

Commission on the Status of Women (CSW63) held in UN New York on 11th-22nd March 2019

IIW Report from UN Representative Martine Gayon, New York.

This year's commission focused on the priority theme – Social Protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. This year's review theme was Women's empowerment and the link to sustainable development (agreed conclusions of the 60th session).

CSW63's priority theme responds to precarious situations that women and girls continue to face. 740 million women currently make their living in the informal economy. They have limited access to social protection, public services and sustainable infrastructure that could increase their income.

More than 50% of urban women and girls in developing countries live in conditions where they lack at least one basic human need.

Women do 2.6 times more unpaid care and domestic work than men and only 41% of the world's mothers with newborns receive maternity benefits.

One in 3 women are likely to face violence in their lifetimes but public services etc. are rarely planned with women's safety and mobility in mind.

The 63rd session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW63) discussed key issues that could bring sustainable change in women's safety, health, paid work, education, leisure and rest. A key dimension of the discussion focused on how such benefits and services could reduce and redistribute women's unpaid care and domestic work.

The forum called for stronger laws, investments in gender-responsive infrastructure such as transport and urban planning that work for women and girls, public services that are affordable, improvement in women's employment and working conditions.

Women, peace and security experts look ahead to 2020. In 2000, resolution 1325 became the guiding Security Council resolution on women, peace and security. Yet, between 1990 and 2017, only 2% of chief mediators and 8% of negotiators in peace processes were women. Even in the last year there have been peace talks that excluded women, such as Syria and Yemen.

Women's inclusions in peace process has proven to be critical in creating lasting, sustainable peace. When women are included in peace processes, peace agreements are more likely to last for **15 years or more**.

Accelerating the elimination of harmful practices to reap the demographic dividend in Africa. To discuss and hopefully eliminate child marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM).

One in every 5 girls is married before reaching the age 18, and more than 200 million women and girls alive today have been cut in 30 countries in Africa, the Middle East and Asia, where FGM is most common. According to recent UNFPA data, as many as 68 million girls globally may be at risk by 2030. Making sure the youth are leading the way forward is at the heart of UN Women's social mobilization efforts to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the blueprint for women's rights worldwide, endorsed by 189 governments to end harmful practices such as child marriage and FGM.