

Concept Note for CSW69 Side-Event

[Bahá'í International Community](#), [ChildFund Alliance](#), [Equimundo](#), [IBVM](#), [Plan International](#), [Save the Children](#), [Women's Refugee Commission](#)

Children and the Promise of Gender Equality: Achieving Shared Care Responsibilities and Addressing Gender-Based Violence at Beijing+30

DATE, TIME AND LOCATION

Thursday, 13 March 2025 @ 9:15 - 10:45 am ET

Baha'i International Community ([866 United Nations Plaza #120](#))

REGISTRATION

[Register here](#) for in-person and virtual participation

BACKGROUND

On the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the seminal Fourth World Conference on Women and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, we invite you to join us in aspiring to a truly inclusive and gender-equal world. A world where the rights of women, girls, and children in all their diversity are respected, protected, and fulfilled. All children represent the future of any community. The ways in which they are treated foreshadow the future of any given society. Against today's background of a highly complex and conflict-ridden geopolitical reality, where previously agreed-upon rights of many groups - especially women, girls, and children - have regressed and are under threat, we are seeking to foster a space of optimism and hope to envision a future where the rights of current and future generations are not only guaranteed and intrinsically valued but also protected and actively promoted. This requires reflecting on the protection of women, girls, and all children, articulating the myriad root causes of gender inequality, recognizing the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, and discussing - most importantly - comprehending the indispensability of transformations that must occur at the level of culture in order to achieve enduring gender equality across all societies.

OBJECTIVE

This side-event will identify how both political will and actions driven by civil society initiatives in support of strengthening the rights of one demographic group (e.g., women) tend to complement and strengthen similar initiatives targeting the rights of others (e.g., children in all their diversity, girls and boys) and vice-versa. For instance, in what ways can addressing boyhood, caring masculinities and transformative gender norms ensure societal safeguarding against the rising backlash against women's rights, feminism, and gender equality? How can support for girls and boys, as well as children's very own actions, complement and reinforce one another and the work of their caregivers? Furthermore, how can humanitarian aid advance gender equality, while ensuring that no child is left behind? How can equality-driven governments and civil society organizations best join forces to further the ambition of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the Beijing +5 Political Declaration and Outcome (2000), including a genuine commitment to gender equality, the empowerment of women, girls, boys, and children in their diversity, the identification of gaps as well as an ongoing follow-up mechanism to hold governments accountable on the implementation of their commitments?

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- **Outcome 1:** Demonstrate how addressing evolving gender dynamics and norms, especially in the home and community, as well as nurturing a broader sense of responsibility of care (beyond fathers to brothers, cousins, etc.) are proven means to further the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.
- **Outcome 2:** Present the impact of gender transformative humanitarian interventions on challenging and dismantling entrenched and systemic violations of women's, girls' and boys' rights, particularly reducing the threat of violence, including sexual violence against persons with diverse SOGIESC.
- **Outcome 3:** Encourage the meaningful engagement and participation of children and young people, especially girls, in matters that directly affect them, and underscore the importance of providing adequate and safe spaces for them to share their ideas, thoughts, and hopes.
- **Outcome 4:** Articulate the importance of societal transformation to accelerate the gender equality movement and outline the opportunities for solidarity that are presented by Beijing+30.

AGENDA

- **Welcome Remarks**
 - Mrs. Meg Gardinier, Secretary General, ChildFund Alliance
- **Statements from Young Leaders**
- **High-Level Interventions and Discussion**
 - Mrs. Anna Ascani, Vice-President of the Chamber of Deputies, Republic of Italy
 - Dr. Anna Cody, Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Australian Human Rights Commission
 - Undersecretary for Violence against Women, Government of Ecuador
 - *Moderator:* Ms. Jana Berchtold, UN Youth Delegate from Austria
- **Civil Society Panel on Transforming Gender Dynamics and the Role of Children**
 - Ms. Martha Moghbelpour, Baha'i Representative from India
 - Ms. Stefania Piccinelli, Head of International Programs, WeWorld (a member of ChildFund Alliance)
 - Ms. Giovanna Lauro, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Equimundo
 - Mrs. Debora Cobar, Head of NY Office and UN Representative, Plan International
 - Ms. Lily Jacobi, Senior Advisor, Women's Refugee Commission
- **Q&A**
- **Closing Remarks**
 - Ms. Kathleen Sherwin, Chief Strategy and Engagement Officer, Plan International

ATTENDEES

Relevant stakeholders implementing similar programs, UN Member State representatives, UN officials, heads of state and government, NGOs, and civil society organizations with programs aligned with the thematic focus.

CONTACTS

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ANNEX: PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The Baha’i International Community (BIC), in its [statement](#) to the 69th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, outlines that, “Until transformation takes root within mindsets and finds expression in culture, the underlying causes of prejudice and discrimination, embedded in the systems and structures of societies, will remain unquestioned and will continue to perpetuate injustice”. The BIC’s intervention will highlight the importance of creating inclusive consultative spaces that can address those societal practices that communities should guard and those to discard in light of promoting gender equality as a prerequisite for enduring peace. The BIC’s contribution to this event will comprise experiences from India on societal transformation and the role that boys and men can play in achieving gender equality. In light of the 30th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women that took place in Beijing, the BIC will endeavor to explore the persistent hurdles that have impeded the realization of gender equality as an integral step in achieving enduring peace and the unique opportunities to move forward that this anniversary presents.

ChildFund Alliance’s Italian member [WeWorld](#) recently conducted a field study on the disproportionate impact of humanitarian crises on women and girls that exacerbate existing gender inequities and inequalities. With a focus on eight countries - Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Palestine and Ukraine - and drawing on original data from the [ChildFund Alliance World Index 2024](#), our conclusions highlight the urgent need for gender transformative humanitarian interventions to address both immediate and long-term challenges that, if left unaddressed, will stand in the way of gender equality for generations to come. [Afghanistan](#), a focus-country of the study, serves as a particularly stark example of entrenched and systemic violations of women’s and girls’ rights. Their progressively deteriorating situation under the Taliban’s dictate not only undermines their own rights but aggravates the living conditions and prospects for boys and men alike. We will present actionable recommendations for gender-transformative humanitarian aid that emphasize the role of women and girls as agents of change in peacebuilding and recovery efforts that also serve the broader population. Voices of refugee Afghan activists will also be heard.

Equimundo: Centre for Masculinities and Social Justice will spotlight the [Global Boyhood Initiative](#) and its new research, supported by UNFPA, addressing critical aspects of boys’ development and gender equality. Insights from three recent papers exploring the urgent and often overlooked dimensions of boys’ lives will be shared. The first examines how empowering [boys’ sexual and reproductive health and rights](#) (SRHR) is essential for fostering healthier relationships and communities. The second paper investigates [how anti-feminist backlash actors exploit boys](#) by manipulating their experiences of vulnerability to undermine gender equality efforts. The third focuses on [boys and sexuality in the internet age](#) and explores the profound influence of digital spaces on boys’ understanding of identity, consent and relationships. Our collective findings illuminate pathways to nurture healthier masculinities, confront harmful narratives, and advance gender justice globally, thus aligning with the broader UN goals of equitable and sustainable development.

Plan International will share insights from our work with children, particularly girls, across more than 80 countries, as we strive to create a world where everyone is equal. Guided by our ambition to see [All Girls Standing Strong Creating Global Change](#) by 2027, we are dedicated to amplifying the voices and leadership of girls in shaping a more inclusive and gender-equal future. In May 2024, in partnership with UNICEF, we launched the [Girls’ Pact for the Future](#), a groundbreaking initiative that reflects adolescent girls’ and young people’s vision for a gender-equal world. The Pact outlines key recommendations to address systemic barriers and accelerate progress toward equality. Building on its findings, the same young people identified eight priority actions they believe will have the greatest impact in overcoming the challenges they face. These priorities will form the foundation of our advocacy and engagement during this discussion, highlighting the importance of listening to and acting on the perspectives of girls and young people as leaders of transformative change.

The **Women’s Refugee Commission (WRC)** launched the [Sexual Violence Project](#) in 2018 to document the diverse characteristics, scope and consequences of sexual violence in humanitarian crises for people who identified as male or were assigned “male” at birth, including persons with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC). Through our research with migrants in Bangladesh, Kenya and along the Central Mediterranean route, WRC found that there are high unmet needs for health and mental health services for male survivors, including survivors with diverse SOGIESC. Many practitioners lack the capacities, tools, and resources to effectively promote such survivors’ health and well-being. WRC will share the findings from our six-year Sexual Violence Project, and introduce two new practice-oriented resources aimed at building the capacity of humanitarian actors to design, implement, and evaluate prevention strategies and response services on sexual violence and exploitation for adolescent boys and male youth. WRC’s work with men and boys is grounded in intersectional feminist principles that prioritize accountability to women and girls and recognize evolving notions of gender diversity.