



Widows' Rights International



# WRI SPRING NEWSLETTER



**6-17 March 2023** **INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE**  
**CSW67** **EDUCATION IN THE DIGITAL AGE**  
 COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN **Progress toward gender equality**

## WRI at CSW

For the UN Commission on the status of Women, WRI prepared a statement, which can be found here:

<https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N22/722/85/PDF/N2272285.pdf?Ope>

As usual, WRI worked with other interested organisations advocating at every opportunity to include language on Widows within the Agreed

For the first time the issue of widows was included in the Agreed Conclusions of CSW. WRI thanks all those who worked to achieve this.

Conclusions. Although many organisations for widows hope for more diverse and robust language, we are happy that our efforts were successful and indeed now there is language about widows in the Agreed Conclusions, which we can now use for our continued advocacy.

<https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/LTD/N23/081/71/PDF/N2308171.pdf?Open>

*“ 80. The Commission also recognizes the need to ensure the economic independence and full participation and empowerment of widows, including in the context of innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age, inter alia, by enabling their access to digital technologies and promoting the control, ownership and management of their own businesses and entrepreneurship, including through the incorporation of financial instruments such as bonds and credit lines, the mobilisation of sufficient financial resources and capacity-building.”*

WRI supported events relating to widows organised by others and held its own event. A report can be found here

<https://sigbi.org/2023/csw-67-session-on-widows-rights/>

## WRI follow up event in UK



### WRI follow up event in UK parliament



A conversation about the positive use of technology for widows and their families hosted by Bell Ribeiro-Addy MP

In April 2023, with the help of MP Bell Ribeiro-Addy, who hosted the event, WRI organised a CSW67 follow up event held at the House of Commons. Two WRI Trustees, Tyra Tapu-Fanolua and Chair Zarin Hainsworth shared the platform with Heather Ibrahim-Leathers and Dominique Gazar, A report on this event can be found here

<https://onedrive.live.com/edit.aspx?resid=68DF6163D52EEB62!1858&ithint=file%2cdox&wdo=2&authkey=!ALGB9t5KB2TMJlc>

# Global Alliance Last Women First

After decades of advocacy on widows rights at the international level, those involved could see little development. At a book launch in London of Meera Khanna's book on Kashmiri widows, it was decided a new strategy was required. Guild of Service (India) and WRI jointly established the umbrella organisation of Global Alliance Last Woman First, to reflect the language of the SDGs - "no one left behind". Since that time organisations such as WUURN, Widows Development Organisation and Global Fund for Widows have taken a key and vital role in the development of this Alliance. The current Secretariat is held by the Guild of Service who, together with Global Fund for Widows, have held annual conferences and seminars on issues related to widows. The number of organisations who are members has significantly increased and is now more than 500 globally. This represents a huge number of widows. As ever the key recommendations from the Global Alliance is data disaggregated by sex and marital status so that we can ascertain the exact number of widows in the world; financial support to local widows organisations; legislation insuring their rights; full implementation of such legislation; a recognition that widows are of all ages and when supported can be active agents of positive change within their communities.

WRI once again hosted the strategy meeting for the Global Alliance Last Woman held at the BIC office during CSW

## SDG Goal 5



The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic reversed the limited progress that has been made on gender equality and women's rights. The coronavirus outbreak exacerbated existing inequalities for women and girls across every sphere – from health and the economy, to security and social protection. This is particularly the case for widows. With Covid the number of widows has increased. Without data disaggregated by marital status and sex it is not possible to measure the number of widows in the world.





*enabling widows to have a brighter and fairer future*



*Through social and economic empowerment programs, The Rona Foundation educate and strengthen relations to protect widows from SGBV, increase social capital and provide micro business grants.*



## News from our partners

### The Medical Caravan for Widows in Southern Algeria

The Algerian Women’s Association works for widows across Southern Algeria. They have developed a medical caravan: a humanitarian initiative to provide healthcare services to underserved areas. This has proved to be a successful assistance and lifeline to many widows in Algeria. Providing not only medical assistance, but also emotional support and connectivity to widows across Algeria, the caravan has made a significant impact on the lives of widows they have reached thus far.

Some of the results achieved by the of the medical caravan include:

Over 150 widows, 20 children, and several rural men were examined and treated

Some assistance, blankets, and free medications were provided to them

The medical team and support received contributed greatly to the well-being of widows and their families who who would not otherwise have been able to access these services.

For more information: <https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#search/benmirnabil85%40gmail.com?projector=1>

### The Rona Foundation Kenya

WRI has collaborated with the Rona Foundation in the past and looks forward to further engagement. The Rona Foundation promotes sustainable environmentally friendly activities such as establishing tree nurseries, building and use of energy-saving stoves. They educate children through an intervention dubbed Plant & Play. Rona also helps widows know their rights. They create safe spaces to empower widows through a series of transformative workshops to increase agency and make better decisions.

For more information: <https://www.ronafoundation.co.ke/>