



Women's Platform

womensplatform.org

Jonna Monaghan, Director, info@womensplatform.org

Chapeau

As the Universal Declaration of Human Rights marks its 75th anniversary, the world is at a crossroads. Multiple crises are affecting individual nations, as well as the international community. Conflict, climate crisis, cost of living and political uncertainty is affecting global trust in institutions and democracy, while also driving migrant flows and affecting people's livelihoods. Women are disproportionately affected by crises, as the shock absorbers of poverty in families and communities, and as the primary providers of care. In crisis situations, women's burden of unpaid work increases as public services typically are less accessible, while women also are at greater risk of violence, particularly when on the move and in conflict situations.

Multilateral, global action is more important than ever. The Pact for the Future needs to prioritise this, and work towards increased global focus on implementing the agendas identified in the context, from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to Agenda 2030. Also set out in the context, this requires commitment from UN and UN Member States to rebuild trust, which necessarily involves addressing issues that have affected that trust, including racism, social and gender inequalities, and hate such as homophobia, transphobia and religious prejudices such as Islamophobia and antisemitism. Addressing global poverty, including the debt burden in the Global South is also vital to create a genuinely global Pact for the Future.

Chapter I. Sustainable development and financing for development

Sustainable development must be at the heart of the Pact of the Future and all decision making within the UN, as mandated by the Paris Agreement. The climate crisis is increasingly acute and felt worldwide, with concrete impacts on the everyday lives of all people. Women are disproportionately affected by climate change (e.g. water and fuel) and often experience violence from men while carrying water. Droughts, floods and extreme weather do the same, and leave affected people vulnerable. Disasters and climate impacts affect women disproportionately and entrench women's economic and social inequalities. Global North, where aid and support is provided, must take responsibility for its disproportionate contribution to climate change and its impacts.

It is vital that the Pact of the Future emphasizes all three strands of sustainable development—socially, environmentally, and economically. An equitable and sustainable future depends on this. Implementing sustainable development requires investment in education and green technologies, as well as strengthening social protection systems to ensure no one is left behind, and economies are more

Education must be a cornerstone of the Pact, as equitable access to education for all children and young people, regardless of gender, income or social or ethnic background is essential for their future skills and opportunities. Girls have not returned to education to the same extent as before-19 which is associated with poverty, and risks cutting back progress over decades; education for girls is a major factor in development and in reducing maternal and child mortality. Girls also need to have the same access to education in science and technology as boys; current evidence indicates major gaps, and also shows that women find it particularly difficult to enter and progress within technology industries, due to prejudice and inflexible practices. In addition, it is vital that the Pact maintains a focus on care as both a major economic

for the Pact are interlinked. The uniting factor is that joint global, multilateral action is key to identifying sustainable and meaningful solutions, while lack of such commitment is likely to strengthen backlash.

It is vital that the Pact is based on a strong foundation within the UN human rights and international law frameworks, as the minimum standards that must be upheld at all times. The mechanisms, resolutions and agreements set out in the initial context also provide a framework for creating change, and focus of the Pact process should be on cementing support for this. The Pact should also recognize that the process must be inclusive of all sectors in society, including civil society and grassroots communities. It is vital to build the overarching global commitment required to sustain change. This is also essential to ensure accountability for governments and private sector actors, while engaging civil society contributes to ensuring access to the widest possible evidence base to support decision making.

Finally, funding is essential to match commitments and make the Pact more than an aspirational document. The Pact should at a minimum recognize this, while the process agreeing a Pact should include exploring options to strengthen international aid commitments and flows on the priorities agreed. Priorities for action, supported by critical core funding within these areas, can create a major force for change, and together, can develop a Pact that future generations can hold up as a turning point. This, ultimately, should be the aim of the Pact, as it is focused on the future, and the future is not ours alone, but also belongs to future generations, whose life opportunities are directly shaped by our decisions today. The time is now.