



Widows' Rights International



# WRI AUTUMN SUMMER



## WRI & UN Geneva

WRI is a member of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women Geneva. This was established in 1973 and works to ensure the perspectives of all women and girls are represented in all UN processes taking place Geneva.

2023 is the 50th anniversary of the Committee. To celebrate this anniversary an event took place on 21 September, International Peace Day. It was hosted by the City of Geneva at the prestigious venue in Geneva: Palais Anna and Jean-Gabriel Eynard.

Many member organisations were present including WRI with Trustees Margaret Clark and Abby Younis representing WRI. Many dignitaries attended including Ambassadors, UN personnel and senior representatives of the City and Canton of Geneva.

WRI Chair Zarin Hainsworth OBE was a panellist. For more info go to: <https://ngocsw-geneva.ch/ngo-csw-genevas-50th-anniversary-event/>

# 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.

During the 54th Session, WRI representatives attended a number of events, continuing their advocacy for widows of all ages. Representatives met with the gender advisor's office to the High Commissioner of Human Rights to discuss how to raise awareness of widows across the work of the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights in Geneva.

A three day symposium on widows is planned for June 2024.



WRI Trustees at the 50th anniversary celebration of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women Geneva



WRI trustees outside the HRC Chamber

## WRI new website

WRI has been updating its website. We invite you to visit the new website at <https://www.widowsrights.net/>

As with all websites it is under constant development and we invite you to share any recommendations.

If you have any news about widows, please do share with us for our newsletter and website.

If you have any articles or reports we look forward to publishing them on the website with a link to your own website or other credit that you wish.

Photos on the website and in the newsletter are taken from our own library, that of our partners or unsplash whom we would like to credit. <https://unsplash.com/>

# The Resilience of Widows in the UK: Navigating loss and building new foundations

Widowhood is a profound and life-altering experience that affects individuals across the globe, irrespective of age, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status. In the United Kingdom, widows form a significant demographic, and their journey through grief, resilience, and adaptation is both poignant and inspiring.

Widows often face financial challenges after the loss of a spouse, particularly if they were financially dependent on their partner. In the UK, governmental and non-governmental organisations offer financial assistance and advice to help widows manage their finances and make informed decisions. However there are a number of challenges including the lower pensions for women. Understanding pension rights, insurance claims, and accessing relevant benefits become essential steps for widows to regain financial stability.

Despite the challenges, many widows in the UK have emerged as resilient advocates for their own rights and those of others in similar situations. Widows' organisations and advocacy groups have played a pivotal role in raising awareness about the unique struggles widows face, pushing for policy changes, and creating a supportive network for widows across the country. WRI is currently engaged in undertaking research in this area and welcomes all organisations working with widows in the UK to collaborate for the benefit of widows across the UK. It is clear that many widows did not find the support they needed and this is a gap that needs to be addressed with urgency...

In many parts of the world widows are essential to the continuing vitality of communities. Unfortunately they also suffer many harmful traditional practices and severe discrimination. WRI works to raise awareness of the discrimination against widows but also their role as active agents of positive change within their communities...

Data desegregated by sex and marital status is missing from the census across the UK. WRI is looking for more information about widows in the UK and invites those with existing research or anecdotal evidence or cultural information such as stories or poems to contact us. With Covid and conflict the number of widows has risen dramatically. WRI invites widows to share their stories with us.

Widows in the UK face multifaceted challenges. Society needs to recognise and address the unique needs of widows. Meanwhile the collective effort towards providing emotional, financial, and social support becomes more essential and thus the importance of organisations working with widows more evident...for the full article [https://www.widowsrights.net/files/ugd/f3f376\\_e78d0b37d61042289d7092d148ad3afe.pdf](https://www.widowsrights.net/files/ugd/f3f376_e78d0b37d61042289d7092d148ad3afe.pdf)

## WRI Upcoming events

As part of the work of WRI to highlight the work for widows around the world we will be holding two virtual events on 25 November and 10 December. 25 November is the international day to mark the 16 days of activism to stop violence against women and girls. 10 December is the International Human Rights Day.

We look forward to hearing from our partners of their work for widows around the world. You are most welcome to join us and invite your networks.

### Sunday 25 November

14.00 - 15.30 UK time

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85818579068?pwd=Rk9UTnlLQWp4Vyt2YkdNbIVFc1FrZz09>

Meeting ID:  
858 1857 9068  
Passcode: 847900  
**Monday 11 December**  
14.00-15.30 UK time

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88534647497?pwd=ZDRUVExualVUdnlYZENtaUJXMko5QT09>

Meeting ID:  
885 3464 7497  
Passcode: 025917



*enabling widows to have a brighter and fairer future*

## *WRI Partners*

WRI partner The Algerian Women's Association has undertaken a number of projects recently. These include a cultural day celebrating children and a mobile medical clinic. The report of their activities can be found under our reports section on the WRI website.

[https://www.widowsrights.net/files/ugd/f3f376\\_b0da0d8aba20491cbde1de09ed74805f.pdf](https://www.widowsrights.net/files/ugd/f3f376_b0da0d8aba20491cbde1de09ed74805f.pdf)

Photos from their activities can be found here

<https://www.widowsrights.net/gallery/algerian-womens-association>

More information on WRI partner Naserian can be found on their website

<http://naserian.org/>

## Everywoman Treaty

The Every Woman Treaty has been advocating for a global binding framework for ten years. Through comprehensive research, bold advocacy, and high-level conversations with world leaders, the diverse coalition of more than 3,000 women's rights advocates, including 840 organizations, in 147 countries have been working for a safer world for women and girls worldwide.

After research and action the Everywoman team reached the conclusion that currently, a new treaty through an Optional Protocol to CEDAW based on General Recommendation 35 stands to be the most efficient path to eradicate the most pervasive human rights violation on earth.

A new Optional Protocol dedicated to ending violence against women and girls would be a binding legal mechanism, expanding CEDAW's extraordinary accomplishments and capacity to address gender-based violence.

So much has been accomplished over the past decade. But in many ways, the race has just begun.

Many women around the world are convinced that now more than ever, there is a need for this new treaty through an Optional Protocol to CEDAW that codifies ending violence against women and girls into binding law to create a safer world. Widows are among the most vulnerable and the most discriminated and WRI advocates for widows to be included in this Treaty.

## International legal instruments

Information on existing legal instruments relating to widows can be found on the WRI website: <https://www.widowsrights.net/international-instruments>

These include Convention on the Elimination of all forms for Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

