



WorldYWCA

# More than 100 YWCA Women RiseUp at CSW 62

## YWCA women take the lead at the CSW62 Youth Dialogue

During CSW62, the World YWCA co-organised the CSW62 Youth Dialogue together with UN Women and a number of civil society organisations including FRIDA, AWID and WAGGGS. The Youth Dialogue invited over 200 young advocates from around the world to join discussions on the priority theme of CSW62: the challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls.



Leading up to the Youth Dialogue, the team held online consultations as well as focus groups in countries around the world to ensure that diverse young voices—particularly rural young voices—were heard. The team also selected speakers for the Youth Dialogue in advance, to ensure that there was a special emphasis on diverse and marginalised young women’s voices.

Several young women from the YWCA movement led working groups during the Youth Dialogue and Mercy Nzisa from YWCA of Kenya, was Master of Ceremonies throughout the day. Several critical advocates and policy-makers attended the Youth



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Dialogue, including the Executive Director of UN Women, Phumzile Mlambo-NGCUKA; and the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, Jayathma Wickramanayake.

The outcome of the Youth Dialogue included a set of guidelines and parameters specifically designed to raise the concerns of rural young women and girls. These guidelines will become available shortly and will help empower everyone to advocate at the national, regional and international levels.





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## Young women raise concerns at World YWCA & YWCA of Australia breakfast

Before the start of CSW62, the YWCA of Australia and Malayah Harper co-hosted a breakfast at the Permanent Mission of Australia to the UN together with the Global Ambassador for Women and Girls of Australia, Dr. Sharman Stone. During this breakfast, young women from the YWCAs of Samoa, Papua New Guinea, Australia, Nepal, Japan, Palestine, Sweden and Scotland, spoke up about their realities and leadership journeys.

The young women raised concerns about the increasing roll-back on their sexual and reproductive rights, inter-sectional feminism and how to raise marginalised young women's voices. They also covered body shaming, rural young women's concerns, how to rise as LGBTQI activist leaders, as well as restrictive visa regulations and how some sisters were not able to join them in New York. The Head of the Australian Government's Office for Women, Trish Bergin; and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, June Oscar AO; also joined the breakfast to listen to the young women's stories.

## YWCA delegates connect

Just before CSW, YWCA USA and the World Service Council invited all YWCA delegates at the event to join a reception hosted at the Yale Club in New York City. During this vibrant evening, women from all over the world came together to connect and speak about their work and their expectations for the CSW62 session.

For the first time in history, YWCA Brooklyn, YWCA USA and the World YWCA also co-organised a dinner for young women during CSW at the YWCA of Brooklyn's offices.



During dinner, the young women had an opportunity to share their work and their leadership journeys.

## SRHR remains among the top priorities

As a #SheDecides torchbearer, Malayah Harper, together with Deeqo Hussein and Lola Ahmed from Sweden, attended a reception hosted by the former Swedish minister of Gender Equality and now deputy Executive director at UN Women,

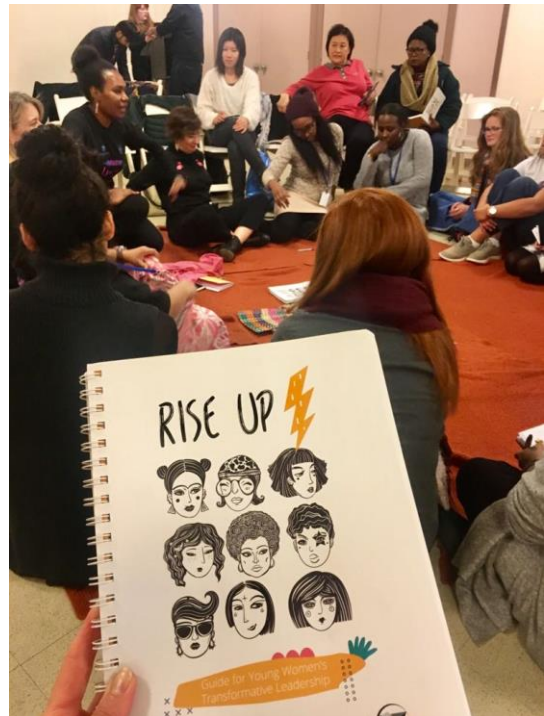
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Åsa Regnér. During the reception, Malayah, Deejo and Lola were able to meet with critical policy-makers and other #SheDecides torchbearers and speak about the importance of raising young women's concerns regarding sexual and reproductive health and rights during CSW62.

## Emphasis on young women

In line with the World YWCA's new strategy, we placed a larger emphasis on young women's engagement at CSW this year. To allow young women delegates to connect and mobilise on issues of top concern, the World YWCA office hosted a young women's training during CSW. The training informed delegates about both CSW processes and the World YWCA's new strategy.

During the training, young women delegates also spent time considering issues which they wanted to raise during CSW62 as their priorities. The YWCA young women delegates decided to particularly focus on the United States' strict visa regulations, and particularly how the United Nations (UN) could justify hosting CSW when so many women had been denied access to the country. Together, the young women delegates then mobilised further during the week and organised to ask UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres this question during a CSW Town Hall meeting.



## Young women launch global RiseUp leadership guide

CSW62 also marked an important point in time for the World YWCA, as young women from the YWCAs of Nepal, Papua New Guinea and Samoa launched the Global RISE UP! leadership guide. The guide has its origins in Asia and the Pacific where the Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia (DFAT) funded young women leaders from the World YWCA to co-create a global manual based on their local work.

Three young women leaders who helped create the global guide, Nirmala Gurung from the YWCA of Nepal, Naomi Woyengu from the YWCA of PNG and Soli Wilson from the YWCA of Samoa, led the launch event together. Malayah Harper and Amy



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Haddad, DFAT's Principal Sector Specialist on Gender Equality, also joined the three leaders to discuss how they as leaders can support young women's voices.

## YWCA's host diverse events

Several YWCA member associations hosted their own parallel events during CSW62 on a variety of themes. This included:

- **Using Technology and Innovation to bridge the rural/urban digital gap, YWCA USA and YWCA Canada**
- **The 13th International Helvi Sipilä Seminar: Rural Women in a Changing World, YWCA of Finland**
- **Faith Leaders Dialogue on Preventing Gender Based Violence and Ending Child Marriages in Rural Communities, YWCA Kenya**
- **Integrating Business Services and Policy Reform as Rural Empowerment Strategy in Palestine, YWCA of Palestine**
- **Japanese Gender Equality Policies from the Viewpoint of Young Women, YWCAs of Japan & Asia**
- **Accelerating Gender Equality Campaign to End Women's Poverty, YWCA of Nigeria**
- **#She speaks: Amplifying Young Women's Leadership, YWCA Australia**