By Kaltuma Dubow

 Climate change is one among the many challenges the world faces currently. Developing countries, especially in Africa, are vulnerable to adverse impacts of climate change and are already experiencing extreme weather events. These include land degradation, coastal erosion, extinction of indigenous forests and crops, water scarcity, among others leading to adverse effects on human life as well as livelihoods, food security and agriculture.

Women, particularly in Africa are mainly affected by climate change due to gender inequality and dependence on natural resources. Because of the nature of their work, women are involved in the care economy and are the care givers in our societies.

Therefore, there is an urgent need to advocate for gender mainstreaming in environmental and climate change policies and have equal participation of both genders in decision making at all levels on matters climate change.

## **Feminist solution for environmental and climate crisis**

More than 50% of women work in the agricultural subsistence production and play a vital role in the process of this value chain. These women face issues of crop failure, diseases and even at times lack of clean drinking water. Despite their strong adaptive strength, women in rural settings are denied a seat at negotiation tables when decisions and policies are being made.

The inaugural CSW66 African edition) comes at a time when most African countries are battling with issues of debt crisis, COVID 19 pandemic and climate crisis and the theme for this year's event being **"Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all**

  
**Women, particularly in Africa are mainly affected by climate change due to gender inequality and dependence on natural resources.**  


**women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programs"**, it is upon all African countries to include more women in the negotiation table and have policies that are inclusive, comprehensive and directed to where they are needed most.

Women and girls in rural and marginalized areas should be given the power to take part in research, policy making, identifying solutions, etc. To instill a sense of ownership and belonging to have concrete localized adaptation and mitigation solutions to climate crisis.


Special thanks to FEMNET for organizing this historical event and giving me a chance to be part of it.

*Kaltuma, Womankind Kenya*



# Connecting With the Roots of my African Feminist Belief

By Liz Lum, 18 Cameroon

 Women have always found a way to make their voices heard, impact seen and presence felt from time immemorial. Attending Africa CSW66 for me is proof that women can do ANYTHING irrespective of their color, race, tribe, ethnicity, or religion. This is because African women organizing for action didn't start today.

When I was denied an American visa to attend CSW64 in March 2020, I remember asking myself, "why does it have to be New York?". I was sad and angry. But two years later, FEMNET has organized the first ever African CSW in Nairobi, Kenya and I am in my room! I am here, adding my voice, sharing my unique experiences,




and learning from great pan-African women leaders that came before me.

Africa CSW cuts across all protocols and inequalities, bridging the inter-generational gap, making this space truly accessible to African girls like myself who long to be heard. Cameroonian girls must be part of the second edition. I see myself mobilizing Cameroonian girls to attend the second edition in order for them to add their voices in solidarity.

I hope that in 50 years or maybe 100 years, history will also talk about me as the youngest pan-African woman (girl) to have attended the first ever Africa CSW and left her mark.

## What does it mean to be part of history making?

By Nada Nashat, Egypt

 For years, I have been attending the CSW in New York. Overwhelmed by excitement and anger, I have also tried to find my way in the UN system. As a non-governmental organization representative, it is not always easy to be heard or even seen in such system. But today, I feel differently.

I am attending the first Africa CSW66 organized by FEMNET. I am owning my narrative and my own history. NGOs from all over Africa found a way to disrupt the CSW this year and that is by convening together in Nairobi to made history; or should I say, herstory.

I am grateful to every woman and man in this place attending the first Africa CSW. I am sure



it will not be the last, but it will always be the first around the world. I wish that the formal CSW in New York would learn from the experiences emerging from Africa CSW in terms of engaging civil society organization in the decision-making process.


Nothing about us, without us. Governments need to listen to what the civil society has to say. Our experiences from working in the ground or breaking taboos can change the world. We will keep fighting for our space and I know we will forever win.

*Nada, Center for Egyptian Women's Legal Assistance (CEWLA) - Egypt*



# My CSW Story

By Azeb Kelemework

 It has been 14 years since I joined the women's rights movement. I have tried several times to attend the CSW meeting in New York, however because of financial constraints, this has been impossible. But this time, thanks to FEMNET, I have finally attended CSW66 in Nairobi, Kenya, which is not far from my country, Ethiopia.

FEMNET organized the Africa CSW66 and invited Union of Ethiopian Women and Children Associations (UEWCA), where I am the Executive Director. Our focus is gender and climate change agenda.

When I got the invitation, I wasn't sure if I was going to make it because of the political instability that is happening in my country. In spite of all that, I decided to join the historic first CSW in Africa.

I was honored to share my ideas and experiences



on the nexus between 'Economic Justice and Climate Justice' as well as 'Gender and Climate Change' for the first time.

I also got an opportunity to share about the violation of Ethiopian women and girls in the ongoing conflict in different parts of the country, particularly

Tigray region. There has been no basic social and economic infrastructural services plus human support for almost 10 months now. I shared the sufferings of our women and girls because this is not fair. I want to call all actors involved to bring this war to an end as it is adversely affecting the living conditions of women and girls.

Finally, this meeting has helped me gain skills on gender justice and climate justice from global and regional participants. I thank FEMNET for the opportunity.

*Azeb Kelemework, Ethiopia*

## AFRICAdisruptiveCSW66

Bernice Ocran Dodoo, Ghana

 Perhaps you have seen, heard, or come across this disruptive agenda trending on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and even on a colleague's WhatsApp status, and wondered what this is all about.

History has been made once again as strong African feminists with the zeal to sustain the African woman's pride and royalty from across the African continent have met to champion a convening, the **AfricaCWS66**. This meeting is born to empower African women and make their voices heard. Because it is one thing having a voice, and another thing making that voice heard to bring about change. Nobody tells the history of Mama Africa like she does for herself.

Some of the provoking comments and utterances from the hosts in New York accelerated the move for African women to hold their own CWS66 to deliberate on home pressing issues that are affecting



the continent.

African women have taken the bold step to organize their own CWS66 for the very first time in Nairobi, Kenya to deliberate on the CWS66 theme which is "**Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programs**" from the African woman's perspective. Africa CWS66 is here to prove to the global north that the African women are in a better position to talk about the issues that affect them.

African women need their voices to be heard and their issues talked about to bring solutions that will enhance positive changes in their continent.

AfricaCWS has come to stay forever because the Blackman is capable of managing his own affairs-Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah.





# Women Arising

By Nancy Makeoh



Growing up as a young girl, I thought that the issues facing me at that time would eventually go away when I grow up and hopefully, as time passed, those issues would not even exist anymore. However, I am very disappointed that the problems keep aggravating, and nothing has been done to create a safe society for young women and girls, thus, making it very difficult for them to live up to the fulfillment of their potential, which is sad!

For how long are we going to continue seeing young women and girls go through all these despicable things? Being Raped, discriminated, physically, mentally, and emotionally abused. Exposed to violence of all sorts.

I am tired of seeing all these beautiful young girls and women, who have lost hope in everything, not being able to speak up for themselves, because they fear being judged and not taken seriously.

The world is evolving by the day, and we all

are hoping that it becomes a better place for us all, but how will that happen when our leaders have decided to close their eyes and ears to all these malpractices happening to us women? Being a woman shouldn't feel like a curse, for we are humans too. We too have visions, we have dreams, and we have brains. But we can't express and materialize our visions and dreams because our leaders have decided to limit us to what they see fit.

Well, the time has come for us to say enough is enough, the time is now! We aren't taking it anymore. In unity we will restore our pride and dignity; and as we do that, we will never be the same again.

We are stronger than we know, we are women!

## To the woman...

By Tendai

To the woman that feels the sun hit her back,

growling tummy due to lack,

The land that once fed, her body that once birthed

both silently bleeding for the one reason.

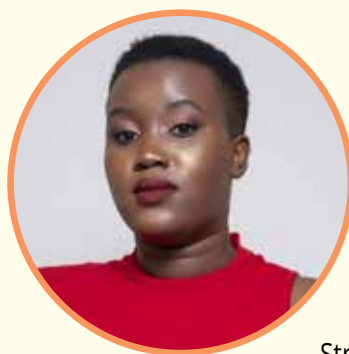
To the woman that bears the burden but never shares in the gain

No longer hearing the clouds rumble, only the factory wheel turn.

To the woman who watches them take her land,

Dig! Dig! Dig! She hears them, forcing out the stones

Earth's children ripped out, her children crying out.



We hear you, we see you, we are you.

To the ones that feel entitled to what is ours,

they come only to take.

To the ones that defile while heaping the blame on us.

Striping our land and selling us dreams.

Reaping and giving us what already belonged to us

To the ones that look the other way,

That do not help us fight for what is ours

Save our soil and our children


The ones that let them in and watch it all.

You will hear us, you will see us, you will not mute us.



# CSW66: How Nigeria can record more success on Gender-based issues with VAPP law

By Titilope Fadare

 The implementation of the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) law can be more successful if provisions are made for gender issues in national and states' budgets, women rights advocates noted as an avenue to address violence against Nigerian women and girls.

The VAPP law was signed into law in 2015 by former President Goodluck Jonathan. It was designed to tackle all forms of violence against persons in private and public life and provide maximum protection and effective remedies for victims and punishment of offenders.

Since it was signed into law, only 20 out of 36 states have assented to it. Although gender advocates consider it a major milestone, along with the introduction of sex offenders' registers in Ekiti and Lagos states, they however indicated a paucity of funds as a major hindrance to the effective operationalisation of this law.

This was stated on Tuesday at the ongoing 66th Commission on the Status of Women, a global intergovernmental body dedicated to the promotion of gender equality, taking place simultaneously in New York and Nairobi, Kenya.

In one of the sessions titled 'VAPP Act a tool for expanding women's rights in Nigeria', panellists suggested that the Nigerian government invest more in gender issues as the country mostly relies on funding from donor agencies.

"It is one thing to pass the law, it is not another thing to implement. We need to have line items for the



implementation of the VAPP law. We have donor agencies that contribute but we don't have such in state budgets," human rights lawyer and feminist, Abiola Akiyode stated.

Similarly, African Feminist writer and human rights activist, Iheoma Obibi noted that the government needs a gender-responsive budget approach.

"At the end of the day, the money matters. It is the thing that defines if the law works and does not work. There has to be a sense of responsibility from federal and states governments to the allocation of resources", Ms Obibi said.

The Country Director of Partners for Reproductive Justice (IPAS) in Nigeria, Lucky Palmer claimed that budgets for the ministry of women affairs are "at a far end" as he urged for increased advocacy and advised donors to include this in their diplomatic conversations with the Nigerian government.



# What have you done to us?

By Sharon Bideri

As children, we would gather by the fireside, and listen to stories told by our elders.

Wisdom dripped from their lips, reminding us of our connection to the earth; our survival lay in its hands.

They taught us that the earth was written in our faces, etched in our hearts, flowed in our veins.

So, we danced and sung in celebration when it birthed plenty of food, the trees purified the air, and the fresh water filled our thirsty bodies.

Our worth was not in the weight of gold or the price of oil.

It was in our way of life, in the uncomplicated connectedness to nature.

I have since grown, and the world has grown old with me.

My body has long since forgotten to dance and sing to welcome the rain.

And when it pours it destroys everything in its path.



My lungs are filled with unclean air, and still I muster a voice to shout, "What have you done to us?"

The earth remains silent.

"Your actions have brought you here. That is why you suffer," I hear from the West.

Yet my fire requires little wood to keep it burning, while your industries level forests.

My tilling of land grows food for my family and community. Yet your pesticides and seeds kill its fertility.

The water I drink comes from deep wells, those surviving for now. Yet you poison our rivers, lakes and water tables with your mining and fishing to supply the greedy world.

Perhaps your connectedness to this world is not as natural as my own.

Is that why you care not for us when we say, "ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!"


We are the cradle of life!

We will not be reduced to the cradle of death!



# African Women - The Custodians of Indigenous Seeds

By **Melania Chiponda**

 Emotions were high at the African CSW as women lamented the loss of their indigenous seeds and the 'contamination' thereof by foreign 'climate-adapted' seeds. Seeds are more than just food; they are connected to African people's identities, cultures, spirituality, and traditions.



Women shared stories of how their seeds and African identities are under threat. One woman mentioned how Kenya used its local variety of avocados until some new 'climate-adapted' seeds were imported. The new avocado seeds were propagated into the existing avocado production cycle but failed to withstand the weather conditions in Kenya and were affected by some plant diseases. The new varieties developed some plant diseases that were unknown to the locals and infected the local avocado leading to a decline in Avocado production and shortages of the same.

Indigenous and peasant women are the custodians of indigenous knowledge on seeds, as they can select, save, preserve, and store

the seeds. Women across Africa are conserving the continent's climate-tolerant traditional seed varieties through having seed banks in various countries. Women are largely the custodians of the indigenous seeds because of the role they play in food production and feeding their families and communities. Food sovereignty relies on food protection knowledge that is passed on from generation to generation.

Women understand that each piece of land is different and requires a particular type of crop. The valleys, the waterlogged soils, the sloppy soils with less rain, all require different crops. As food producers, women understand their local soils because their lives and livelihoods are tied to the land. Women farmers in Africa are pushing back on industrial agriculture that is driven by mono-agriculture as they thrive to live in harmony with nature to deal with the climate crisis.

*Dr Melania Chiponda; Phone: +263773642937; Skype: mela.chiponda  
Twitter: MChiponda*

“

**As food producers, women understand their local soils because their lives and livelihoods are tied to the land.**



# DIGITAL CONVERSATIONS

**Zamara Foundation** @Zamara\_fdn

Dear CSW,

"We need practical solutions to climate change and disaster risk management that takes into account multiple and intersecting impact on women and girls." @kachambwa

#AfricaDisruptCSW66  
#CSW66Africa  
#ZamaraVoices

@FemnetProg

Dear CSW,  
We need practical solutions to climate change and disaster risk management that takes into account the multiple and intersecting impact on women and girls.

Zimbabwe **Memory Kachambwa**  
Executive Director  
FEMNET

**Zonazhwoh M-W** @ZoFem

#AfricaDisruptCSW66 to us in francophone/Arab/Spanish speaking central Africa means, a CSW that is representative, intergenerational, & cross border. That's @GenEgaliteECCAS delegation at #CSW66 !  
#WfacAt13  
#GenEgaliteECCAS

4:32 PM · Mar 15, 2022 · Twitter for Android

**FEMNET** @FemnetProg

Day 3 of #AfricaDisruptCSW66. Love and support from Central Africa. Let us unite our African voices!  
#CSW66Africa #CSW66

UN Women and 9 others

10:28 AM · Mar 16, 2022 · Twitter Web App

**Zamara Foundation** @Zamara\_fdn · BH

Day 3 of the #CSW66Africa.

Taking a minute to evaluate and reflect on the #AfricaDisruptCSW66 space as we continue to develop our own narrative and consider how this might be sustained and integrated in other global events and processes.

@FemnetProg

0:53 | 222 views

From FEMNET

**Akina Mama wa Afrika** @amwaafrika

A message on #CSW66 from our Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Lead @buky

#AfricaDisruptCSW66 #CSW66Africa

Dear CSW,  
Ensuring that young African feminists participate in AfricaCSW66 was important because it meant they could centre their realities and reimagine a future that belongs to them and their peers at the regional and global level. For some of the young women here, this is their first time in this global space. Akina Mama wa Afrika was excited to support the disruption of CSW66 and show what is possible when African feminists are resourced.

**Olabukunola Williams, SRHR lead  
Akina Mama wa Afrika**

Afrifem Macroeconomics Collective

**Afrifem Macroeconomics Collective** @NawAfrica

"There is no more critical a space to be in than this right now. The #AfricaDisruptCSW66 is not just a gathering - it is a statement that African women, activists, and civil society organisations are making to governments..." - Wilson Chivhanga, ED @forequality\_mw

Dear CSW,  
"There is no more critical a space to be in than this right now. The #AfricaDisruptCSW66 is not just a gathering - it is a statement that African women, activists, and civil society organisations are making to governments and the United Nations that we will not wait any longer for our cries for CSW venue to be rotated. Instead, we are saying, we will create our own table and disrupt the status quo. #AfricaDisruptCSW66 is a movement that will change the trajectory of African Women's representation forever and I cannot think of any more critical space to be in than this"

**Wilson Chivhanga, Executive Director  
Equality Africa**

12:58 PM · Mar 16, 2022 · Twitter Web App



# Dear CSW...

“



Dear CSW66,

I want it to be known that black African queer women are coming together to fight for a space for their voices to be heard.

— CARINA UBISSE CAPTINE

#AfricaDisruptCSW66

FEMNET.ORG @FEMNETPROG

“



Dear CSW66,

Let our voices be heard! We have good ideas on the management of climate change if given an opportunity to speak

— ESTHER LEIPAH

#AfricaDisruptCSW66

FEMNET.ORG @FEMNETPROG

“



Dear CSW66,

Change the venue for the annual CSW events to allow more participation of diverse groups of people: rich or poor, young or old, etc. Recommend the increment of climate financing mechanism from loan financing to allow women, girls, indigenous people, rural communities, etc to access this climate finance.

— FAITH LUMONYA

#AfricaDisruptCSW66

FEMNET.ORG @FEMNETPROG

“



Dear CSW66,

NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US. Our voices count. We should be part of the decision making process.

— NADA NASHAT

#AfricaDisruptCSW66

FEMNET.ORG @FEMNETPROG



# Dear CSW...

“



Dear CSW66,

We, the women of Africa have refused to be spectators in New York. We have chosen to disrupt the status quo and influence the space here in Nairobi, Kenya. If we are not invited to the decision making table, we create our own.

— DOROTHY OTIENO



#AfricaDisruptCSW66

EVENT ONE

@EVENTS1000

“



Dear CSW66,

Nothing about us without us! African women's lives matter!

— FAOZAI TRAQUINO



#AfricaDisruptCSW66

EVENT ONE

@EVENTS1000

“



Dear CSW66,

Increase the chance for civil society and particularly women to contribute effectively in drawing policies they raised upon our needs and suits our communities. Let us draw the future together.

— MAL MA, HASSAN



#AfricaDisruptCSW66

EVENT ONE

@EVENTS1000

“



Dear CSW66,

The African woman deserves a seat on the table. The African woman needs to be heard. Inclusivity is not just bringing onboard a few privileged African women to act as wall flowers, it is about meaningful engagement in decision making. Include us, give us the opportunities. We are forces of change.

— NORVEL



#AfricaDisruptCSW66

EVENT ONE

@EVENTS1000





Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands



OXFAM



Sida



Co-funded by the European Union



The African Women's Development and Communication Network