



## CSW61 Side Event

# Supporting Feminist Movement Building for Planet 50-50 by 2030

**Date:** Friday, 17 March 2017, 5 pm to 8 pm.

**Venue:** Great Hall of The Cooper Union, 7 East 7th Street.

**Co-sponsors:** UN Women, OHCHR, the City of New York's Commission on Gender Equity, ICRW, CIVICUS and Cooper Union; in partnership with Made in NY Media Center by IFP, Independent Filmmaker Project (IFP) and 30under30 Film Festival.

### **Context:**

For centuries the feminist fight for gender equality has been the fight for people to live their lives in freedom and justice and dignity. Women's lives tell the history of the fight for gender equality and the power of women's personal stories are the foundation of gender equality advocacy. Women's rights activists and civil society leaders who attend the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) every year have stories that offer important lessons in the history of the political advocacy of the women's movement. The CSW offers a unique opportunity to look at the lives and work of the women civil society participants and to highlight the way they are changing the world.

This is particularly important in the current context of a world beset by ever escalating inequality, intractable and relentless conflicts and discrimination. The increase, globally, of sentiments of conservatism and divisiveness has grave consequences for the ability to live in and shape a democratic, inclusive and plural political landscape. The impact of this divisive politics, which presents an overall threat to global solidarity and civil society activism, affects among others, women's reproductive rights; affordable healthcare; security for immigrants and minorities; civil rights based on race, gender identity and sexual orientation; environmental protection; scientific research and education; and social security and solidarity overall.



Notwithstanding this, a wave of progressive civic engagement, feminist resistance and solidarity is surging in the face of these politically challenged country contexts. Against all odds, including a famine of resources and threats to life and work, women’s rights and civil society groups relentlessly mobilize in countries and communities with creativity and resilience to demand public accountability for gender equality. It is crucial that this feminist mobilization and movement building is supported and strengthened.

### **The event:**

Leaders and activists from civil society, global institutions, and local and national governments will reflect on these challenges and discuss emerging opportunities for strengthening movement building to ensure the achievement of gender equality and the women’s rights agenda – Planet 50-50 by 2030.

### **Programme:**

#### **1) Film and Arts Festival: “The Personal is the Political”**

Thirteen young filmmakers and photographers from eleven countries will tell the stories of feminist activists and civil society leaders participating in the first week of CSW61 (13-17 March 2017), and produce short artistic pieces (in video and multi-media formats) that showcase their contribution to gender equality in their communities and countries. The multi-media pieces will be shown at this special event to celebrate the importance of supporting feminist movement building and the role played by civil society in achieving women’s rights.

#### **2) From “Me” to “We”: A testament to movement building.**

Testimonies from civil society leaders will elaborate how feminist movement building as an expression of political solidarity has advanced the gender equality and social justice agenda. Activists will share succinct, powerful testimonies in a TED Talk style.

This segment will include reactions/ interaction from the floor.



### **3) Leaders' Commitment to Support Movement Building for Planet 50-50 by 2030**

Discussion: representatives of global institutions including the United Nations and local and national government officials will reflect on the civil society leaders' testimonies, and discuss their own commitments, in their roles as leaders and policy makers, to support movement building for gender equality and social justice at the global, national and local levels. This segment will have a panel discussion format and be followed by interventions from the floor.

### **4) Evening reception: Celebrating, sharing and friendship.**

**Overall outcome of the event: Ideas and strategies for the way forward for how the UN/UN Women and stakeholders can support feminist movement building for gender equality.**