

ACT Joint Statement UNGA80

“Reaffirm. Invest. ACT: A Joint Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls”

Preamble

We, the undersigned civil society organisations and feminist networks under the ACT to End Violence Against Women and Girls programme, state clearly: violence against women and girls is one of the most urgent human rights crises of our time, affecting 1 in 3 women worldwide¹. Nearly 9 in 10 governments identify ending this violence as a top priority, according to the UN’s 30-year review of the Beijing Platform for Action². Yet decades of progress, won through tireless feminist advocacy, are now at risk. A global funding crisis is denying women’s rights organisations the resources they need to safeguard rights, strengthen movements, and drive change.

Current Context

Today’s intersecting global crises—from the enduring/long-lasting impacts of the scars of the COVID-19 pandemic to economic instability, armed conflict, and the accelerating climate emergency have intensified the risks and drivers of violence. technologies, including generative artificial intelligence (AI), have been weaponised to amplify misogyny, entrench harmful stereotypes, and spread toxic disinformation targeting women and girls at lightning speed³. These overlapping factors have heightened both online and offline threats against women and girls, particularly women in public life, women journalists, women human rights defenders, and especially grassroots women’s rights organisations from marginalised communities.

Nearly three decades after the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, political commitments to end violence against women and girls ring hollow. Cuts to prevention efforts not only put women and girls at greater risk today but also entrench the conditions for even more violence tomorrow. At the same time, survivors are being turned away from shelters, denied legal aid and psychosocial support, and left without pathways to safety. Without urgent

¹ World Health Organization. (2021). Violence against women prevalence estimates, 2018: global, regional and national prevalence estimates for intimate partner violence against women and global and regional prevalence estimates for non-partner sexual violence against women. World Health Organization. <https://iris.who.int/handle/10665/341337>. License: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO

² Review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. Report of the Secretary General. 27 December 2024. [E/CN.6/2025/3](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/data/indicators/indicators.asp?LMD=1)

³ See, United Nations. (2020). *Review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly*. United Nations Economic and Social Council, Commission on the Status of Women (E/CN.6/2020/3). <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3849040>

course correction, governments risk not only abandoning the promise of eliminating violence against women by 2030 but of actively contributing to the rollback on women's rights -placing the promise of achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) further out of reach.

Strong and autonomous women's rights and feminist movements are essential drivers of systemic change to eliminate violence against women⁴. Women's rights organizations (WROs) provide life-saving services, mobilise communities, influence policy, and challenge harmful norms. Despite their impact, WROs face a worsening funding crisis. Between 2021- 2022, only 0.2% of ODA targeted ending VAWG, and less than 1% of gender equality ODA reached WROs directly⁵.

The funding cuts, anti-gender backlash, shrinking civic space, and shifting donor priorities are forcing organizations to reduce services or close, leaving survivors without critical support. A forthcoming report by UN Women under the ACT programme found that 41% of WROs surveyed have had no choice but to cut lifesaving services, including shelters, legal aid and psychosocial support, and around 42% are uncertain how long they can continue to sustain their activities.⁶

The human and economic costs are devastating for survivors who face long-term harm, while governments incur losses of up to 4% of GDP in healthcare, policing, and reduced social development.⁷ Without sustained investment, the cost of inaction will be staggering, erasing decades of progress and leaving millions of women, girls, and communities exposed to violence and impunity.

As leaders gather at **UNGA80** to mark the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing+30), governments have a unique opportunity to turn commitments into action. Without sustained and adequate funding, efforts to prevent and respond to VAWG will fall short. Ending violence against women and girls is within our reach —but only with political will, accountability, and resources that match the scale of the violence women and girls face every day.

⁴ Mama Cash (July 2020) Feminist Activism Works! A review of select literature on the impact of feminist activism in achieving women's rights. AWID (November 2020) Moving More Money to the Drivers of Change: How Bilateral and Multilateral Funders Can Resource Feminist Movement. Htun, M & Weldon, S.L. (2012) The Civic Origins of Progressive Policy Change: Combating Violence against Women in Global Perspective, 1975–2005. American Political Science Review. Vol. 106, No. 3 August 2012

⁵ *OECD. (2024). Development Finance for Gender Equality 2024. OECD Publishing.*
https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/development-finance-for-gender-equality-2024_e340afbf-en.html

⁶ UN Women, *Assessment of the Impact of Funding Cuts on Women's Rights Organizations (WROs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) Working on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls* (forthcoming)

⁷ Ashe, S., Duvvury, N., Raghavendra, S., Scriver, S., and O'Donovan, D. (2016) Costs of Violence Against Women: An Examination of the Evidence available at

<https://www.whatworks.co.za/documents/publications/68-authors-ashe-s-duvvury-n-raghavendra-s-scriver-s-and-o-donovan-d/file>

WE call on all governments and donors to:

1. **Adopt a whole-of-government approach** to end violence against women by implementing fully costed, evidence-based, multisectoral and intersectional national action plans. Ring-fence budgets and monitor expenditure across key ministries, including health, education, justice, child protection, social protection and prevention campaigns—to ensure coordinated VAWG prevention and response.
2. **Sustain and increase dedicated EVAWG funding through Official Development Assistance (ODA)** to ensure continuity of life-saving services and prevention interventions. Even small contributions, such as 0.1% of health and education budgets, could dramatically improve support for survivors. Countries that have already reduced their ODA funding are urged to make retroactive exceptions for EVAWG programming as lifesaving essential services.
3. **Increase direct investments in sustained, long-term, and flexible funding for women's rights organisations and feminist movements**, including those working in crisis and conflict and post-conflict areas.
4. **Adopt, implement, enforce, and fund comprehensive, evidence-based laws and policies to end VAWG**, in line with global standards such as the Beijing Platform for Action. This includes strengthening and expediting access to justice for survivors of VAWG, enacting laws on Tech-Facilitated VAWG, repealing discriminatory laws and transforming institutional cultures that reinforce VAWG.
5. **Increase investment in evidence, research, and field building** to strengthen evidence-based approaches and ensure prevention and response to violence against women and girls are sustainable and scalable.

To sign the ACT Joint Statement, [fill in this short form](#).



Signed by:

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About ACT TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN PROGRAMME

This joint statement is issued by **women’s rights organizations coming together under the ACT ([ACT to End Violence Against Women and Girls](#)) Programme** —a new game-changing commitment between the European Commission and UN Women as co-leaders of the Action Coalition on Gender Based Violence (GBV), in collaboration with the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women. Under this programme, women’s rights and feminist organizations coordinate their efforts through a [Shared Advocacy Agenda](#), which elevates their priorities,

aligns strategies, and amplifies their collective voice. To accelerate efforts in eliminating Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG), ACT is calling for: 1. Bold investments in prevention and responses to end violence against women and girls (VAWG); 2. Strengthened financing, protection and support to women's rights organizations; 3. Enhanced accountability, access to justice and the full and effective implementation of laws to prevent and respond to VAWG.