



Africa Disrupt

CSW66 Newsletter

Issue No.01 15th March 2022

Viva Mama Africa!

Why CSW66 is a defining moment
to #Breakthebias

Back to normal is not enough

Disasters aren't natural
neither is climate change

#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



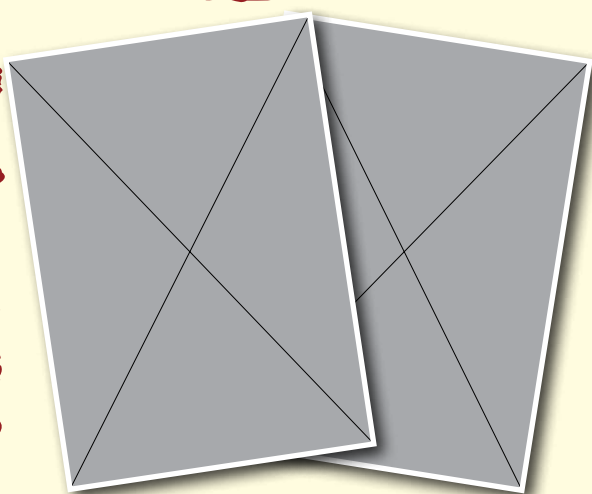
FEMNET is convening the Africa CSW66 event in Nairobi from 14th - 17th March 2022, as a model to test and demonstrate how a meaningful investment for regional in-person convening would look like and mean for many activists, feminists and advocates who are unable to join the in-person CSW66 in New York.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

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#AfricaDisruptCSW66



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Back to normal is absurd!

By Millicent Wayua

As Africa joins the CSW66 with the rest of the world and various African countries represented here in Kenya, we are asking all these figures being presented some from the hard efforts of grassroots organizations, mostly women led who have given so much to better the lives of our fellow africans where is the money? Have we become study subjects where data is just collected and stored for reference and nothing is being done about it?

Why are other people telling our stories when we as Africans we who understand the beauty of our diversity, the beauty of our different cultures and languages being washed out while we watch in silence? I believe it's time we stopped being on the sidelines and challenge ourselves to rise up and let our voices be heard.

The whole world is crying out for Ukraine yet our brothers and sisters in DRC have suffered over the years and it seems like they have been forgotten, we have so much to give to the world but we cannot continue giving and leaving ourselves out.

We want our data used to better lives, we need to see resources channeled to the grassroots and we also want to see accountability.

Millicent Wayua, SDG Kenya Forum

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Why are other people telling our stories....

Why CSW66 is a defining moment to #Breakthebias

By Memory Kachambwa



What brings us together is our collective enemy. It is the oppressive neocolonial, capitalist, misogynistic, paternalistic and patriarchal powers that disproportionately subjugate women in all their diversity to a lower status in society. We acknowledge that women have been leading revolutions even when they are not recognized or acknowledged for their contributions. They have influenced how the world should be and the struggle for equality continues hence 66 years ago, when the CSW was created, it had the underlying vision to be a multilateral space for the freedom of women. ALL women.

CSW has however slowly been closing as a space where gender equality advocates, women's rights and feminist organizations can influence negotiations, policy and norm setting on issues that affect their lived realities. CSOs have been methodologically excluded from consultations at country, regional and international level. Despite being ECOSOC members, CSOs cannot observe the negotiations. Year in year out, there is contention on language in the outcome document such as women's human rights, women in all their diversity, women human rights defenders, among others. The African civil society faces a lot of prejudice to participate from expensive visas – which should be waived for intergovernmental events, to visa denials with the most absurd reasons for rejection.



The CSW66 theme focusing on climate change and disaster risk management is a defining moment for Africa's voice to be heard since it's the continent that is hugely affected by climate change and disasters. CSW66 also happens at a time when the world has been ravaged by the impact of COVID and clearly agrees that the current financial social and environmental order cannot continue and MUST shift.

CSW is the largest, and among the most attended gender equality and women's rights event held every year at the UN headquarters. Importantly this year, the Commission will be reviewing its working methods, an opportunity that only happens every 5 years. We call for shifting and rotating of CSW to the various regions and ensuring CSOs have observer status and are meaningfully engaged across the regions, at all levels, and in the delegations. CSW must devolve with clear monitoring and accountability frameworks on the agreed conclusions. There must be resources for implementation and coherence with other processes such as SDG, generation Equality Forum and the COP gender action plan. We cannot afford to move back on the commitments – African women's and feminist organizations and activists will push for the space to be worth its salt. Viva Africa! ■

Memory is the Executive Director, The African Women Development and Communication Network (FEMNET)



Disasters aren't natural neither is climate change

By Esther Wambui



When we refer climate change as a natural disaster, we steer away the conversation on who is responsible for the change of climate. Over the years Africa has been faced with disasters such as poverty, floods, cyclones hurricanes, wild fires as a result of change in weather and climate. When these disasters happen, they cause massive destructions in African soil and disproportionately affect women and girls who tend to bear the brunt of these disasters. But why are these disasters really not natural. Let's take a keen look into how disasters related to climate change happen.

Over the years we have experience changes in climate which has in turn affect our environment the rise and shifts in temperatures and weather patterns may be natural, however since the 1800s human activities have been the main driver of climate crisis. Activities such as burning of fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas which in turn produces heat tapping gases. United Nations asserts that as greenhouse gas emissions blanket the Earth, they trap the sun's heat. This leads to global warming and climate change. The world is now warming faster than at any point in recorded history. This is most caused by developed countries and multinational corporations that emit gas emissions in the world. According to [Thomas Reuters Foundation](#) globally multinational companies account for nearly a fifth of global CO2 emissions in the



world. Multinational companies such as BP, Coca Cola and Walmart among others are responsible for nearly a fifth of climate changing carbon dioxide emissions according to this study. As they cause this climate crisis, they should also be at the forefront of addressing the climate change emergency.

As we gather here in Nairobi for the Africa CSW66 we are aware that Africa is contributing least in the climate crisis we are facing now and is the most vulnerable continent in the world. We also are tired of hearing the global north terming these disasters as natural while they are not. As we look at the CSW66 theme which is Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster, we demand that the global north act so fast to address the climate crisis. This can be done by developing nature-based adaptations strategies that have gender differentiate impacts and also to ensure that climate finance is designed to enable, instead of hindering women and girls impacted negatively by climate change. This is how taking responsibility for one's actions looks like. Have climate crisis solutions that are aligned to the lived realities of women and girls in Africa.

*Esther Kimani- Gender Experts Founder/
Director Zamara Foundation*

Viva Mama Africa!!

By Marvel



You can hear it in the thunder of their voices and in the persistence of their tones. 'We want something different. It must be different. We cannot keep going to New York every year for Commission on the Status of Women, CSW, and yet see no change'. This is a message I keep hearing in this historic CSW, the first of its kind to being held on African soil. Viva Mama Africa!

Led by FEMNET, women and girls from all over Africa and in all their diversities are meeting in Nairobi, Kenya for the CSW66 which is a parallel event to the annual one that takes place in New York. Not to be forgotten, we have a number of men who have joined this meeting and making their contributions.



African women and girls did not give up when they could not get their visas to go to the main meeting. I am told that, the lack of visas was largely because of COVID19 whose effects are yet to go down. So a parallel meeting it is. Not in New York, but in Nairobi, Kenya.

At the point of historic moves, brazen boldness that dares the norm is what lingers for decades in the minds of those that read or are told about them.

This year's theme of CSW66 is one that the African women and girls know all too well seeing that they suffer the most because of the negative effects of climate change. Let it be said of the participants of CSW66 in both New York and Africa; they came, they saw, conquered and are conquering the world by leading the way. #AfricaDisruptCSW66

Of adaptation and mitigation...!

By Melania Chiponda



Adaptation is how people adjust to the existing and future impacts of climate change. It involves the ways in which we reduce the harmful effects of climate change and take advantage of the opportunities that arise so that we can live in harmony with nature in the context of the current crisis. Therefore, restoration of damaged ecosystems, agroecology, and agroforestry are always that African women adapt to climate change. Our resilience as African women is rooted in



our in-depth understanding of our lands and territories and our indigenous knowledge, which strengths our capacity to adapt to environmental changes resulting from climate change. Mitigation is the steps

taken to prevent and reduce greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Mitigation seeks to address the causes of climate change. Africa's emissions are negligible and currently stand at less than 4%. The majority of African women are not contributing much to global warming, yet they are dying in large numbers due to climate-induced disasters. The rich people in the Global North need to drastically adjust their consumption habits and stop polluting so that African women can survive the climate crisis.



What is the point of this Revolution if we can't dance!

By Mildred Ngesa

Dance! African Women Dance! For the revolution is taking shape... surely, what is the point of this revolution if we can't dance!

The excitement! The energy! The Inspiration! **#AfricaDisruptCSW66** reminds me of why African women and Africans in general find healing, power and renewed hope and solidarity in song and dance!

Here in the Africa CSW66 room with hearts pounding with excitement, eyes widen in with expectations and voices rising in trepidation, the women of Africa are making history as they mark the very first CSW held on Africa's soil for the last 66 years ago...and the fire in this revolution is thumping in song and dance



as our issues are voiced on why women and girls of Africa must never be left behind!

The spirits of our foremothers on whose shoulders we stand and on whose audacious footsteps we dare to follow is guiding us through this new but wonderful beginning where we have said ; *"If New York cannot come to Africa, then Africa will "be that New York!"*

And so the discussions are fired up and I know why; they are guided by the spirits of our great foremothers and their achievements of which history chooses to forget. In the spirit of Pan African Feminist solidarity, we tap into the **HERSTORY** of **Lillian Masediba Ngoyi** of South Africa, **Josina Muthemba Machel** of



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If New York cannot come to Africa, then Africa will “be that New York!”



Mozambique, **Aline Sitoe Diatta** of Senegal, **Rose Lokissim** of Chad, **Taytu Bettul** of Ethiopia, **Funmilayo Ransome Kuti** of Nigeria and many other great African Women whose contribution and sacrifice to the emancipation of Africa's women and girls opened up the space for us to lift our chins even higher!

And so we shall keep dancing; to Brenda Fassie's *Vulindlela, I am a super woman* by Tanzania Women all stars, *Shekere* by Yemi Alade and Angelique Kidjo and God bless the women by Lucky Dube! We shall dance to many more because Africa's rich and diverse music creativity is bottomless!

When odds of technology weighs us down on our attempts to log into CSW66, we shall dance!

When we are locked out of translations and interpretations because our African languages are "too complicated" to CSW66, we shall dance!

When the global North purports to "speak on behalf of the global South as if we in the South are not capable of articulating our own issues, we shall dance!

When the visa requirements and restrictions lock us out because we have "no husbands or too many children" to be allowed into America, we shall dance!

Dear CSW66, we Africa's women are here and we shall dance, dance and dance.....!!!

Mildred Ngesa is a pan African Transformational Leadership Coach and Inspirational Feminist and the moderator of Africa CSW66.





**EXCUSE
ME!**

When is it my turn to speak?

By Imali Ngusale

African women “bear the brunt” of poverty, unemployment, even worse illiteracy. They are backward, misinformed and let’s not forget, climate illiterate. To the extent that their views are not important in global spaces. In fact, African women need to be seen in emotive picture stories that testify just how cold life is in the hot Sub-Saharan. Put simply, African women and girls qualify to be clustered as third-class citizens.

Painstakingly, as third-class citizens from the global south, African women and girls do they do not have a right to speak, think, or believe! This has been made clear with the closed doors in the open space of digital divide. A space where the internet cost more than a glass of water yet it is the avenue of conversations that decide Africa’s future and that of her women who are either living, dead or yet to be born.

Informed by the exclusive hegemonic culture of patriarchy and the religion of racism backed up by open masculinity, African women and girls probably deserve to be denied an open ticket to participate in consultations of the Status of Women. Their voices can be virtual and should be especially because the stains of CORONA may have escaped the vaccines, they took to qualify them a merit



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**Perhaps the time is
ripe for African women
to ask when is it their
turn to speak?**

of attendance. Perhaps the time is ripe for African women to ask when is it their turn to speak? euphemistically, African women and girls are there to be seen...As if being seen is equivalent to respect!

Seemingly, in the context of climate justice, African women are sparsely in the boardrooms of negotiations but are objects of museums. Reviewed, and revered to tell the world of the sorry state they have had to endure because of the intellectual chains of hegemonic masculinity - the axis of discussions of climate change and its crisis. As this ensues, a significant number of African women remain economically dependent on hegemonic policies sponsored by misogynists who have the audacity to curb their attempt of liberation.



S.H.E.

By Sylvia Kerubo

D Destiny. Is it by chance or is it controlled? That is the question SHE asks herself. The African Woman. From where I am seated, it appears as though the world is set on controlling her future. And not in a positive way. Barriers have been placed to make it even harder for her to be represented.

And when she does shows up, she sits and listens to world leaders make commitments. Make promises of a better future for us. So why is she still here? Why is she still seeking support from the very people who assure us



that our voices will be heard? She is still bearing the brunt of climate crisis. She has been forced to work twice as hard to make sure her home is still running.

This year, she is wearing her African crown and saying NO! She WANTS CSW66 to ensure that she is are FULLY REPRESENTED AND HEARD. HER voice matters just as much as the rest of the world! This is not just a DISRUPTION, but the beginning of history in the making! Her story will be told. SHE will not be ignored.

Mulheres, seus sonhos, amores e lutas

Carina Ubisse Capitine

Gerações de mulheres que vieram antes de mim lutaram pelos seus direitos. Gerações de mulheres que lutaram antes de mim viveram pelos seus amores. Gerações de mulheres que viveram antes de mim morreram pelos seus sonhos. Gerações de mulheres que sonharam antes de mim dominaram os segredos da criação do mundo.

Há 51 anos morreu Josina Machel. Há 47 anos o seu (também meu) Moçambique independente nasceu. Josina não viveu para ver a materialização da sua criação.

Mas os seus ideais, a sua força e os seus sonhos vivem.

(em mim) O seu sonho de um Moçambique independente se torna realidade.

Eu luto para que as gerações de mulheres que



estão por vir possam amar. Eu amo para que as mulheres do amanhã possam sonhar. Eu sonho para que nós possamos criar. Um futuro que seja nosso. Um sonho que se torna realidade.

Hoje as mulheres da minha geração lutam. Mulheres de várias gerações amam. Desde sempre mulheres sonham.

O que para mim parece um primeiro passo. Um início. Uma inepção. Um sonho. São na verdade realidades, continuidades, criações vivas. Juntas criamos. Eu e Josina. Sonhamos o mesmo sonho.

Aline e Rose amaram. Tatye e Aline lutaram. Ma'Ngoi, Taytu e Funmilayo criaram. Todas elas vivem.

Em mim. Em nós. Juntas, sempre.



Where is the table for our voice?

By Joanne Velo



Climate change has for the longest time been discussed without the input of women and girls who suffer the most. I speak as a marginalized black girl from Northern Part of Kenya whose voice has been silenced by poverty, patriarchy, marginalization in all aspects and harmful cultural practices.

As pastoralists we are intentionally left behind as climate change talks happen yet the effects are ugly. Having lost all our family livelihoods to the scavenging drought and famine, women and girls are suffering untold pain and mental torture, increased Gender Based Violence, GBV, in families, malnourished children some even dying due to hunger and lack of enough supply of relief food.

Where is my place when policies are made that are not only oppressive but also expensive for my application in real life? How can I access clean fuel when I can't access clean drinking water? If I am not able even to afford one dollar a day for my family meals, how will I afford a dollar a day for clean fuel? Do we have the ground facts before publishing

some of these policies?

As a young girl from the Daasanach community in Kenya, with the loss of livestock, our community livelihood that all families depend on, I am the 'community redeemer' for my family to get a new livelihood. We are threatened of being married off for our families to recover the loss while our boys and men are ready to go for raids to regain their livelihood pride.

Consequently as a result of these actions, women and girls will be subjected more to poverty, we will have increased female led households, single parenting, high illiteracy rates on girls and women, high mortality rates among other vices.

African women and girls MUST be on the decision-making tables to bring the reality to the technocrats. MY STORY IS GREAT WHEN I TELL IT, NOT WHEN I AM REPRESENTED by someone who has never been in my shoes. I can do it given a chance, do not silence me.

Joanne Velo is the founder of HADADEGE



How can I access clean fuel when I can't access clean drinking water?



Dear CSW...

“ 

Dear CSW66,

We urge you to listen to our voices. We are proud African women and we stand firm for our right. We are the voice of the voiceless and we call for inclusive climate justice.

— AMUDATH MATU

#AfricaDisruptCSW66

  @AfricaDisrupt

“ 

Dear CSW66,

Neglect and discriminating women from Africa is the biggest and social mistake you are making. I believe the concept CSW is focused on uplifting African women but discriminating them is unfair and we want to ask you to STOP include them in all decision making processes.

— BUSEIN SAMILU

#AfricaDisruptCSW66

  @AfricaDisrupt

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Dear CSW66,

I was denied access to the #CSW66. I was denied an American Visa. Today I am part of a historical moment, attending the first ever CSW66 Africa in Nairobi. I am here to show that my voice counts.

— LIZ LUM

#AfricaDisruptCSW66

  @AfricaDisrupt

“ 

Dear CSW66,

We are pushing for an increment in female leadership to enhance female participation in decision making as well as safeguarding the RIGHTS of all women especially Girls & Young Women

— BERNICE DODOO

#AfricaDisruptCSW66

  @AfricaDisrupt

“ 

Dear CSW66,

If there is no meaningful engagement and inclusion of Africa's Women & Girls in your processes, then whose global agenda are you advocating for?

— MILDRED NGESA

#AfricaDisruptCSW66

  @AfricaDisrupt

“ 

Dear CSW66,

The women of Africa must be part of the change, decision making and be a voice in the development of all women. It is time for African women to stop being in the sidelines when it comes to developmental decisions.

— NESTER CONTEH

#AfricaDisruptCSW66

  @AfricaDisrupt

“ 


Dear CSW66,

Support the move to have mitigation and adaptation financing to more women led enterprises. Support African women and girls from Africa to envision, conceptualize and implement a truly just and inclusive transition.

— ANNE SONSOLE

#AfricaDisruptCSW66

  @AfricaDisrupt



“ 

Dear CSW66,

Women play a big role in the society and the community at large. We urge you to include women's voices in decision making. Women are the most vulnerable to the climatic change. Make a conducive environment for them.

— ELIZABETH ANGIKA

#AfricaDisruptCSW66

  @AfricaDisrupt

“ 

Dear CSW66,

I need adolescent boys and girls to be included in these different events and processes. This is because their voices all count and they are as well affected by your choices

— FOKOU HILUX

#AfricaDisruptCSW66

  @AfricaDisrupt

“ 

Dear CSW66,

As a young female sex worker, I want to see more inclusion of sex workers in every space where decisions are being made.

— ELIZABETH ONYANGO

#AfricaDisruptCSW66

  @AfricaDisrupt

DIGITAL CONVERSATIONS



Africa CSW66!!! Africa here we Go! Africa, (she/her/hers)



Africa CSW66 was a conversation that randomly popped up in FEMNET's Boardroom as we were discussing our participation and role in the Global CSW66 in New York. Accessing the restrictions in attendance and even our own financial constraints that would hinder us from travelling to New York, We realized that it was difficult, almost impossible to meaningfully participate in CSW66. I am not even mentioning the unspoken biases that we women of the black continent have to endure in the occasion that we make it to the Global spaces.

So, anyway, the brilliant Idea of Africa CSW66 came about! We refused to isolate our difficulties in participating meaningfully with those of other Women and girls in Africa. We began to mobilize, Fundraise, and invite,



almost by faith. It was not long until we started getting calls of people even wanting to take care of their bills, just as long as they get to be in the Inaugural Africa CSW.

I will be honest and say that we began to battle with the fact that we could not have everyone come considering the limited conference space. We constantly asked ourselves, are we going to lock women out after they have already been locked out of New York? No way! So, in CSW67, we miss in there, we go big! Right here at home. I am so happy, so proud and so excited that nothing can hinder African Women. And that that, is the Status of Women in Africa. Unhindered!

Wambui Wambugu
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FEMNET



Africa CSW66 Pictorial



Africa CSW66 Pictorial





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The African Women's
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