

# #ShowUpForGirls

## AT #CSW68

Adolescent girls' rights are in crisis - from HIV and maternal mortality rates, to gender-based violence, including child marriage, to the numbers of girls still shut out from school, training or a safe transition to work. Across the SDGs, progress for adolescent girls is stalling or even seeing reversal of progress (for example, in Latin America and the Caribbean, maternal mortality has actually increased).<sup>1</sup> Efforts to address manifestations of gender inequality, such as on child marriage and gender-based violence, have been considerable from feminist leaders, and inroads have been made - yet prevalence rates are still unacceptably high. In this global context, adolescent girls have not been adequately prioritised in national budgets and public policies, including commitments from the global community through Overseas Development Assistance.<sup>2</sup>

In this context, adolescent girls are all too often sidelined from public policy dialogues and decision-making processes, from international fora on issues that directly affect them, including gender inequality, to national dialogues including on education, violence, health and peace. The rollback on rights is falling heavily on the rights of adolescent girls, from their right to information and education about their bodies and bodily autonomy, to hard-won changes in norms on child marriage, gender-based violence and the distribution of unpaid care work.

Yet adolescent girls are taking action, and they are not alone. Around the world, adolescent girls are working together, speaking up, challenging the status quo and leading change on issues ranging from their right to quality education and action on climate change, to sexual violence and sexual harassment, to child marriage and FGM, to comprehensive sexuality education.

### **We urge you to #ShowUpForGirls at #CSW68!**

Many organisations around the world stand in solidarity with adolescent girls and their movements. As part of this commitment, a group of organisations committed to adolescent girls' rights have come together in support of and to amplify adolescent girls' call for change at the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) – the UN's primary moment to deliberate on gender equality – and beyond. Together we underline the urgent need for action, with a campaign to #ShowUpForGirls in meaningful ways:

1. **“Nothing about us without us:”** Too many discussions and decisions fail to meaningfully centre girls' experiences of gender inequality, from unpaid care to lack of access to safe and quality

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<sup>1</sup> Rumble, L., Petroni, S., Graham Goulder, R., Pandolfelli, L. (2024) 'Adolescent girls and the SDGs: acting at the midpoint', *The Lancet*, December 2023. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2352-4642\(23\)00319-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2352-4642(23)00319-X)

<sup>2</sup> Devonald M, Guglielmi S and Jones N. [Investing in adolescent girls: key changes in the bilateral donor funding landscape](#). Report. London: Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence. 2023.

education, to child marriage and maternal healthcare. Girls must be part of the discussion and their needs part of the solution. At CSW68, ensure adolescent girls are meaningfully and equitably engaged in your events, activities, and advocacy; and be sure you are hearing from girls by attending girl-led and girl-centered events.

2. **Scale up bold investments in adolescent girls, their issues, and their priorities:** This means structural changes to how we commit funds, ensuring adolescent girls' issues are funded as a core component of major financial flows and not sidelined to small budgets on youth participation or gender inequality - including on humanitarian funding, education funding, climate funding, and health funding. A new global poll reaching over half a million adolescents indicates some key priorities for girls' rights, alongside qualitative consultations, with the following emerging at 5 key policy asks:

- School access & skills, including *education on girls' rights and gender equality*;
- Comprehensive sexuality education & *girl-centered adolescent health services*;
- Classes for parents & caregivers *on girls' rights*;
- Financial literacy training *to manage resources & livelihoods*;
- Financial security *with support to earn money & money for the family*.<sup>3</sup>

At CSW68 and beyond, we call on all partners to accelerate action against these priorities with bold, accountable investments.

3. **Create intentional space and funding for adolescent girls' leadership and advocacy:** From Vanessa Nakate to Queen Cleopatra, adolescent girls have shown their powerful leadership and advocacy. Imagining teenage girls as disempowered and incapable of leading change must become a thing of the past. Make space for and **fund girls' leadership, network, organizations, initiatives and movements**, and strengthen our collective ability to understand and solve global problems. At CSW68, advocate for designated leadership roles for girls and their networks in gender equality initiatives, and amplify the solutions of girl leaders.<sup>4</sup>



Look out for events and campaigns during CSW with the #ShowUpForGirls stamp and hashtag, including [this calendar of CSW68 girl-centered events](#).

If you would like to use this stamp and hashtag for your work at CSW, please complete this [short form](#).

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<sup>3</sup> UNICEF, [Five Game Changing Priorities for Adolescent Girls](#), March 2024  
<https://www.unicef.org/reports/delivering-and-adolescent-girls>

<sup>4</sup> Over [50% of young feminists rank a lack of financial resources as their top challenge](#) – yet despite funding challenges, [95% of girl and young women activism say their activism has a positive impact on them](#): girls find meaning in advocating for themselves as they feel more empowered, capable and proud. These positive impacts have a ripple effect on other children and promote positive change in their communities.