

CSW Revitalisation – Elements Paper

Introductory Note from the Co-Facilitators

The purpose of this Elements Paper is to enable focused consultation with all relevant stakeholders on proposals made to the co-facilitators during the first phase of the process for the Revitalisation of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).

This Elements Paper has been drafted based on inputs received during **three open consultations** held with Member States and civil society on: 20 February, 13 March, and 18 March 2025, as well as **134 written inputs** received from groups and individual Member States, academia, regional organizations, youth groups, civil society organizations and UN Entities. It also remains open to stakeholders to make further proposals for revitalisation.

Consultations have shown **strong support for the Commission on the Status of Women**, its unique global position, the mixture of normative negotiations, high-level participation and multi-stakeholder engagement, as well as its convening power. As was underlined in the Pact for the Future, which established this process, and as also apparent from the inputs received, the revitalisation exercise is not intended to alter the CSW's mandate, but rather to “ensure that the Commission is fit for purpose, while reaffirming” its mandate. Based on the volume of proposals received, there appears to be broad agreement that the revitalisation process is important to enhance the CSW's operation, relevance and effectiveness.

Delegations may note that many of the proposals received are **alternatives to one another, while others contradict one another**. We encourage Delegations to take this into consideration when providing feedback.

Proposals received that were outside of the scope of **the mandate** of the CSW Revitalisation Process are not included in the Elements Paper.

To focus our discussions, we have grouped the proposals received into five sections. These groupings are not prescriptive and are used only to facilitate consultations in thematic clusters.

The co-facilitators look forward to the continued participation and feedback from all stakeholders at the upcoming consultations.

Section 1: Session and Meeting Format

- **Decentralise the location** of the CSW's sessions, rotating the host, to improve access for Member States and civil society. Alternative proposals include holding decentralised sessions every 3-4 years; having a multi-stakeholder preparatory forum outside of New York; or rotating the Session to UN Regional Commission Headquarters.
- CSW General Discussion should take place in the **General Assembly Hall**.
- Leverage **digital platforms** to provide access to debates and resources related to CSW and **establish hybrid and remote participation** options for certain sessions.
- Suggestions on refreshed approaches to **side-events** include:
 - only side-events addressing the priority theme should be held at the UN;
 - side-events should not be organised in parallel with plenary sessions;

- summaries of the narratives, perspectives and outcomes of side-events should be shared in official CSW sessions;
- more rooms should be made available at the UN for CSW side-events;
- Virtual/hybrid side events should be encouraged.
- **Negotiate the Outcome Documents**, including the Agreed Conclusions and where relevant Political Declarations, **ahead of CSW sessions** to enable Delegations to engage more substantively. Others prefer negotiations to take place in parallel with the plenary.
- **Regular review of the multi-year programme** of work to ensure the themes reflect current global challenges and emerging issues; or, abolition of multi-year theme setting.

Section 2: Effectiveness

- Make the Outcome Documents, including the Agreed Conclusions and Political Declarations, **more concise** (potentially limit the number of pages), **action-oriented, time-bound, measurable, actionable, thematically focussed and broadly disseminated**.
- **Strengthen the interactivity** of sessions to allow for more substantive exchanges. Suggestions include: dedicated **sessions on best practices and knowledge sharing**; spotlighting **case studies**, including from civil society; and integration of **technical discussions** with participation of subject matter experts.
- Establish **standing agenda items** on specific issues. Suggestions include; on violence against women and economic empowerment or, provide for annual multi-stakeholder dialogues on **persistent issues**.
- Address the 12 critical areas of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in a **comprehensive and balanced manner**, recognising their interconnected nature.
- **Increase CSW's responsiveness to emerging issues**. Proposals were made on specific topics (e.g. climate change, disaster management, environmental degradation, online abuse and technology-facilitated violence, digital inclusion, post-pandemic recovery, gender backlash, care economy, armed conflicts and crises, reproductive trafficking), while other proposals were for greater responsiveness to **urgent** issues.
- Organize timely, transparent, civil society-inclusive national and regional consultations ahead of the drafting of the **Secretary General's report on the priority theme**. The SG's Report should include **suggestions for specific policy initiatives**. Improvement in **data collection systems** and evidence-based assessment of trends was also called for.
- **Strengthen dissemination of CSW outcomes**, including strategic communications to better showcase the purpose and impact of CSW.
- Strengthen the role of **the Bureau** to decide on **methods of work** e.g. speaking time; issuance of speaking lists; allocation of rooms.

Section 3: Implementation, Monitoring and Accountability

- Provide a **space, or platform, to share reports on progress in implementation** of the BDPFA, e.g. disseminating legal, policy, and budgetary measures taken at national or local levels.
- Prepare a **compendium of best practices** from CSW roundtables.
- **Develop monitoring or accountability frameworks**. Proposals include:
 - **an accountability/annual review mechanism**, including periodic reporting from states, peer reviews and civil society shadow reporting, similar to the UPR or the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development processes.

- **review two critical areas** of the Beijing Platform and Programme for Action each year, underpinned by international, regional and national levels analysis, with follow-up tools such as public dashboards or in the annual SG's report.
- leverage the **Voluntary National Review** mechanism and make public regular progress reports beyond annual sessions, with the participation of civil society.
- Contrasting proposals include that **no additional reporting or accountability mechanisms** should be created, or that any new monitoring or accountability framework **should replace the five-yearly implementation reports**.
- Proposals on the **Communications Procedure** include maintaining its current practice; improving its transparency by publishing metrics on its work; follow-up processes addressing gender-based injustice or discriminatory practices; or terminating it.

Section 4: Inclusion of Civil Society

- Learn from best practice to **ensure meaningful, inclusive, accessible, and safe participation of civil society**, draw from practices at e.g. UNFCCC, HLPF and UPR.
- Ensure that civil society actors participating in the Commission's session **abide by the rules and standards of conduct of the UN**, including ECOSOC resolution 1996/31.
- **Expand civil society's role and participation**, e.g. through establishment of civil society advisory panels and bodies; consultation mechanisms; or moderated dialogues, to ensure meaningful civil society engagement in CSW preparations, discussions and in decision-making.
- Standardise **access to information** for civil society on various CSW processes, for example through an information hub.
- **Integration of the UN Secretary-General's Town Hall** with civil society into CSW's official programme of work.
- Establish a **secondary/special accreditation process** for civil society, as is the case for High-Level Meetings and other fora at the UN.
- Establish a civil society advisory mechanism to **support the work of the CSW Chair and Bureau**, or assess the idea of appointing civil society representatives as observers to the Bureau.

Section 5: Engagement with other Processes and Entities

- **Strengthen synergies between CSW and other intergovernmental processes**, including those in Geneva, avoiding or reducing overlap.
- Strengthen and better **integrate the work of the UN Regional Commissions** into the work of CSW through, e.g. pre- and post-CSW regional consultations; presenting regional outcome documents during CSW; formalising two-way communication mechanism between Regional Commissions and CSW Bureau; and Annual Regional Gender Reports.
- Ensure better **coordination between UN Women Executive Board and CSW**.
- **Strengthen links between CSW and other mechanisms** by holding interactive dialogues, discussing their reports at CSW and including experts as observers. (E.g. CEDAW; Human Rights Council including UPR; Working Group on Discrimination against Women and Girls; Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women and Girls; the Platform of Independent Expert Mechanisms on Discrimination and Violence against Women; UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues reporting system; Generation Equality Accountability Report, SDGs and monitoring of the Pact for the Future)

- Recall the catalytic role of the Commission in **promoting and monitoring gender mainstreaming** within the UN system, including across all UN bodies.
- Link CSW revitalisation to **wider revitalisation and reform processes**.
- **Encourage structured multi-stakeholder dialogues to localise and implement CSW outcomes**, engaging governments, parliamentarians, national institutions (including NHRIs), local government, civil society organizations including academic institutions and the private sector.