NGO CSW/NY Monthly Meeting

A Multilateral Approach to the Gender Impacts of COVID-19:
Intersection of Health and Finance
18 June 2020 at 1PM EDT on Zoom

**Background:**

NGO CSW/NY ensures that the voices and leadership of feminist and women's rights organizations all over the world are included in UN deliberations such as the annual Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). NGO CSW/NY conducts advocacy trainings, prepare an orientation, offer spaces to exchange and collaborate, and host regional caucus discussions. Along with civil society around the world, the NGO CSW/NY advocates for UN Member State to meet the commitments they make via declarations, resolutions, and treaties including the ground-breaking:

- **1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action**
- **UN Security Resolution 1325**
- **Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**
- **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

In addition to NGO CSW/NY's work during CSW, we hold monthly meetings featuring NGOs, UN, and government speakers, promote a gender perspective at the UN and other international meetings. These monthly meetings are particularly relevant as we move closer to organizing next year’s Commission on the Status of Women 65 (CSW65) and the activities surrounding the Generation Equality commemoration of the Beijing Platform for Action, adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. Each monthly meeting has a specific thematic focus and features speakers with expertise in the thematic focus.

**Event Description:**

The current coronavirus pandemic has caused havoc worldwide creating not only a global health crisis but straining health infrastructures and national budgets, while exacerbating an existing debt crisis and downturn of a global economy and financial markets. Recent global outlooks by institutions are showing a global economic recession and financial setbacks from COVID-19 are derailing advances in financing for development and gender equality as a more complete picture
is emerging of the COVID-19 impacts on women and girls. As COVID-19 plateaus in some countries, research is surfacing to show that women are bearing a disproportionate brunt of the healthcare costs through sustaining the care-economy and as high percentage sellers in the informal sector and as a majority of small-scale farmers in the agriculture economies of many countries. Despite the best efforts, no country and no region alone can solve the entire implications of the crises on their own. What's become clear is the need for systemic solutions and addressing the root causes of the current challenges. June’s Monthly Meeting will explore this topic and discuss a potential recovery plan from COVID-19 while considering the intersection of health and finance during this crisis.

Program:

NGO CSW/NY BUSINESS MEETING:
Updates from Houry Geudelekian, Chair of NGO CSW/NY and UN Representative for Unchained at Last

PANEL:

Dr. Nata Menabde, Executive Director of the World Health Organization Office at the United Nations
Dr Nata Menabde is with WHO Office at the United Nations, New York since May 2015, where she promotes WHO’s engagement with the United Nations system and a broad range of stakeholders to anchor health in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development agenda. Prior to her current role, Dr Menabde was Head of Mission and WHO Representative to India, leading a large team with thousands of dedicated professionals in over 250 offices across the country. Most notably, her tenure saw one of the biggest achievements in public health: a polio-free India. As Deputy Regional Director at the WHO Regional Office for Europe (2006-2010) she successfully led the Region’s work on strengthening health systems, which culminated in the development and adoption of the European Tallinn Charter: Health Systems for Health and Wealth, a decade ago. During this period she was also in charge of WHO’s extensive operations in 35 European countries, including emergency response and post-conflict recovery and rehabilitation.

With a solid academic background and an exemplary track record of over 30 years of experience in regional and global health, health diplomacy and health systems, Dr Nata Menabde has shown unwavering commitment to the goal of Health for All. Her current interests are linked to universal health coverage and sustainable development, health and foreign policies, global health governance, emergency preparedness and crises response, health systems performance, as well as addressing public health in other sector policies.
Nafissatou J. Diop, PhD  Chief, Gender and Human Rights Branch, UNFPA

Nafissatou Jocelyne Diop is the Chief of the Gender and Human Rights Branch at the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). In her role, she is promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women’s and adolescent girls within UNFPA strategic plan to achieve three transformative goals: ending preventable maternal deaths; addressing the unmet need for family planning; and ending gender based violence and harmful practices. Nafissatou lead programs to change entrenched social norms on harmful practices. She brings more than 20 years of rewarding experience advocating for sexual and reproductive health, human rights and gender equality.

Crystal Simeoni, Afrifem Macroeconomics Collective

Crystal Simeoni is the Director at Nawi: Afrifem Macroeconomics Collective. She previously served as Head of Advocacy and lead on Economic Justice at FEMNET, one of Africa’s largest women’s rights networks, with over 600 members in more than 45 African countries. She led FEMNET’s work to ensure that women from Africa have the capacity to articulate their issues through a Pan-African feminist macroeconomic lens and are meaningfully present in policy spaces.

Prior to working at FEMNET, Crystal’s previous role was as Policy Lead for the thematic area on international financial architecture at the Tax Justice Network Africa. Her duties included policy and advocacy work at a Pan-African level with governments, donors and organisational members and partners on tax justice issues on the continent. She also previously worked for Hivos - East Africa where she served as both Programme Officer and Programme Development Manager. While at Hivos, Crystal worked in sub-national, national and regional policy and partner management across both roles. This meant that she worked with private sector, government at all levels, journalists and researchers, as well as having a fundraising role.

Crystal’s career has revolved around themes of inequalities, including economic inequality and gender inequality, and has also involved work around data. She has an MA in African studies with a focus on rural economic development from Dalarna University in Sweden, and a BBA in Business Management from Centria University of Applied Sciences in Finland. She currently sits on the board of the Institute of Public Finance (IPF Kenya) and is a member of a number of reference groups related to gender and macroeconomic policy.

Crystal J. Rogers, Community Organizer, New York State Nurses Association

Crystal Rogers began her career in Advocacy in 2004 as a secretary for CWA, a labor union located in Newark, NJ. Crystal realized the power of unity and began participating in labor rallies and community organizing. In 2008 Crystal was promoted to Member Representative. She learned to protect contract language, file disputes, and negotiate. Assigned to work with community child care providers she was exposed to early education in New Jersey. Crystal soon realized parents were a missing link in early education.

When two of her own children were diagnosed with autism she realized that special education was broken in New Jersey. Every issue went ignored until a judge made a decision. After successfully obtaining
services for her own children she began advocating for other families. In 2016 she founded Standard Advocacy, a boutique consulting agency. Services included consultations, completing forms, filing complaints, preparing/attending Child Study Team Meetings, and preparing/attending court hearings. Crystal began to collaborate to expand services at the agency. Standard Advocacy Action Center is now led by Family & Self Advocates. The collaboration provides advocacy for all disability support services. Crystal has helped to train over 300 participants through community workforce training.

Most recently Crystal wrote "My Superpower is Autism" a book that celebrates Autism as a Superpower. There are many issues that families face that a complaint will not address. The book touches on having more than one child with autism, siblings, inclusion, and civic engagement. It is a great training tool but most importantly it is empowering for all readers. Crystal wrote the book based on real life experience. The book has opened the opportunity to provide youth advocacy training and community discussions.

Crystal is currently married with 3 children. She owns a home in East Orange, NJ and works full time fighting for healthcare justice with the NY Nurses Association. As a Political & Community Organizer she helps prepare testimony for hearings, lobby elected officials, and draft legislation. Crystal sits on the Steering Committee for NYC4CEDAW (Convention to End Discrimination Against Women and Girls) and help to pass the East Orange for CEDAW Resolution.

**Moderated by Rosa Lizarde, NGO CSW/NY Member-at-Large and Global Director of the Feminist Task Force**

Rosa Lizarde is a Mexican-American feminist advocating for economic, environmental, gender and racial justice. She currently serves as the Global Director of the Feminist Task Force (FTF), a global women’s rights coalition calling for gender equality to end poverty, founded under the auspices of the Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP) in 2005. Her advocacy, policy and campaigning experience has been honed at the UN and through global processes focusing on women’s economic justice, poverty eradication and women’s rights. She is a founding member and the current Co-Convener of the Women’s Working Group on Financing for Development (FfD), a network which advocates for financing for gender equality, systemic reform and global governance. Nationally, Rosa is involved in social justice actions at the US/Mexico border and supporting many LGBTQI causes. Rosa is a graduate of Columbia University’s School of International and Public Affairs where she specialized in international human rights and Latin America.

**Q&A**

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