



# WRI SUMMER NEWSLETTER



## WRI in UN Geneva

WRI is a member of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women Geneva. The Committee was established in 1973 and works to ensure the perspectives of all women and girls are brought to the fore in the diverse UN processes that take place at the UN in Geneva.

The Bureau has established a series of Ambassador Breakfast Briefings. In June the second one in the series took place. Zarin Hainsworth, Chair of NAWO was present and facilitated one of the table discussions. The Ambassadors of Belgium, Vietnam, Samoa and the Mission of Congo were present together with senior UN agency representatives.

**NGOCSWGeneva continues to advocate for all rights for women and girls. UN entities present at the briefing were UNOHRHR, WHO, UNECE**

# WRI International Widows Day



The United Nations observes 23 June as International Widows Day (resolution A/RES/65/189) since 2011, to draw attention to the voices and experiences of widows and to galvanize the unique support that they need.

International days and weeks are occasions to educate the public on issues of concern, to mobilize political will and resources to address global problems, and to celebrate and reinforce achievements of humanity. The existence of international days predates the establishment of the United Nations, but the UN has embraced them as a powerful advocacy too.

Lord Loomba worked with Cherie Blair and others to have International Widows Day recognised and undertakes a number of events on June 23 every year.  
<https://www.theloombafoundation.org/our-work/advocacy/international-widows-day>

Global Fund for Widows organised a policy forum in Washington:  
<https://www.globalfundforwidows.org/news/press-release-international-widows-day-sheds-light-on-the-marginalized-struggles-of-widows-worldwide>

Celebration in Kenya: <https://www.aljazeera.com/videos/2017/4/25/kenyans-speak-out-against-widow-cleansing-tradition>

Now more than ever, this day is an opportunity for action towards achieving full rights and recognition for widows. This includes providing them with information on access to a fair share of their inheritance, land and productive resources; pensions and social protection that are not based on marital status alone; decent work and equal pay; and education and training opportunities. Empowering widows to support themselves and their families also means addressing social stigmas that create exclusion, and discriminatory or harmful practices.

## *WRI Briefing on widows to NGOs in Geneva*

WRI Chair, Zarin Hainsworth, provided a briefing for NGOCSWGeneva members on the situation of widows globally. The hybrid meeting was kindly hosted by Latter Day Saints Charities whose representative currently serves as a Vice President of the NGOCSWGVA Bureau.

Members of the Committee promised to raise awareness of the situation of widows amongst their members across the globe

For more information on IWD observance: [www.un.org/en/observances/widows-](http://www.un.org/en/observances/widows-)



# Unlocking success

Raising the quality of life of communities is a complex process and the fear of failure often prevents good ideas being developed into plans of action by individuals or committees that could result in real success. There are many pitfalls on the way to a community development project that can be avoided, mistakes will be made but with the help of friends, the correct timing and some luck the project you start as a seedling will grow into a tree. Widow’s Rights International has acquired much experience in its journey and is developing a Theory of Change.

WRI Trustee Les Gornall shares a series of articles based on the WRI Theory of Change. For all the article click here:[PART 1 NEWSLETTER ARTICLE v1.2.docx](#)



# Human Rights Council

The Human Rights Council is an intergovernmental body within the United Nations system made up of 47 States responsible for the promotion and protection of all human rights around the globe. It has the ability to discuss all thematic human rights issues and situations that require its attention throughout the year. It meets at the United Nations Office at Geneva.

HRC was created by the General Assembly on 15 March 2006 by its resolution 60/251, replacing the Commission on Human Rights. The Council held its first session from 19 to 30 June 2006. A year later, the Council adopted resolution 5/1, its “institution-building package” to guide its work and set up its procedures and mechanisms.

Its mechanisms include the universal periodic review, which serves to assess the situations of human rights in all States Members of the United Nations.



WRI has been working with UN processes in Geneva for a number of years. WRI statements have been submitted to the Human Rights Council and oral statements given. WRI has held a number of events during the HRC and provided text on widows for a number of resolutions.

For the June HRC, WRI continued its advocacy meeting with Member States, civil society and UN personnel to raise awareness on the plight of widows worldwide but also their potential as active agents of positive change for their families and communities.





*enabling widows to have a brighter and fairer future*

*The Algerian Women's Association provides support for low income widows and rural families; training for high achieving students as well as those in need. They provide basic health care and awareness on health and they organise cultural programmes for children and young people.*



## News from our partners

### Naserian

Established in 2010, Naserian is a Maasai widows led organisation in the Arusha district of Tanzania. Initially started in three villages, it is now established in more than 15.

With the help of WRI they have organised training in human rights, the Tanzanian constitution, soap and candle making and FGM/C.

Naserian has bought a soap making machine and with the profits from production they pay for the education of the daughters of widows.

Naserian has built two nursery schools and trained a number of widows in children's education. There is therefore provision of primary education where otherwise there would be none.

Since its inception, building capacity amongst widows and raising awareness within the Maasai community has led to a reduction in FGM/C, violence against women, early and forced marriage and inheritance stealing.

### The Guild of Service India

WRI has collaborated with the Guild of Service for many years and jointly founded the Global Alliance Last Woman First. The Guild has hostels in Vrindavan - known as the city of widows and in Kashmir where they work with conflict widows.

Widows struggle to care for themselves and their children in their own countries, refugee camps or countries of asylum. Trauma during and after the conflict: many women see their husbands tortured, mutilated or suffering other cruel and inhuman treatment.

The Guild has worked with Global Fund for Widows on projects to increase financial independence of widows.