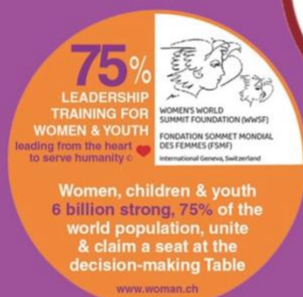




# Empowering Women, Children & Youth

Women's World Summit Foundation (WWSF)  
Fondation Sommet Mondial des Femmes (FSMF)

## ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT 2024



© Images Hans Erni / WWSF

Creating the power for change - leaving no one behind - woman.ch



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## Women's World Summit Foundation (WWSF) Fondation Sommet Mondial des Femmes (FSMF)

Empowering Women, Children and Youth  
Les Femmes, Enfants et la Jeunesse d'abord



## WWSF – 2024 ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT

Women's World Summit Foundation - WWSF

### Message from Founder/President

Maria Elfriede (Elly) Pradervand (MEP)



In 2024, WWSF continued most of its annual empowerment programs for women's and children's rights while developing its "Leadership Training Forums for women and youth": *leading from the heart - serving humanity*. ❤️

Adding a spiritual dimension to our Call for action to help advance the realization of the UN Sustainable Development Goals – SDG Agenda 2030, is about a learning **"how are we going to learn to live together on this planet"**, end the many ongoing wars, deal with increasing climate change, reduce poverty and hunger and increase knowledge and respect for right human relations and

world goodwill.

WWSF wishes to thank our Board members, sponsors, staff, consultants, interns and volunteers for their valuable support and faithful commitment during 2024.

It is with great sadness that we inform you of the passing on of our key partner, Pierre Pradervand, sociologist and author (27 July 2024 in Geneva). WWSF is still trying to fill the void he left as an advisor and sponsor since the beginning of the WWSF Foundation. Several of our planned Zoom events had to be cancelled due to time constraints by MEP.

Overall, WWSF adjusted its annual campaign program and especially the "75 % campaign events and is now developing new ideas for 75 % Leadership Training sessions for women and youth. The world is calling on all of us to ensure that especially our young people are supported and trained in exercising positive leadership from the heart to interrupt the very precarious political challenges the world finds itself in now.

**The WWSF Motto has not changed:** *"Always remembering that our actions make no sense if they do not change lives in communities and knowing that at the end, they are the real actors of change in their countries and need our solidarity to succeed".*

## Presentation of the 2024 Activities



### 1) “PRIZE for women’s creativity in rural life”

**6 Prizewinners honored on International Day of Rural Women - 15 October 2024**

### Press Release

**October 1- 2024 - wdpca@wwsf.ch - +41 (0)79 476 17 84**

**Presenting 6 Laureates receiving the  
WWSF - Prize for Women’s Creativity in Rural Life**

*& commemorating International Day of Rural Women – 15 October 2024*



492 Prizes awarded to-date (1994-2024) – US\$ 1000 per prizewinner – honoring creativity, courage, compassion and leadership and help advance the quality of life in rural communities. Local award ceremonies were held on International Day of Rural Women – 15 October.





## Introduction to the Prizewinners



**NGUEN Lydiadine**  
Cameroun



**A. Femina Das**  
India



**Sabine Schrott Prenn**  
Italy



**Sana Kishan Farmer's**  
Cooperative Group - Nepal



**Women Acting Together**  
for Change (WATCH) - Nepal



**Gregoria Lopez**  
Argentina

**The Prize gives visibility and recognition to the prizewinners** and empowers them to ensure their continuation of sustainable development, household food security, peacebuilding, climate mitigation, etc., thus generating support and visibility for their projects.

While rural women and rural women's groups are essential in providing examples of good practice in their communities, they still do not have full access to tools necessary for achieving sustainable development and to move forward, such as in basic education, access to credit, their right to land, clean drinking water, basic education, IT, and participation in local and national decision-making.

By highlighting and rewarding examples and ideas for rural development, innovation and experiences improving the quality of rural life, WWSF participates in the gradual reduction of rural poverty, the need for gender equality, and the empowerment of women's rights in general. Most of the Laureates are involved, directly or indirectly, to help achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.



# Profiles of the Prizewinners

## AFRICA

### Cameroon



#### **1) NGO MANG Epe NGUEN Lydiadine (54) President of RAFARBY (Biyouha District) in partnership with the WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION NETWORK**

##### MOBILIZATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Since several years now, this Women's Association Network mobilizes its members for the empowerment and autonomy of rural women via income generated activities, mostly volunteer work. These activities allow them to maintain their women's association while holding a job in administrative or private enterprises. The women organize, whenever they can, create workshops for the transformation of products stemming from cassava (Manioc). All the transformed products are up for sale and are appreciated by the large public that discovers their creativity and good work. The driving force behind this initiative is its

President, **NGUEN Lydiadine**, receiving the **2024 "Prize for women's creativity in rural life" in partnership with the RAFARBY Network members.**

Cassava is a staple food for most of the Cameroonian population, with average annual consumption estimated at 63 kg/person, including 42 kg of fresh tubers and the remainder in processed products. Its cultivation mobilizes almost all agricultural assets, firstly for self-consumption, and secondly as a guaranteed source of income for rural households. Female labor is in great demand in all operations linked to its cultivation, particularly in the planting of cuttings, harvesting and processing.

WWSF wishes the Women's Association Network lots of success in advancing and transforming their rural communities.

The following UN SDG targets are positively impacted by their creative community work.



## AMERICAS

### Argentina



**2) Gregoria LOPEZ (71) Leader of the Tupi Guarani Iguopeigenda – Rio Blanco Banda Community (Oran-Salta) in recognition of the whole community, Argentina**

#### *RESPECTING NATURE AND TRUSTING JUSTICE*

The community is made up of more than 50 families who have lived and continue to share a firm and peaceful struggle in defense of the land and the territory, fighting against the Seaboard Corporation (ex Ingenio San Martin del Tbaçal).

The hard experience has strengthened the organization of the community, based on convictions and values related to their indigenous identity of caring for mother earth and, at the same time, growing and improving their form of self-sustainability in respect and use of natural resources.

This is why, for more than twenty years, they have been able to defend the community's possession, remaining in it, in the face of attacks by the company that spared no violence, always trusting in justice and in the dignity of living through community work, without falling into the humiliation of depending on bags of goods or handouts, which are a sign of the growing impoverishment of a large part of the Argentinean population. Everyone has been in this: men, women, the elderly, young people and children.

Gregoria LOPEZ role not only encompasses permanent work in her Aba Guarani community, but also selflessly involves other communities in the area, interacting with public and private institutions. In short, she is an example for new generations by generating and maintaining the spirit of community, beyond her individual role as a food producer, where she always considers the environmental issues of the activities in the territory.

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The following UN SDG targets are positively impacted by their creative community work.



## ASIA

### India



#### 3) **Sr. A. Femina DAS, 45, a leader of Dalit Women's Self-help groups, caretaker and motivator for visually impaired girls, India**

##### *COMPASSION IS HER LEITMOTIV*

Sr. A. Femina Das belongs to a religious order. She works at the St. Amalarakkini Education Economic and Social Development Society in Tamil Nadu. Sister Femina Das coordinates the Dalit women in the villages, brings them out of their ignorance, superstition, and makes them to be aware of their potential.

She introduces income generative schemes such as vegetable cultivation, honeybee keeping, kitchen garden promotion and marketing in rural areas. She used to obtain loans from Banks for Women Self-help groups to make them financially sustainable.

She is also a social activist and stopped many child marriages and provides village people with awareness for the prevention of child marriages and safeguarding the health of girl children. She visits remote villages in and around the Tiruvannamakai district, meets the Dalit and Tribal women, and listens to their problems. She is a spark for the women who are marginalized in the society. From her early age she wanted to contribute something for the women folk. For this she qualified herself in her academic studies.

Sr. Femina Das has a high impact on village women and visually impaired girls. The girls are impressed by her motivation and lifestyle. Many Dalit and Tribal women are empowered socially, economically and culturally by her way of inclusion and service.

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The following UN SDG targets are positively impacted by her creative community work.







#### 4) Women Acting Together for Change (WATCH) Kathmandu, Nepal

*SUPPORTING AND PROMOTING RURAL WOMEN'S AND DISADVANTAGED PEOPLE'S HUMAN, LEGAL RIGHTS AND ACCESSING RESOURCES AND SERVICES*

**WATCH** started activities in rural areas by organizing women, children and disadvantaged communities since 1991. It was registered with the government in 1992 and helped create various national level networks and federations like **FECOFUN** (community forestry), **NFIWUAN** (Irrigation water users), (women users of natural resources), the **Iron First / Awake Rural Women's Organizations**, and more.

It also organizes six weeks training for rural women's groups and organizations to initiate and operate the organization in their areas. Later, it became six months of trainings. It has organized more than 1500 women's groups, 400 or so children's groups, several HIV+ women's groups, groups of people with disabilities and leprosy, etc.

It also started a movement against low wages and long hours of work. It rescues bonded laborers and supports them to be independent.

In 1995, **WATCH** organized a national level public hearing to make the government, MPs, and Ambassadors to be aware of the problems faced by trafficked women, HIV+.

**WATCH** is there to support violated, abused and ostracized women and children. It not only organizes them for power and their rights, but it also helps them to lobby for advocacy accessing rights, resources and services.

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*WATCH activities cover several SDG goals like "No poverty, End Hunger, Ensure Healthy Lives, Achieve Gender Equality, Decent work & economic growth, climate action & ecosystems", etc.*



## Nepal



### 5. Sana Kishan Farmer's Participatory Group, Nepal

#### WOMEN FARMERS LOCALIZE FOOD SYSTEMS IN RURAL NEPAL USING THE POWER OF PGS

The Sana Kishan farmers create guidelines for organic food growing, hold each other accountable, provide sustainable income, learn from each other, and improve access to healthy foods. With the foods they produce, they can sell to the Kopila Valley School's daily healthy lunch program, the Valley Children's Home, and other local customers.

*Syani Chaudhary, Member & Sustainable Coordinator of Sana Kishan*

*"Yesterday I was just a mother of my children, but today I am a woman, mother & a farmer who supports my children's education & health. I am a proud farmer".*

Small farmers, especially in isolated regions, face immense challenges. Market access is limited, and the demand for quality food, organic certification, and fair labor standards is growing. However, these demands can be overwhelming for farmers who are disconnected from global consumers.

They wanted to contribute to stable livelihoods for parents, and their programs needed a consistent source of healthy food, so they partnered with the PGS project – a Participatory Guarantee System – that addresses the challenges faced by localizing the food system farmers, the children they serve, & the broader community's food access.

In collaboration with CEAPRED (Center for Environmental and Agricultural Policy Research, Extension & Development) and the local Karnali Province Ministry of Land Management, Agriculture & Cooperatives, the group began to educate and model organic practices.

This women-led initiative is challenging traditional gender norms & provides a model for non-traditional careers that have previously been closed to women, laying the groundwork for gender inclusivity & empowerment in rural Nepal. Their efforts are significantly advancing environmental conservation, climate resilience & social equity, establishing new benchmarks for sustainable development and leadership.

The following UN SDG targets are positively impacted by their creative community work.



### Italy



**6) Sabine Schrott Prenz (44) Farmer in Uttenheim, South Tyrol - an autonomous province in Northern Italy**

*A PIONEER & ORGANIZER OF THE SEED FESTIVALES SINCE 2015 IN SOUTH TIROL. SHE CALLS ON POLITICIANS TO PROMOTE AND NOT HINDER THE CONSERVATION AND DISSEMINATION OF LOCAL SEEDS*

Sabine Schrott runs a farm together with husband Franz & son Julian. She has always been fascinated by gardening from an early age and studied horticulture. Between 2004 & 2008, she worked at the technical college for fruit, wine and horticulture in Laimburg. There, during a course on old fruit varieties, she joined a small circle of committed seed propagators and became totally 'infected' with the subject. Her main motivation is to promote the Pustertal Valley\* varieties and reactivate them. "They should become part of everyday culinary life again". She is not interested in preserving for the sake of it. She wants to use the old varieties again and not just cultivate them as a hobby. This is the only way they have a future.

With almost 400 cultivated varieties, many of them old and rare, Sabine is one of the most committed guardians of diversity in South Tyrol. Her never-ending motivation in preserving the diversity makes Sabine a pioneer. Her commitment to preserving the diversity of varieties, the dissemination and the exchange of cultivated plants is very valuable for biodiversity, for the cultural landscape & the farming world in South Tyrol. Sabine founded in 2021 "Bio-diversity Farms" a Südtirol Association (*Artenvielfaltshöfe*) because she wanted to provide a platform for biodiversity farms. In numerous discussions with political decision-makers, she repeatedly points out **the need for a seed law that does not restrict the activities of local conservationists**.

\* The Pustertal Valley is one of the largest longitudinal valleys in the Alps that runs in an east-west direction between Lienz in East Tyrol, Austria) - To read more about Sabine Schrott: [info@baeuerinnen.it](mailto:info@baeuerinnen.it) [www.baeuerinnen.it](http://www.baeuerinnen.it)

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The following UN SDG targets are positively impacted by her love and work for saving local seeds.





## WWSF PRIZE FOR WOMEN'S CREATIVITY IN RURAL LIFE

Awarded since 1994 by WWSF Women's World Summit Foundation, Geneva, Switzerland  
(492 awards given so far – all laureates are published on the Internet - [www.woman.ch](http://www.woman.ch))



### **Nomination Form 2025** **Guidelines available online**

<http://womensection.woman.ch/index.php/en/prize-for-rural-women>

Nomination materials should arrive no later than **30 April through the post**.

E-mail nominations are no longer accepted.

#### **CANDIDATE**

Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Website \_\_\_\_\_

#### **NOMINATOR**

Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Website \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to the Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **List of supporting materials**

- ☐ Endorsement letters
- ☐ NewsPaper articles
- ☐ Publications
- ☐ Other (photos, videos, etc.)

#### **International Prize Jury**

Maria Elfriede (Elly) Pradervand (Switzerland); Gulzar Samji (Canada); Jyoti Macwan (India)

#### **Next awards in 2025**

**Nomination materials should arrive no later than 30 April through the post and be addressed to :**

WWSF Women's World Summit Foundation, POB 1504, 1211 Geneva 1, Switzerland  
Tel.: +41 (0) 22 738 66 19 - [www.woman.ch](http://www.woman.ch) - [wwsf@wwsf.ch](mailto:wwsf@wwsf.ch)





## WWSF Prize for women's creativity in rural life

### Nomination Guidelines - Next prize awards in 2025

Awarded since 1994 by the Women's World Summit Foundation (WWSF), an international, non-profit, humanitarian NGO, serving the implementation of women's and children's rights and the UN development agenda - the Prize (US\$ 1000 per laureate) honors women and women's groups around the world exhibiting exceptional creativity, courage and commitment for the improvement of the quality of life in rural communities (**492 prizes awarded so far**). The Prize aims to draw international attention to laureates' contributions to sustainable development, household food security and peace, thus generating recognition and support for their projects. While rural women are vital in providing examples of sound practice in their communities, they still do not have full access to tools needed for development, such as education, credit, land rights and participation in decision making. By highlighting and awarding creative development models, innovations and experiences enhancing the quality of rural life, WWSF participates in addressing the eradication of rural poverty, gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment.

#### Eligibility

- Nominees should be women and women's groups currently active in rural life whose efforts have not yet been acknowledged by other awards. **They may not nominate themselves.**
- The nominating organization or individual must have direct experience of the nominee's work. The nominator may not nominate a family member, be a member of the nominated organization, nor can an organization nominate its senior officer (i.e., founder, president etc.). No more than three nominees may be presented by the same person/organization in the same year. The nominator commits to organize an award ceremony if the candidate is selected for the Prize and invites the media.

#### Nominations must include the following items:

- ① Original signed letter of nomination indicating how the nominator knows the nominee and for how long.
- ② Biographical data on the nominee (full name, age, education, place of work, background) and a detailed history of the nominee's creative project (written by the nominator) including her motivation, innovative aspects, any obstacles overcome, and the impact in the community. Nominations must specify whether the nominee has received or is currently being nominated for other awards.
- ③ At least two original and signed endorsement letters from organizations or individuals other than the nominator and, if possible, additional supporting materials such as newspaper articles or publications.
- ④ A few labeled photographs clearly showing the nominee(s) for possible publication.

#### Criteria

The long-term impact of the Prize depends on the integrity of the nominators and the quality of their nominations. The Prize is an award for successful accomplishments rather than a fund for future projects. The nominee's history, written by the nominator (2-3 pages) must demonstrate the creativity, courage and sometimes sacrifice in the efforts by the candidate at the grass roots level to improve life in rural communities. Descriptions should be as specific as possible.

#### Any of the following elements should be emphasized:

- \* Exceptional courage and perseverance in improving rural life
- \* Creativity in the approach
- \* Preservation of and respect for the environment (if the candidate is involved with the environment)
- \* Continuing impact in the community
- \* Underline how the work of the candidate promotes the UN Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 – Transforming our world. Link: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300>

Laureates are selected by an international Jury composed of WWSF Directors and Advisors; they are announced officially on 1 October and celebrated in their countries on **15 October – International Day of Rural Women**. WWSF has a commitment to award annually 5 - 10 creative rural women leaders and women's groups around the world. To read about past laureates, visit our web site [www.woman.ch](http://www.woman.ch)



WWSF - Women's World Summit Foundation, POBox 1504, 1211 Geneva 1, Switzerland  
E-mail: [wwsf@wwsf.ch](mailto:wwsf@wwsf.ch) - [www.woman.ch](http://www.woman.ch)

**Nomination materials must arrive no later than 30 April through the post only.**

## 2) International Day of Rural Women – 2024

WWSF publishes the annual civil society poster to commemorate the Day and give credit where it's due. This Day was created by WWSF together with other NGOs during the 1995 Beijing Women's Conference in Beijing, China. WWSF took the lead in mobilizing governments and the Day became a UN official Day in 2007.

# 15 Oct. 2024

## INTERNATIONAL DAY OF RURAL WOMEN

Honoring SEWA Association  
(India - [www.sewa.org](http://www.sewa.org)) grassroots  
members for their creativity in  
producing and promoting solar  
lanterns for rural communities to  
provide basic energy needs (lighting)  
of rural homes.

WWSF Annual empowerment poster with our message overleaf.





Journée internationale des femmes rurales  
Día internacional de la mujer rural  
Internationaler Tag der Landfrauen  
اليوم العالمي للمرأة الريفية 世界农村妇女日

Rural Women Rise & participate in advancing the  
realization of the UN Sustainable Development  
Goals Agenda 2030, with a Seat at the Table.



Created in 1995 at the Beijing 4th World Women's Conference  
by international NGOs and promoted by WWSF which resulted  
in becoming an official UN Day in 2007. WWSF awards its  
annual Prize for Women's Creativity in Rural Life on 15 October.

**WWSF - Women's World Summit Foundation**  
FSMF - P.O. Box 1504 - 1211 Geneva 1 - Switzerland  
[wwsf@wwsf.ch](mailto:wwsf@wwsf.ch) - [www.woman.ch](http://www.woman.ch)



## “Green Livelihoods Campaign” - 'Hariyali',

is a project initiated by Ela Bhatt <sup>†</sup>, past SEWA President, who helped give some of India's poorest women access to affordable energy. **Shining a light on India's poor!**



**Ela Bhatt with members of Self-Employed Women's Association-SEWA. Photo © The Elders/Tom Pietrasik**

The “Green Livelihoods Campaign” - 'Hariyali', is a project initiated by Ela Bhatt <sup>†</sup>, SEWA President which helps give some of India's poorest women access to affordable energy.

William French, Head International Media at The Elders <https://theelders.org/what-we-do>, explains why it has had such a big impact on their lives, writing for The Skoll World Forum & Reuter. Excerpt: 19 March 2015

“Till now we always lived in darkness. Now I have a solar lantern, it has brought brightness and light to us. Our hearts and minds are now bright. We see hope in the future.” – Fulaba, a weaver from the village of Khombhali in the Kutch deserts of North Gujarat.

India is an increasingly dynamic player in the modern digital economy, but many thousands of poor and rural communities still have their lives and work dictated by the rhythms of the sun and the moon. A lack of access to affordable energy means sundown equals shutdown, a loss of productivity, efficiency and valuable income. “No light means we cannot continue to work after sunset. This means less income, and often we cannot afford to eat on the next day”, in the words of - Santokben, an artisan from the village of Bakutra in Gujarat.

To break this cycle, the grassroots trade union SEWA has been working since 2009 to promote its “Green Livelihoods Campaign” – known as “Hariyali” in the local language – to provide cheap access to sustainable energy across India. SEWA, founded in 1972 by Elder [Ela Bhatt](#), has argued for decades that access to energy is vital in emancipating communities and especially women who are otherwise marginalized both economically and politically.

“The Hariyali Campaign has been structured to deliver Energy Access, financial inclusion and gender empowerment for SEWA’s members,” said Ela Bhatt. “The key to success was in building a model which is sustainable, replicable and scalable.”

In practice, portable solar LED lanterns and clean cooking stoves are provided to SEWA members, paid for by instalments. SEWA has negotiated an unsecured bank loan of Rs 250 million (\$4.2 million) from an Indian private bank to provide this service to its members.

The result has been electrifying – in the most literal sense. In the words of Kapilaben, a widow and small farmer from the Gujarat village of Rasnol: “When my husband died, I had to bring up three daughters. Life was dark as we had no electricity, and everything felt hopeless. How do I cope? Thanks to ‘Hariyali’ I now have a solar lantern and a cooking stove. Now I do all the work, send my three daughters to school and am now a grassroots leader at SEWA!”

Underlining the complex nature of its work in a country as vast and diverse as India, SEWA has identified three major challenges which highlight the importance of listening to local communities and learning from their own needs and experiences. It aims to raise awareness, for example of how to use more efficient and healthy cooking stoves; to determine availability so the right sort of stove is delivered to the right people (i.e. the stove made for the South Indian population who mainly eat rice isn’t suited to those who eat roti in North and Central India); and guarantee affordability by closely working with local communities and financing partners. SEWA has also developed “Project Urja” to provide solar lights to women’s self-help groups across the deprived Bihar-Mungar region using a special “energy loan product” in cooperation with India’s Ministry of Rural Development.”

For Ela Bhatt, this was a shining example of how innovation & cooperation can transform lives. SEWA is a WWSF Board member since 1991.





## Background

### International Day of Rural Women

#### 15 October

Created in 1995 during the UN Beijing Women's Conference, 30 years ago, WWSF took leadership in promoting the Day around the world, showcasing rural women's efforts and results in pushing collectively for change, especially in communities where climate change is challenging their very survival.

## Objectives

- **Mobilizing** relevant NGOs and grassroots women's groups and organizations, government networks and international institutions, as well as the media, to mark the Day by sharing transformative and courageous action by rural women. The FAO has recently developed partnership programs with local/national women's groups to ensure more success in ending poverty and hunger in rural areas.
- **Raising awareness** of rural women's participation in the development processes with a focus on their needs and rights, highlighting their contributions to sustainable development, household Food security, safeguarding traditional knowledge biodiversity, leadership & peace building.
- **Sensitizing the public** at large and lobbying governments on the crucial role rural women play in climate change management and prioritizing action for their support.
- **Encouraging local and national initiatives to create partnerships with the WWSF Prize program and the annual World Day - 15 October** to draw attention to the hardships of most rural women's lives around the world and to give credit where it's due.

## "Some Facts (UN source)

- Rural women comprise more than one quarter of the total world population
- 500 million women live below the poverty line in rural areas
- Women produce 60 - 80% of basic foodstuffs in sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean
- Women perform over 50% of the labor involved in intensive rice cultivation in Asia
- Women perform 30% of the agricultural work in industrialized countries
- Women head 60% of households in some regions of Africa
- Women meet 90% of household water and fuel needs in Africa
- Women process 100% of basic household food stuffs in Africa".





### 3) 19 Days of Activism for prevention of violence & abuse against children & youth 1 - 19 November 2024 (updated 2024 Kit available online)

WWSF updated the 2024 edition of its annual **19 Days Campaign Kit**, including news, statistics and ideas for action. We added **personal Messages to World Leaders and Prime Ministers**, reminding them of their obligation to better protect children and youth from increasing abuse & violence against them in too many countries. **A world fit for children & youth must become a priority.** We thank our active partners for continuing to use the campaign and remind the world that children are children not criminals.

19

Days of activism for prevention of abuse and violence against children/youth  
 Jours d'activisme pour la prévention des abus/violence envers enfants/jeunes  
 Días de activismo para la prevención del abuso/violencia contra los niños/jóvenes  
 Tage Aktivismus Prävention von Missbrauch/Gewalt gegen Kinder/Jugendliche

WWSF Call to Action!
SDG #16.2

19 Days Activism Prevention Kit - 1-19 November 2024

Prevention of Violence & Abuse against Children & Youth

We need to mobilize not only governments, but also civil society  
 - women, children & youth - 75% of the world population - to unite and  
 co-lead the future with a seat at the decision-making Table.

woman.ch

WWSF Children / Youth Section  
#19DaysWWSF

With the introduction of **the WWSF - 19 Days campaign in 2010**, WWSF started a dynamic way to draw attention to increase not only civil society activities and measures, but also urgent actions by Governments. How can we hold our Leaders to account with questions we must ask to strategize new ways to influence progress in respecting Children's rights and ending violence and abuse.

We wish to thank our registered members and partners who sent us their activity reports, which are always a gift to read, and some of them we share in our annual activity report.

**The annual Prevention Kit, 1-19 November 2024**, provides our Kit with 19 themes and ideas for urgent action to increase positive development in respective countries and craft powerful advocacy to help realize the end of violence and abuse against children and youth by 2030.

Below we share our selected 19 themes for everyone to choose where to begin to get involved.



#### Link to the 2024 - 19 Days Kit:

[https://www.woman.ch/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/2024\\_KIT\\_19\\_D\\_UPDATE\\_EP-FINAL-LIGHT\\_FI\\_07.11.2024.pdf](https://www.woman.ch/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/2024_KIT_19_D_UPDATE_EP-FINAL-LIGHT_FI_07.11.2024.pdf)

#### Link to the UN Convention on the rights of the child:

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child>

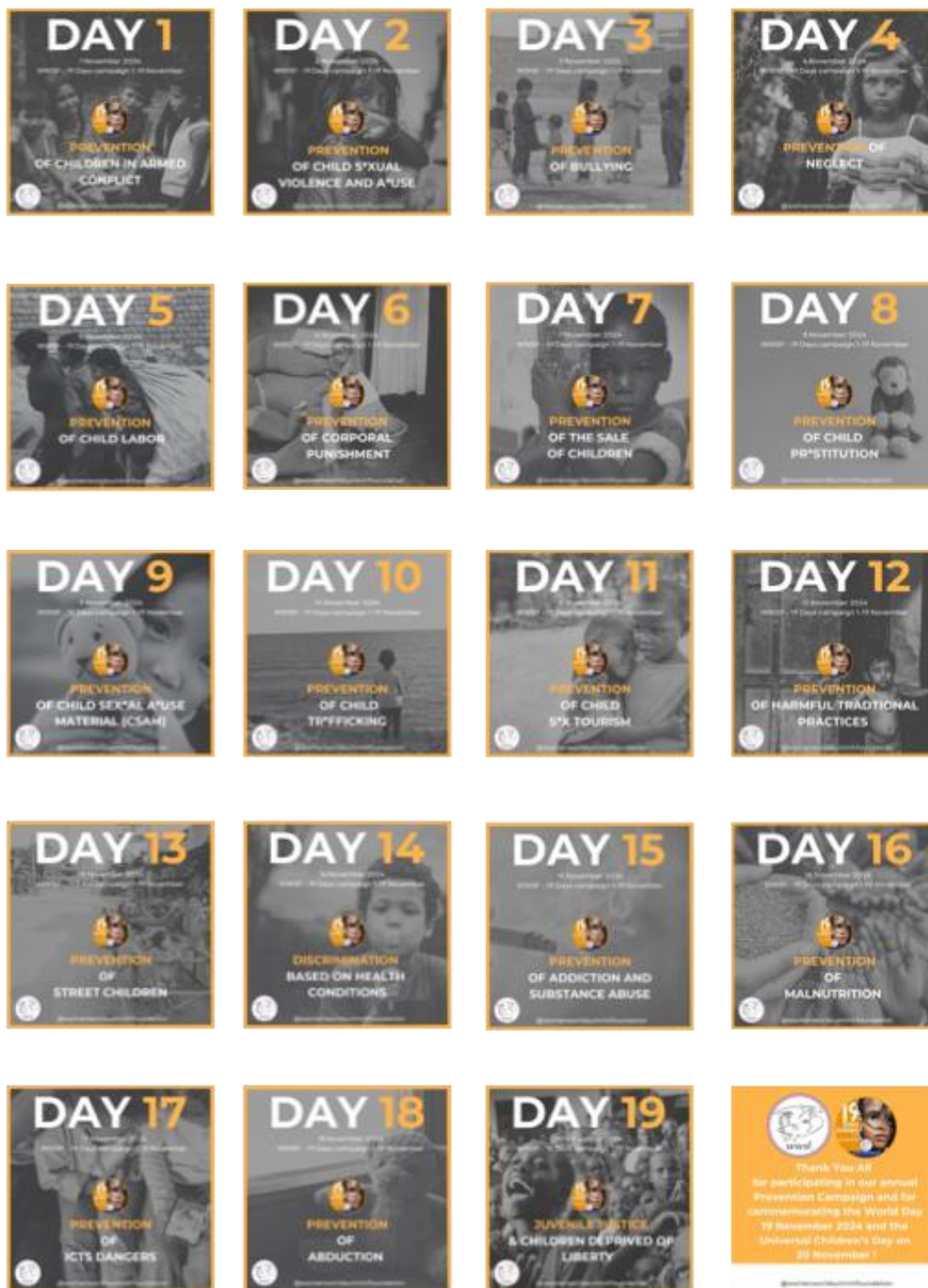
#### Link to the UN Sustainable Development Goal - Target # 16.2

*“End abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and all forms of violence against and torture of children »*

<https://indicators.report/targets/16-2/>



## Daily WWSF Social Media posts for the 19 days themes representing of the WWSF annual Campaign 2024



Each daily post during 19 Days included 3 components: the theme of the Day, an explanation of the problem, and a reference to the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child.



## Examples



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF EDUCATIVE COMMUNITIES

### Example:

**Country Report - 19 Days Campaign 2024  
from a Member organization in Romania,  
promoting the campaign for 13 years now**

## FICE ROMANIA

*"Fighting school violence means improving the quality of relationships and communication between all those involved in education." - Dardel Jaoud (FICE)*

*FICE is an acronym that stands for the [International Federation of Educative Communities \(FICE-International\)](#), a global organization dedicated to promoting child and youth care.*

### Excerpts from the FICE Activity Report 2024

#### **"The FICE (Romania) 19 Days campaign involved:**

- **350 schools** in the country (with legal status) and
- **121** in Bucharest, coordinated by a local coordinator per school
- **Country School Inspectorates** and School Inspectorate of Bucharest Municipality
- **General Directorates** of Social Assistance and Child Protection of the participating counties
- **Over 150'000 pupils**
- **Over 30'000 teachers**
- **School counselors, psychologists, doctors**
- **Specialists from other local (public social assistance services in the more than 300 localities involved),** county (County Police Inspectorates, County Centers for Prevention. Evaluation and anti-Drug Counseling, Judges, Public Health Directorates, Military Circle, County Employment Agencies), regional (Regional Health Directorates, Military Circle, County Employment Agencies), regional (Regional Centers for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings) and central (National Authority for the Protection of Trafficking in Human Beings) and central (National Authority for the Protection of Children's Rights and Adoptions/ANPDCA, Romanian Institute for Human Rights) institutions
- **Representatives of NGOs working in the field of child protection** (Association of Directors of DGASPC/AD-DGASPC, Association of Municipalities in Romania/AcoR, Federation of Non-Governmental Organizations for the Child/FONPC"

#### **National partners involved in the campaign – description of the partnership:**

- **Tribuna magazine** – role in the dissemination of the project/results
- **The National Authority for the Protection of Children's Rights** and Adoption (ANPDCA)- specialized body of the central public administration, subordinated to the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, performs the function of monitoring how the rights of persons with disabilities and children's rights are respected and promoted, including the right of the child to be protected against any form of violence.
- **The Association of Municipalities in Romania**, AcoR, Bucharest, - role in supporting at the level of local public authorities, prevention and information actions carried out in schools.
- **Radio Romania** – Societatea Romana de Radiodifuziune, Bucharest – disseminating project and its results

**Association of the Directors of the General Directorates of Social Assistance and Child Protection** – role in supporting prevention and information actions carried out child protection institutions/structures



- **National Anti-Drug Agency**, -role in the methodological coordination of activities to prevent substance abuse among children and young people

### Specific objectives

- **Stop abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against children**
- **Eliminating the worst forms of child labor, including slavery**
- **Providing safe, inclusive and effective learning environments for all children**
- **Ensuring that all children acquire knowledge and skills to promote a culture of peace and non-violence**
- **Reducing the impact of violence in families, schools and communities**
- **Significant reduction of all forms of violence in the school environment**

### Promotion/media and dissemination activities

The campaign proposed a set of actions aimed at changing social behavior, educating and mobilizing school children, various organizations and civil society partners to get involved in preventing one or more of the themes associated with abuse, to help create a more preventive culture, to stop violence against children and young people, to support the implementation of the UN recommendations and, last but not least, to achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals promised, we need to join together in collaborative actions.

- **Over 350 workshops**, round tables, debates, participation in local, regional and national TV programs
- **Over 700 meetings** with specialists (police, doctors, psychologists, priests, etc.)
- **Over 3000 direct** and information/awareness-raising activities carried out with and by children from participating kindergartens and schools
- **Drawings/Collages/Exhibitions of work**
  - Case Study/Role Play
  - Anti-bullying photo/poster/message competitions
  - Video presentations / Thematic films
  - Circles of compassion (WWSF) and Dedicated Facebook pages
- **More than 200 activities carried out with parents or grandparents and relatives of children** (where parents work abroad)
- **Over 120 compassion circles**
- **Events organized on 16 October (World Food Day), 02 November (Day of Compassion), 19 November** (Intl. Day for the Prevention of violence against child abuse, and **20 November** (International Children's Rights Day).
- **This year we have also added 18 November, the European Day for the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse**, dedicated by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, to the campaign period.

Throughout the campaign, the schools and institutions enrolled in the project sent photos or videos of their activities to the e-mail address specially defined for the campaign. [www.ficeromania.wix.com/ficeromania](http://www.ficeromania.wix.com/ficeromania) and FICE Romania facebook.

At the end of the campaign, based on the report drawn up and signed by the sole local coordinator of the participating institutions, FICE Romania handed out a certificate of participation and community involvement to everyone.

### NATIONAL CONFERENCE – 20 November 2024 – Romanian Parliament Palace

Theme: “**Child, family and education today: confrontations with violence, drugs and ill-treatment**”

*President of FICE Romania,  
Prof. Toma Mareş*

*National campaign coordinators,  
: Prof. Manuela Stan & Dr. Eugen Simion*

## Another example from the NGO UDISHA in India:

### **“19 Days Campaign 2024 : Prevention of Violence & Abuse against Children & Youth Report, an Awareness Campaign with Poster Painting Competition on Prevention of Child Abuse & Child Labour**

**In its 21st year of coalition partnership with WWSF**, the Annual Campaign on Prevention of Violence & Abuse against Children & Youth, the Udisha Society for Education, Employment & Sustainable Development, organized an Awareness Campaign and Poster Painting Competition to address the pressing issues of child abuse and child labour. The events were organized in collaboration with Lal Bahadur Shastri School and supported by the Delhi State Legal Services Authority (DSLISA). The event was graced by Chief Guest, Mr. K.C. Mittal, Former Chairman Bar Council of Delhi & Former President Delhi High Court Bar Association Manager of School, Mr. Indu Shekhar, and Founder President, Udisha Mr. Rakesh Gaur.

The program commenced with the traditional lighting of the lamp, followed by a soulful rendition of Saraswati Vandana by the school choir, setting an inspiring tone for the day. A key highlight of the event was an insightful session by Advocate Mr. Lovedeep Gaur, Legal Aid Counsel, DSSLA, who organised a session on Protection of Children from Sexual Abuse along with the Concept of "Virtual Touch" and Its Potential Dangers in light of the Hon'ble Delhi High Court's judgment in Kamlesh Devi vs. State of Delhi & Ors.

The session commenced with an introduction, highlighting the ongoing efforts of DSLISA to promote legal awareness and build a society that is both informed and sensitized about child protection laws. The discussion focused on the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, which provides a strong legal framework for safeguarding children from sexual abuse and exploitation. During the session, the Resource Person explained the fundamental concepts of Good Touch & Bad Touch, helping participants distinguish between safe and unsafe physical interactions. **Special emphasis was placed on Virtual Touch, a growing concern in the digital age, where inappropriate online behaviour, including bullying and cyber exploitation, poses significant risks to children and vulnerable individuals.**

The discussion elaborated on the legal safeguards under the POCSO Act, ensuring that participants understood the provisions available to protect victims and the legal consequences for offenders. The Resource Person ensured that the conversed in simple and comprehensible language, making it accessible to all attendees.

The session lasted for over an hour, concluding with an interactive Q&A segment where participants' queries were effectively addressed and where students engaged actively, seeking further clarity on legal protections and societal responsibilities.

The initiative successfully raised awareness, instilling a sense of responsibility among students towards safeguarding children's rights. As a part of the Awareness Campaign a Poster Painting Competition on the subject "Child Abuse and Child Labour" was organized, which provided a creative platform to the students to express their thoughts on child safety and rights. Their artistic expressions effectively conveyed the Campaign's message, advocating for a safer society for children.

The efforts of all participants were highly appreciated, and outstanding entries were awarded trophies and certificates by the Chief Guest and other dignitaries."

**A big Thank You for sharing your report and the beautiful pictures by the Udisha Founder/President- Mr. Rakesh Gaur.**

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## 4) World Day: 19 November 2024

Annual Reminder: Prevention of Violence against children and youth



The poster features a central photograph of a group of diverse children sitting on the ground, looking upwards with expressions of hope and curiosity. The children are dressed in colorful traditional clothing. The background is a mix of orange and blue. At the top, the date '19 Nov. 2024' is prominently displayed in white on an orange background, and '20 Nov. 2024' is on a blue background. The main title 'WORLD DAY' is in large, bold, orange letters, followed by 'PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN & YOUTH' in smaller orange letters. Below this, it mentions 'SDG Target # 16.2' and 'In synergy with Universal Children's Day Respect for Children's Rights'. The bottom section contains the event name in multiple languages: 'Journée Mondiale prévention violence envers les enfants', 'Día Mundial Prevención del violencia contra los Niños', and 'Welttag Vorbeugung von Gewalt an Kindern'. It also includes the 'Circles of Compassion' logo, which is a circular emblem with a heart in the center and the text 'Circles of Compassion' in multiple languages. A call to action reads: 'Create your Community Circle of Compassion to speed up ending violence and abuse against children & youth'. A URL is provided: <https://www.woman.ch/19-days-of-activism-prevention-kit/training-workshops-creating-community-circles-of-compassion/>. At the bottom, there is a blue box with white text inviting people to use the poster and share their plans. Logos for the Private Swiss Foundation, UN Women, and the 75th anniversary of the UN are also present. The bottom right corner features the Women's World Summit Foundation logo and website: [www.woman.ch](http://www.woman.ch).

**19 Nov. 2024**

**WORLD DAY**  
PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE  
AGAINST CHILDREN & YOUTH

SDG Target # 16.2  
In synergy with  
Universal Children's Day  
Respect for Children's Rights

**20 Nov. 2024**

**Journée Mondiale prévention violence envers les enfants**  
**Día Mundial Prevención del violencia contra los Niños**  
**Welttag Vorbeugung von Gewalt an Kindern**

Create your Community Circle of Compassion  
to speed up ending violence and abuse against children & youth  
<https://www.woman.ch/19-days-of-activism-prevention-kit/training-workshops-creating-community-circles-of-compassion/>

You are invited to use this poster to publish your activity and move others to join you!

Share with us your plans and posters to help realize the UN SDG Target # 16.2: « End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children by 2030 »

Private Swiss Foundation

75

Women's World Summit Foundation  
Fondation Sommet Mondial des Femmes  
[www.woman.ch](http://www.woman.ch)

Every year since 2000, WWSF calls on world leaders, Child Rights organizations, networks, and civil society actors, partners and friends around the world to mark the **“World Day for Prevention of violence and abuse against children and youth – 19 November”** with messages and concrete actions to empower the establishment of **A WORLD FIT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH** and to speed up urgent prevention measures. WWSF invites its network via social media posts to use the campaign poster, add their name, logo and program of action to increase civil society commitments and help create the power for change.

With every 5 minutes a child dying because of violence around the world, we need to mobilize not only governments, **but also all citizens – including children and youth** – to commit to the full implementation of children’s right to dignity, non-violence and protection of their innocence.

WWSF created and inaugurated the **“World Day in the year 2000”** with endorsements from many dignitaries, including former UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Queen Rania of Jordan, Jean Zermatten & Prof. Yang-hee Lee, both former Chairs of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, Marta Santos Pais, former Special Representative of the UN Secretary General on violence against children; Najat Maalla M’jid, former UN Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution & child pornography, to mention some of them.





## 5) Community Circles of Compassion

*A WWSF initiative and strategy for  
a world fit for children & youth*

*“Every 5 Minutes a child dies as a result of violence”.*

### Let's empower the world compassionately!

Participate in implementing the UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target # 16.2 – Agenda 2030  
“End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children”.

WWSF proposes to families, diverse networks, clubs, schools, groups and the business community to consider creating **Community circles of compassion** to meet, discuss, learn and help implement strong prevention measures to end persistent violence and abuse against children and youth in our world today and help increase education of the rights of child around the world.

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### Guidelines: How to create your Community Circle of compassion:

#### Introduction

The Women's World Summit Foundation (WWSF) is pleased to invite civil society and NGOs around the world to join the movement of creating **Community Circles of Compassion**—safe, empowering spaces where people gather to foster healing, dialogue, and collective action.

In a world still recovering from a global pandemic and facing continued challenges, our future depends on more people stepping up with compassion and responsibility. **By joining and forming a Circle, you become an agent of positive change for children, youth, and future generations - helping to realize the UN Sustainable Development Goal [Target #16.2: End abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and all forms of violence against children.](#)**

👉 Register your Circle today using our online form!

Visit: [www.woman.ch](http://www.woman.ch)

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### Violence Against Children: Key Facts & Figures

*(Source: UN SDG 16.2, UNICEF, WHO, and other child protection agencies)*

- Over **1 billion children** are affected by violence every year.
- Violence against children costs societies an estimated **USD \$7 trillion** annually.
- **1 in 2 children** worldwide experiences some form of violence each year.
- A child dies every **5 minutes** as a result of violence.
- **1 in 10 children** is sexually abused before the age of 18.

- In **90% of countries**, corporal punishment is still legal in some settings, leaving **732 million children** without full legal protection.
- **1 in 3 internet user** is a Child; **800 million** are active on social media—exposed to cyberbullying, grooming, and exploitation.
- Online child sexual abuse reports have skyrocketed—from **1 million in 2014** to over **45 million in 2022** (NCMEC).
- **246 million children** experience school-related violence every year.
- **1 in 3 students** report being bullied at school in the last month; **1 in 10** have experienced cyberbullying.

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## What is a Circle?

Inspired by Beverly Engel’s *Women Circling the Earth*, a Circle is more than a physical arrangement of chairs—it is a **transformative space** for truth-telling, healing, listening, and collective empowerment.

Circles offer an **alternative to hierarchical systems**, fostering mutual respect, emotional safety, and co-leadership. They provide simple yet powerful tools for:

- Listening without judgment
- Fostering empathy, understanding, and cooperation
- Finding creative solutions to shared problems
- Bridging differences
- Resolving conflicts and reaching consensus
- Encouraging healing, forgiveness, and community spirit

“When people gather in circles, the illusion of separation dissolves. We remember that we are not alone.”

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## Circle Guidelines

To create an effective and safe Circle, we recommend the following best practices:

- **Invite friends, family, and community members** to co-create a welcoming space.
- **Open with silence or a reflection**, led by a Circle convener.
- **Use a talking piece** to ensure only one person speaks at a time.
- **Speak from your own experience, with honesty and heart.**
- **Listen deeply** and compassionately—**not to judge, but to understand.**
- **Embrace silence** as a space for reflection.
- **Take ownership** of your experience and contributions.
- **Aim for consensus-based decisions**, and document agreements.
- **Encourage diverse perspectives** and hold space for discomfort.
- **Maintain confidentiality and mutual respect.**
- **Rotate leadership roles** to practice shared responsibility.
- **Close the circle** with gratitude, reflection, and a set date for the next gathering.

Circles empower individuals to learn healthy, collaborative leadership rooted in compassion and shared purpose.

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## Create Your Own Circle of Compassion

Gather your peers, colleagues, or community members and **commit to collective goals**, ideally aligned with the **UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**, with a special focus on **SDG Target #16.2**.

As your Circle matures, members may initiate **community projects**, support causes, or join broader movements to protect and uplift children and youth. Some Circles have thrived for **10–15 years** or more, becoming strong support systems and sources of grassroots activism.

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## Adding a Spiritual Dimension

Including a **prayer or meditation moment** in your Circle can foster a deeper connection among members. Begin each session with a brief go-around where each person shares what's most present in their heart. At the close, you may choose to bless any issue discussed and offer a moment of silent contemplation. This spiritual layer is open to all paths and is **not meant to replace existing religious practices**.

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## Tell Us About Your Circle!

WWSF would love to hear from you! Please send us a short report about your Circle (name, location, theme, and contact email) to [wdpca@wwsf.ch](mailto:wdpca@wwsf.ch). Your Circle will be featured in our global network, annual Impact Report, and you will receive our quarterly free newsletter.

Once we receive your information, you'll be granted the use of the **Circles of Compassion logo**© CirclesOfCompassionWWSF2020, and be listed among WWSF coalition members.

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## Resources and Inspiration

We honor the many pioneers of the circle movement, including:

- The Millionth Circle (Jean Shinoda Bolen)
- Women Circling the Earth (Beverly Engel)
- Calling the Circle (Christina Baldwin)
- Wisdom Circles (Garfield, Spring & Cahill)

These books and initiatives offer invaluable guidance for deepening your Circle work.

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## Join the Movement



**Be part of a global community committed to ending violence against children and transforming the world compassionately.**



[Register your Circle](#)



[Explore our initiatives](#)



[Contact us: wdpca@wwsf.ch](mailto:wdpca@wwsf.ch)

- **Invite** friends, family & partners; create a special center, a space where you can put photos, flowers, candles, whatever your culture uses to celebrate a special time of relationships
- **Introduce** “What are community circles of compassion” with brief explanation of the SDGs Agenda 2030, and especially **SDG Goal # 16 and its Target # 16.2**
- **Begin** with a period of silent reflection
- One person speaks at a time – use a talking peace if necessary
- **Speak from the heart** and from your own experience
- **Listen for wisdom** with compassion and with discernment instead of judgment
- **Invite silence** and reflection when needed, in you, and in the Circle
- **Take responsibility** for your experience and your impact on the Circle
- **Take decisions**, whenever possible, by consensus and write them down
- **Encourage** and welcome diverse points of view
- **Agree** to hold the tension, instead of rushing in to fix things
- **Keep** the confidence of Circle discussions; respect the trust relationship about what is shared
- **Feel free** to add other guidelines should Circle members find it useful to do so
- **Close** with fixing the date for your next meeting

**For more information and instructions, visit our website:**

<https://www.woman.ch/19-days-of-act>

[ivism-prevention-kit/training-workshops-creating-community-circles-of-compassion/](https://www.woman.ch/19-days-of-act/ivism-prevention-kit/training-workshops-creating-community-circles-of-compassion/)

**Every Circle is autonomous in its function.**

The only request is (which is implicit when adopting the name “**WWSF Circle of Compassion**” to respect the guidelines, as well as the vision and objectives, which gave birth to them – creating a world free of violence - leaving no one behind.

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## 5) White Ribbon - Swiss Campaign (Ruban Blanc)



**Brief update:** The Geneva Campaign committee is in contact with an interested person in Bern who will continue the Swiss White Ribbon campaign after 11 years campaigning out of Geneva in French, English and German.

We will inform you of the new Coordinator-President of the Swiss campaign in due time when he is officially registered. The campaign is important as Switzerland is no exception in the yearly increase of violence and abuse against women and youth.

**“In Switzerland,** around 25 people die every year because of domestic violence - and 75 % of victims are women. Authorities and civil society are looking for ways to take action. Are such initiatives having an impact? And is the situation changing fast enough? Join the discussion with ‘dialogue’.”

**“Worldwide,** 140 feminicides are committed every day, or one woman killed every ten minutes, according to a United Nations report published earlier this week (26 May 2025). Even more disturbing is that the most dangerous place for women and girls is within their homes, as the perpetrator is usually someone close to her or her family. In 60% of the cases of femicide in 2023, the women were killed by their partner or a family member.

**Switzerland is no exception.** On the same day as the UN report was released, Swiss Interior Minister Elisabeth Baume-Schneider presented an interim report that analyses the measures of the National Action Plan for the Implementation of the Istanbul Convention 2022-2026.

**“Women are not safe in our country,”** said the Swiss Interior Minister, Elisabeth Baume-Schneider, “Over the past 15 years, the number of women killed by someone close to them has stagnated in Switzerland, ranging from 14 to 24 a year”.

**The Swiss federal government, cantons and municipalities** have identified three areas that require particular action: combating the causes of violence against women, a further training offensive, e.g. for healthcare professionals and judicial authorities, and greater awareness on the topic of protection against sexual violence.

**Worldwide,** 140 feminicides are committed every day, or one woman killed every ten minutes, according to a United Nations report. Even more disturbing is that the most dangerous place for women and girls is within their homes, as the perpetrator is usually someone close to her or her family. In 60 % of the cases of femicide in 2023, the women were killed by their partner or a family member.”

Source : <https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/swiss-abroad/initiatives-against-gender-based-violence/88363455>




## 6) 75 % - Leadership Training for Women & Youth: leading from the heart ♥ serving humanity.

(a program with ongoing research for examples).

WWSF continues to prepare future **events** to share organizations that “lead from their heart – serving humanity”

Due to unforeseen circumstances, WWSF had to change the date of our **planned Leadership Training Forum events in 2024**. The passing on of a WWSF member, who was also a contributor, obliged us to cancel planned initiatives in 2024, and convene our “Leadership Training Zoom event for women and youth” on **17 December 2024**, which was an enriching experience with speakers sharing their leadership from the heart.




### WWSF - LEADERSHIP TRAINING FOR WOMEN & YOUTH


*Leading from the heart ♥ to serve humanity*

#### Zoom Event / WWSF - 75 % Campaign


Join us on 17 December 2024 - 6:15 - 7:30 pm




**MARIA ELFRIEDE PRADER VAND**  
Founder-President  
Women's World Summit  
Foundation  
Geneva, Switzerland




**MINTZE VAN DER VELDE**  
General Secretary of  
Lucis Trust & Director of  
World Goodwill  
Geneva, Switzerland




**KRISTIN ENGVIG**  
Founder and CEO of  
WIN and WINConference  
Lausanne, Switzerland




**MARIANNE SÉBASTIEN**  
Founder of the  
Association Voix Libres -  
La Terre des Enfants  
Geneva, Switzerland




**ARIANNA PUGLIESE**  
Ambassador 75% Campaign  
Youth Section - Women's  
World Summit Foundation  
Geneva, Switzerland




**“When women, children & youth unite to create a more just world, it will be a force for the common Good like the world has never known.”**




**SCAN ME TO REGISTER**



For more informations: [www.woman.ch](http://www.woman.ch)  
WWSF - Women's World Summit Foundation  
P.O. Box 1504 - 1211 Geneva 1, Switzerland







Excerpts from invited speakers representatives. You will find the original texts on our website in English and French. <https://www.woman.ch/wwsf-leadership-training-for-women-youth/>



### 1) Maria Elfriede Pradervand (MEP), Founder/President - WWSF, Geneva, moderated the event

#### Excerpt from her speech

**MEP**, a social worker and change-maker, creating new pathways for a better world, thanked participants for attending the WWSF Zoom event on 17 December 2024 - **75 % Leadership Training for women and youth**

**discussion** - to share updates and learning from invited speakers about their humanitarian projects – *leading from their heart*.

**“Now is the time to bring the reality to our elected world leaders that co-leadership with women and youth need to become the norm to achieve transformational change in our world today.**

WWSF is engaged in creating programs that empower civil society, especially the women, children and youth, **(75 % of the world population)** to be included in decision-making processus, and co-designing with elected leaders the space in which we live, leaving no one behind.

The new era will need courageous and constructive leadership *that comes from the heart* ❤️ and represents and includes all of humanity.

**MEP** also shared the “WWSF -Dakar **75%** Conference Declaration (launched in 1994 in Senegal), which introduced the concept that “75 % of the world population cannot be excluded in decision-making processes. The Declaration is published on our website in English and French. [www.woman.ch](http://www.woman.ch) (section 75%).

#### **A few words about our Mission :**

- **Help advance** via our annual campaigns the advancement of women and children’s rights to live in a more just and peaceful world, where everyone can join the conversation for change.
- **Contribute to changing our present world order** to become more inclusive, just and respectful of Human Rights, and ensuring delivery of the UN SDG Goals - Agenda 2030.
- **Ensure realization of UN binding conventions**, and since November 2024, the elements of the “**UN Pact for the future.**”

## 2) Mr. Mintze von der Velde, Guest speaker, General Secretary of the Lucis Trust & Director of World Goodwill, Geneva, Switzerland

### Excerpt from his speech

“Goodwill is one of the most basic spiritual qualities of the human being and the great untapped resource **at the heart of every human community**. People of goodwill from all cultures, faiths and professions are creating, through their words and actions, a new world where sharing, cooperation and right relations are taking root and spreading.

**In promoting recognition of the power of goodwill in our time, World Goodwill has three primary objectives:**

- To help mobilize the energy of goodwill through education, and through subtle action with programs that draw on the power of thought. At the heart of every human being there is a reservoir of goodwill accompanied by deeper warrior-like qualities: the will to good and the will to love.
  - To foster a universal spiritual perspective on the future, centering on the idea that all faiths throughout history have anticipated an age of peace and justice, ushered in by a World Teacher who embodies divine principles. Despite the clamor of populist forces claiming for attention today, we believe that there is a rising tide of goodwill in the world today...
  - To study the causes of major world problems in such a way as to reveal universal principles, spiritual practices and actions that contribute to the healing, transformation and resolution of the problem.”
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## 3. Kristin Engwig, President of the WIN Network, Lausanne, Switzerland shared about existing gaps in realizing women’s rights, continuing unbalanced power distribution.

### Excerpt from her speech

“ ... Talking about women, why do we need to empower the women along with the children, the youth and everybody else? I think since a long time that I can remember there is this imbalance or this possibility or the lack of possibilities for many women. But it wasn't that we always knew it. I think I was lucky to grow up in Norway where I was quite empowered. I could travel; I could get educated. I had access to healthcare, so it was when I started to travel that I realized that that was not the case for everyone, and particularly not for all women. So, I thought, well, we need to do something about that.

So, I have spent most of my adult life post-university traveling the world and empowering women. And one of the things we see today, because some people think that, oh, it's almost obvious now that all the women are doing so well in school, they're doing so well in universities, which is true in the western world. But that's not the case worldwide. So, we need to get all over the world for equal access to education for all girls and boys and the same with universities.

But then we still see in the workforce, even in the most advanced society, we still don't have equal pay. There is a pay gap, so it's still not the same salary for the same work. There is a representation gap in the political organizations, even in the UN and in corporations in their workplace. So, in

positions of power, there is still not a 50 / 50 balance. There is also an employment gap. And in a way we can say we don't all need to work in a paid fashion in some ways. Maybe some women choose to be home with the children. But the thing is, the way we have organized our society and how you get your pension points, how you get your unemployment support, etc. You know, we need to make sure you have a foot inside the system so that what you are doing has this economic empowerment also, so that you have freedom to choose... “

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#### **4) Marianne Sebastian, Founder/President of “Voix Libres International, Geneva, Switzerland”** *(Due to a health problem on the Day of the event, Marianne sent us her speech which we share in part below).*

##### **Excerpt from her message**

“... Twenty years ago, during a humanitarian trip to the Altiplano in Bolivia, she witnessed the most abject poverty. Marianne’s humanitarian commitment has been recognized with numerous awards, including the International Prize of Human rights. With a triple background in social work, education, and literature, she has an exemplary career as a business leader, opera singer, and voice therapist. In Bolivia, her utopia of creating a solidaristic society led by young people from the mines, the streets, and the trash has become a reality: In 24 years, two million beneficiaries have managed to turn poverty into a positive strategy.

**Voix Libres is ranked as 58th best NGO in the world based on criteria of impact, innovation, and sustainability. It incorporates an innovative vision with solutions that emerge from the children themselves.**

The work of Marianne Sébastien invites us to explore the power of contribution as a path to personal healing. Love and compassion can transform not only the lives of others, but also our own inner journey and path. In this journey, voice and service become instruments of unconditional love, liberation from inner blocks, and awakening to a life of meaning and wholeness, a life of meaning and fulfillment. Marianne shows that serving and loving can create miracles in everyday life.” [www.voixlibres.org](http://www.voixlibres.org)

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#### **5) Ms. Arianna Pugliese, student & WWSF intern, introduced her vision for Youth Leadership** – *learning to lead from the heart - and increase mobilization of young people to become changemakers.*

##### **Excerpt from her message**

“... As a student at The Graduate Institute in Geneva (22-year-old), it’s a privilege to speak about something that affects not only youth, but humanity. Often, when we think of leadership, we picture people in high positions of authority, like political leaders or CEOs. But the truth is that leadership isn’t just about titles. It’s about vision, purpose, and above all, empathy. Today, that leadership is coming from youth, and I am proud to represent a generation driven not only by ambition, but by a genuine drive to build a more just and compassionate world.

We’re already seeing the incredible impact of youth-inclusive initiatives across the world. From local movements to global campaigns, young people are proving their capacity for leadership, creating their own tables while claiming their seats at the existing ones. At the individual and collective level: - The number of leadership initiatives and youth-led programs is growing rapidly,



with young people consistently demonstrating their creativity and drive to develop innovative ideas. Initiatives like the Youth for Change, the Young Activists Summit, Alliance for Youth Action, and many other youth-led platforms are amplifying their voices and making meaningful contributions to a wide range of global issues.

**At the national level:** Many countries are actively creating national youth councils to ensure that youth priorities— such as educational reforms, climate action, and access to mental health services—are directly reflected in national policies. Examples like Iraq’s 2030 National Youth Vision, Ghana’s Youth Climate Council, Rio de Janeiro’s City-level Pact for Youth, or Canada’s Prime Minister’s Youth Council represent real progress in that regard.

**At the international level: - Heads of States at the Pact for the Future** this year recognized children and youth as agents of change, highlighting the need for intergenerational dialogue and engagement. The need to consider the views of youth, alongside older generations, in policy and decision-making processes is critical to ensuring that we safeguard the needs and interests of future generations.

**The establishment of the United Nations Youth Office** in 2022 represents a significant opportunity to introduce a new model of leadership within the UN. **We must do even more.**

Leadership isn’t about experience alone, it’s about perspective. Young people bring fresh, innovative ideas that are crucial for addressing the complex challenges we are facing. They are the ones asking the hard questions and offering bold solutions. And it’s everyone’s responsibility to support them. - We need to dismantle barriers to participation - We need to invest in youth-led solutions - We need to promote diversity and inclusivity - We need to build partnerships and mentorship programs - We need to facilitate youth-led networks - We need to encourage youth entrepreneurship - We need to foster intergenerational dialogue - We need to recognize and amplify youth achievements - We need to normalize youth representation. Leadership doesn’t need to be top-down. It can—and should—be collaborative, inclusive, and heart-centered. This is the kind of leadership that youth are bringing to the table. And it’s the kind of leadership our world needs. We need to learn to lead our lives from our heart to transcend our war culture, invest in peacebuilding and create a world that works for All. “

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## 7) WWSF Participation in NGO Working groups

- NGO Committee on Ageing: Elizabeth Williamson, WWSF member & volunteer
- Working Group on ‘Violence against Children’: Maria Elfriede Pradervand, WWSF CEO

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## 8) WWSF - Board Members

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