



**Theme: Road to CSW69: AGYW Africa Humanitarian Crisis, Climate and Environmental Impacts on Women's Rights in Achieving Beijing +30**

**Date and Time: 25 February 2025; 0900hrs-1200hrs**

**Venue: Zoom**

#### **Background and Introduction**

As we approach the 69th Commission on the Status of Women in March 2025, we take a look at the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), adopted in 1999 that played a pivotal role in recognizing that gender equality and women's empowerment are essential to achieving basic human rights and most currently in the sustainable development. As we approach the 30-year milestone since the BPfA's adoption (Beijing +30), it is an opportune moment to reflect on the progress achieved and the challenges that remain in our pursuit of gender equality. This reflection is especially necessary in light of current humanitarian crises, climate change, and environmental degradation, which have significant implications for women's holistic rights. With African girls and young women (AGYW Africa) being intricately connected to the environment through their crucial rights and responsibilities of livelihoods through the land, agriculture, education access, housework, gathering firewood, collecting water, and caregiving, their deep engagement with natural resources is vital for fostering a sustainable environment for future generations. Additionally, the significant role women play in food security highlights the urgency of addressing the economic vulnerabilities they face, especially in the face of all their unpaid labour.

In Africa, women are disproportionately affected by climate change, making up an astonishing 80% of those displaced by climate crises on the continent. Their predominant roles in agriculture—where 60% of employed women in sub-Saharan Africa are engaged—placed at heightened risk from climate-related shocks such as droughts and floods. Compounded by poverty, limited educational opportunities, and health risks, girls and young women face a "triple burden" of climate change, gender inequality, and forced migration. This calls for an urgent, comprehensive response that emphasizes gender equality and women's empowerment. As we honor the enduring significance of the Beijing Declaration, fostering inclusive dialogue that embraces the diverse experiences of women worldwide is crucial. This pivotal moment in history invites us to demonstrate unwavering commitment, empathy, and a resolute determination to empower women as key players in the pursuit of a just and sustainable world. Through Adolescent Girls and Young Women Africa (AGYW Africa)

platform, TaLI and its partners bring the voices of adolescent girls to CSW69 Beijing +30 to ensure their amplification.

#### **AboutTaLI**

Tag a Life International Trust (TaLI) is a girls and young women's rights organisation working to advance the rights of girls and young women in Zimbabwe. At TaLI, we envision a 'Safe World' where girls and young women are free to dream, empowered to become whatever they want to be, a world where girls and boys are treated equally in every aspect of life, where children or young people will be allowed to be themselves enjoying their equal rights. TaLI is doing this by creating a safe place for girls and young women; building their agency and voice, so that they may create movements, as well as engage boys, men, communities and leaders to challenge gender norms while advancing their rights.

#### **Justification of the Regional Meeting**

Despite the commitments outlined in the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), significant gaps continue to impede the achievement of gender equality, particularly in the face of humanitarian crises, climate change, and environmental degradation. The increasing frequency and severity of natural disasters, conflicts, and environmental challenges signal the need for a renewed focus on the intersections between these issues and women's rights. Climate change and environmental degradation are closely interlinked with critical women's rights issues, such as access to education, healthcare, economic opportunities, and essential social services. The BPfA's identification of "Women and the Environment" and "Women in Situations of Armed Conflict" as focal points emphasizes the importance of sustained attention to these areas. The Beijing +30 review offers a significant opportunity to evaluate our progress, identify existing gaps, and reaffirm our commitment to addressing the humanitarian, climate, and environmental issues impacting women's rights. By working together, we can forge pathways for meaningful change and ensure that women's rights are at the forefront of our collective efforts.

This process will allow young women to come together to develop one strong voice for the concerns of the African girl child. Building from our past AGYW Africa conferences and efforts, including our 2021 communique, 2024 CSW68 petition, and the Summit of the Future, our young women will evaluate the issues that have been addressed since the last time we met and issues that still need to be addressed on climate and environmental impacts on women's rights and create a position paper detailing the outstanding issues. The meeting will also create a space for young African women to share experiences, ideas, and concerns regarding policy and structures concerning the girl child in Africa in relation to humanitarian crises caused by climate and environmental change. In line with the upcoming CSW theme, the event will open the discussion on how these environmental issues on women's rights impact and reflect the achievements of Beijing +30, allowing AGYW to vocalize the changes and suggestions they want to effectively address the needs of young women. The meeting will be online, on Zoom, and will include adolescent girls and young women from various countries across the African continent.

#### **Objectives of the Meeting**

- To amplify AGYW Africa voices on the international level on Beijing +30 processes.

- To highlight the humanitarian crisis, climate and environmental impacts on women's rights and to identify strategies for promoting gender mainstreaming and empowerment in the face of these challenges.
- To enhance young women's knowledge of advocacy on a regional and international level
- To bring exposure and promote cultural exchange among AGYW in Southern and Eastern Parts of Africa
- To build solidarity amongst AGYW and organizations that work with AGYW-related issues

#### **Expected Outcomes**

- Ensure AGYW Africa voices in the Beijing +30 processes for sustainable development goals.
- To develop a position paper that will be presented at CSW69 in March and beyond.
- To strengthen AGYW voices regionally and internationally