



YWLTP – stage 3: community work, by Abida Jamal

Unbelievably a year has passed—a year committed to cultivating leadership for transformation.

Every Monday for two hours, for a year, the crossing of thoughts, ideas, desires, inspiration, tiredness, solidarity and compassion, the YWLTP planning team met and is happy to say that this intergenerational journey towards empowerment of young women was worthwhile and continues to be! We continue working together, making sure to leave nobody behind and ‘keeping the light on’.

(The team is Abida Jamal, Ana Barata, Khensani Nhambongo, Mary Kay Louchart, Maya Gallardo, Noella Nakabuye).

We are already in stage 3 of the program. (We do not know the type of engine that drives this speed!) During this stage, 3 aspects are the focus: leadership in public life through a global agenda, shared leadership, and, leadership and communication. Part one of this stage was to experience CSW at the United Nations: a place that we consider to be able to contribute to a broad vision of world affairs. This part culminated with a zoom session reflecting on the experience--learnings from CSW-65. (See below some echoes). The second part is to reflect on the importance of shared leadership in contemporary society with a zoom session facilitated by Marijke de Koning, Grail member from Portugal. The last part, on leadership and communication, facilitated by Lisa Petro, USA Grail member. A full report of ‘stage 3’ will be given in the May-June GLUNN newsletter.

ECHOES...

inspiring moments during CSW-65 and impacts of YWLTP

“We are not alone”

Tatiana Manjate, Portugal

Being with women from different countries, cultures, ages and feeling that they all share the same thinking I do on various subjects
Aira, Mozambique

Dedication of all, listening to the others from different places during CSW-65

Mariana, Brazil

During CSW-65 I could see that woman are doing great things around the world to make change in their communities

Tusiwe, South Africa

Seeing a friend shine on the panel of CSW-65

Margarida, Portugal

...to have seen women and girls share success stories in the first person... to have seen several groups, with different approaches, speaking in different languages, for the rights and empowerment of women/girls; and see how the Grail has supported girls and gave them the opportunity to be leaders.

Vanessa, Mozambique

The session organized by the Grail in Portugal:

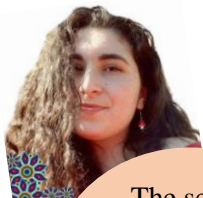
“Weaving changes: meeting between girls and women about leaderships in the Grail”

brought together the YWLTP participants from Portugal and other young women of different ages and contexts to reflect and share thoughts about leadership in the Grail. It was a moment of complicity, intimacy and friendship that followed an activity of the YWLTP. Find out more in the next issue of the GLUNN newsletter!

Elsa Nogueira, Portugal

...seeing many women from all over the world gathered. And feeling joy and hope while I was sharing the word.

Veronica, Ecuador





STIRRED AND OVERCOME... CSW-65, by *Camila Citlalli Castillo Aranguiz*

“I believe that the most important single thing, beyond discipline and creativity is daring to dare”

Maya Angelou

Fifteen years ago, the Grail began to venture into the world of CSW bringing girls and young women from all over the world who traveled to New York to prepare for, participate in and be part of a great experience.

To do so, you had to face traveling to another continent, another country, another city, listening to another language, getting used to another climate, and facing those big barriers that can generate fear.

Who would have thought that 15 years later, CSW would have to adapt--like all of us-- to such a complex reality that raises new barriers and challenges! It is no longer the fear of traveling to another continent—we can connect with each other with a single click of the mouse. Now it is how to navigate on this network, and face the invisible giant that is the Internet: How to know if they hear me? How to connect and make myself present? If the power goes out for an instant, I'm out of something I've worked hard for.

There is no doubt that attending the CSW is an individual and collective challenge, but we always find solutions and overcome obstacles together. The girls and young women, who have attended over the past 15 years, as well as those who participated this year, are brave and daring to dare.

We dared to take the opportunity to face new challenges and continue to raise our voices in a CSW that is out of the "ordinary" but no less meaningful.

**We are strong women, who accompany each other along the way,
who support each other in daring to dare.**

TECHNOLOGY POSSIBILITIES..., by *Noella Nakabuye*

Covid-19 has made many changes in all aspects of life and has made very many new normal circumstances. In the normal “world”, January to March are very busy days in the Bronx, New York, as Mary Kay and Sharon welcome new members to the Bronx Grail community. The Grail International through GLUNN, every year facilitates girls, young women and women to go to the Bronx to participate in CSW. In 2021, many things, CSW included, became possible virtually by the use of technology.



Many thought that ‘CSW-65 will be “cheap” and easy’ as it will not involve traveling and all other necessary expenses. Yes, it was cheap in terms of money but very expensive in terms of different time zones, availability, commitment and accessibility to technology. I believe we were all learning from each other since CSW has never been totally virtual.

One virtue everybody needed throughout CSW-65 was Patience...Patience as we operated with many differences: expertise, age, language, policies.... It was very interesting though as over 700+ Parallel Events** were organized and attended throughout the world. Many Grail members attended both of our events. (See the flyers below)



[On Grail events](#) (To view the video of our parallel events described below, click [here](#))

Empowered-Girls Eliminating Gender-Based Violence: 8 girls 18 years and below shared with the rest of the world how they are fighting Gender-based violence in their communities in spite of the challenges still faced.

Sustaining Progress through Spirituality in Unprecedented Times: 8 young women have been able to survive throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

The way the young and senior people welcomed the technology was impressive and their voices were heard despite the lack of physical meeting.

Networking and internet connection was kind of a challenge due to uncertainties especially from the African and Asian continents. Even in the new normal, the struggle has to continue to have an equal and equitable world even when it means learning more than one technology. Thanks once again for all that contributed to a successful CSW-65.

**25,000 participants and with sessions practically around the clock so everyone could join.

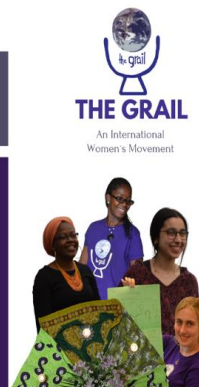


PANELISTS:

- Loes (Canada)
- Amahle (South Africa)
- Beatriz (Portugal)
- Kimy (Moçambique)
- Ashlei (USA)
- Stacy (Moçambique)

MODERATORS:

- Gabriela (USA)
- Londeka (South Africa)



PANELISTS:

- Veronica (Ecuador)
- Margarida (Portugal)
- Aira (Mozambique)
- May Joy (The Philippines)
- Monica (Mexico)
- Bahlebonke (South Africa)

MODERATORS:

- Tusiwe (South Africa)
- Rachelle (The Netherlands)

CSW-65 CONSULTATION DAY, by Mary Kay

During CSW-65 consultation day there were many speakers including Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN Women, who is always brief, to the point, inspirational.and there were several young women speaking who were also inspirational and very dynamic. Camila Castillo worked with WGG to create a 10-minute video of girls including one of our own: Beatriz Facundo from Portugal.



Watch/hear the poem they did [HERE](#)



CSW-65 CONVERSATION CIRCLES, by Mary Kay

...a space for girls to have productive dialogue around the issues of the Generation Equality Action Coalitions. The aim was to increase visibility and amplify the voices of girls around the world.

From Tiffany Lee at the Academy of Mt. St. Ursula, Bronx, NY:

We had a great experience with the local conversation circles, engaging more girls than usual with our normal UN Connection Club at AMSU. We were able to connect with 3 other Ursuline schools in NY, Ohio, and Delaware. The AMSU girls who participated in the Global Circle and the Statement Writing Group had a transformative experience.



From Bijayananda Singh of UFER in Orissa, India:

(Bijay is a member of UFER. He worked with 18 girl students, standard 11th and 12th, who participated in the local conversation circle.)

The Action Coalition chosen by Group-1 was "Gender-based Violence" and the Action Coalition chosen by Group-2 was "Economic Justice & Rights".

- **Group-1 (Gender Based Violence)**--Education is the basic part of human being. If we educate a girl, we educate the whole family. Education is

the best weapon to overcome the Gender Based Violence. All the schools and colleges must have self-defense classes so that a girl could protect herself.

- The girl child should be given right to decide whether she wants to marry or not. She should tell her family and relatives. The violence must be prevented from our home that influences the society.
- Sexual harassment should be prevented in the community. Sex education should be given in schools, villages etc. The rapist must be given that much pain that the victim had to bear or the rapist should be punished strongly in a short period of time.



1) Group-2 (Economic Justice & Rights)

- How does a woman empower herself? What does she need? They focused on Economic empowerment which includes equal pay, quality education, equal sharing of household care, Equal Payment:

- Girls are paid lower rather than men. In a software company, men are always given the night shift and are highly paid but girls are not given that chance. Why is it like that? If a girl can wake up for the whole night while her child is ill, then why she cannot work whole night in the company?

- Quality Education--In a family of boys and girls, boys are always given the most priority because most of the parents thinks that boy is physically strong, so he can go anywhere for his higher studies but girl is not that much strong to go anywhere but it is wrong. A saying is there that “A girl is more mature than a boy”. So, if a girl is more mature than a boy then why she cannot be stronger than boy physically or mentally.
- It is commonly known that women do all the household work, not men. (The adult team decided to add group conversation of girls in the annual gender training given in the school to girls and boys so that it is not only one time activity but can be done every year).



Londeka and Amahle (South Africa) led a circle with 5 girls.

Bonisiwe (South Africa) held a circle with girls at school and it went good.



Beatriz led a Circle in Portugal. She was also trained as a facilitator for the Global Conversation Circle.

Kimy’s(Moçambique) Circle discussed 2 action coalitions: Gender Based Violence and Bodily autonomy, and sexual and reproductive health and rights. It was an exciting conversation and exchange of ideas. She was also trained as a facilitator for the Glocal Conversation Circle.

Stacy (Moçambique) met with five girls and talked about violence and feminist movements and leadership, especially sharing very practical things: premature marriage, types of violations (physical, sexual, psychological).

Gabriela(USA) met with 5 girls. They all felt more empowered after the conversation and will start for advocacy works in their communities and agreed that they would speak out more those who do not have a voice.

***++Action Coalitions:**

1. Gender-Based Violence
2. Economic justice and rights
3. Bodily autonomy/sexual & reproductive health & rights (SRHR)
4. Feminist action for climate justice
5. Technology and innovation for Gender Equality
6. Feminist movements and leadership
7. Women, Peace & Security and Humanitarian Action

GENERATION EQUALITY, by Kimy Chadreque and Abida Jamal

The **Generation Equality Forum** in Mexico immediately followed CSW-65. The GLUNN team was too exhausted to have a full participation, but Abida Jamal and Kimy Chadreque did represent us.

The Forum engaged about 10,000 people, including over 250 speakers from 85 countries to reinvigorate action and movement for gender equality. Reflecting the spirit of involving a new generation, nearly half the participants were under 30 years old. Twenty-five years after the landmark Beijing Conference and Platform for Action, the Forum aimed to re-ignite efforts for full implementation.



It is time to achieve equality for all, by Kimy Chadreque

As Girls, Women, Lesbian, Gay, Persons with disabilities who suffer inequalities around the world and as me, a girl leader, who advocates for girls rights, I continue to push for equality for all of us around the globe.

With the help and support of the Grail, I am so grateful for the opportunity to participate in the GEF. The event lasted 3 days and was participated in by all generations.

It was opened by the co-organizers and partners of the GEF who are the: UN Women Executive Director (Phumizile Mlambo Ngouka), President of Mexico (Andres Lopez Obrador); President of France (Emmanuel Macron); UN General Secretary (Antonio Guterres).

Let me say that I couldn't attend this specific event but the images that were shared in the group of GEF Girls' Consultation (where I was pleased to see my colleagues) made me feel like I was there in every explanation and words that they expressed to us.

There were more than 30 themes that I continue to be passionate about. There were 4 auditoriums named after different leaders like Malala Yosufazi and Marielle Franco.

I couldn't attend all events that I would like to, but the 6 that I attended brought to me new perspectives and inspiration to continue fighting to achieve gender equality.

29 March - Feminist Movements--The challenges of feminist movements and grassroots women's organizations where 6 young women panelists that collaborate with a variety of feminist movements, shared the challenges and achievements regarding COVID19. My favorite panelist was my fellow sister from Mozambique, Quiteria Guirengane, a young social activist who talked about the challenges we faced in achieving gender equality and not giving up and have been creating solutions for that. How powerful we are

30 March –Cities and territories--There were 9 panelists reviewing the BPfA, mostly of them were women mayors. They focused on the efforts to make cities be secure for women and girls; also on equal opportunities in the political arena for women. I couldn't have a favorite panelist because I felt like it was a discussion centered on political rights for women to be secure; I more focus on girl's rights and safety.

30 March – Girls in Generation Equality--This was my favorite event of the 6 as there were girls showing their strength, and speaking out like always. I loved when one of my fellow girls said that the space is not created for us but we are here and sharing about struggles and strengths and showing them what we do best and in this space all the time.

30 March – Action Coalitions networking - Innovation and Technology - This event was fantastic, first because one of my fellow colleagues from Girls Consultation on GEF was co-moderating the event. I loved the way that the action coalition represented their voices. I was delighted with how Uffa Modey (representative of Innovation and Technology Action Coalition) expressed her opinion about having internet for all and about being always a safe space because we can't walk in, if we are not secure about the steps that we are about to take.

I would like to conclude by expressing this short sentence that a friend of mine taught me during CSW-65 '**small people, in small places, doing small things can change the world**'. In the Grail, we are small girls, young women and women around the globe working for the transformation of the world through our spiritual search and dignity. So we are doing changes in the spaces where we are, we are together and act for equality.

(Kimy is 16 years old. She was a panelist in the Grail Girls' Event in CSW-63).

**The work must go on!** , by Abida Jamal

Young women are the leaders of today! But they stand on the shoulders of the unrelenting, inspiring women activists that came before them. Women have been organizing, educating and advocating for their rights for generations. Women have been--and remain--underrepresented in every sphere of life. Their roles are appreciated only when it comes to manual labor and care-work in the society, despite our significant contributions in politics and development. The continued advocacy in gender equality led by women's movements and activists led to the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA) at the 1995 Beijing Women's Conference.

The GEF reactivated commitments and made a call to accelerate action on gender equality. During the three intense days of fully virtual discussions, we analyzed the progress and gaps in the implementation of BPfA. Since 1995, there have been concerted efforts to ensure that women in every part of the world are free to enjoy their rights and access equal opportunities. However, critical gaps remain, and our gains are fragile.

To me, the GEF in Mexico was empowering and informative. What struck me first was the inter-generationality and intersectionality of the Forum. With the public, virtual platform for discussion available to everyone in multiple languages, more women's groups and thousands of young women and women who may not have had the resources or opportunity to travel to Mexico to attend, could participate in the interactions! This means that there were more diverse and authentic voices in the Forum. Girls and women of diverse identities and cultures gave accounts of their experience and perspectives on the BPfA, and, the challenges they face in making it a reality. Young women made concrete recommendations to policy-makers and other actors, which was very inspiring. I particularly remember the remarks by Hajer Sharief, a young woman peacebuilder from Libya during the plenary session on Women's Leadership. She reiterated the need to embrace intersectionality to ensure more feminist leadership be part of the solution. However, the virtual space also left out many girls and women with limited to no access to the internet, highlighting the increasing digital divide and also being an obstacle to women's participation and gender equality.

The GEF, through its 6 Action Coalitions seeks to address the urgent areas of concern for women.

Recommendations that came out from the discussions at the Mexico GEF included:

- Meaningful inclusion of young girls, grassroots women, Indigenous people, women with HIV, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Intersex persons in decision-making, including a COVID-19 response;
- The need to transform the global economic system, so that women have equal opportunities at making income and sustaining their lives;
- Get support from male gender equality allies, especially those in positions of power;
- Financing women activists and movements and ensuring their protection;
- Investing in women's leadership and participation in national COVID-19 recovery plans.



The critical commitments made at the Forum respond to increased needs by civil society, youth and feminist movements and multi-stakeholder partnerships that have identified the actions required to accelerate gender equality in areas from economic rights to stopping violence against women. The last day of the forum, there was an unveiling of an Action Coalition blueprint and of new commitments for gender equality. Youth and civil society leaders also launched a 2026 vision and a common feminist pathway.

Yes, the work must go on. Freedom for women is freedom for all!

More information about the “**Action Coalitions: A Global Acceleration Plan for Gender Equality**” [HERE](#)

More information about the “**Act For Equal**” campaign [HERE](#)

UFER REPORT on conflict situations, by Sharon Joslyn**Ethiopia Today**

...Report sent by Berhane Raswork, UFER Board member from Ethiopia, on the current situation in her homeland.

Despite the peaceful co-existence of Muslims and Christians that has shaped our history and culture, in the present geo-political and global situation of Ethiopia Muslim fundamentalism is being observed. Today we find Christians being brutally murdered and forcefully displaced.

Ethnic conflict is another major problem. The country having been divided into ethnic regions by our previous regime for governing with a divide and rule political agenda, resulted in one ethnic group against another. Thousands are murdered and displaced on the basis of ethnic identity.

We need prayers that peace will reign in Ethiopia and in the rest of the