

Women's Recovery Month – International Women's Day 2022

~ Statement by the WFAD Gender Working Group ~

In honour of International Women's Day, March 8th, 2022, WFAD applauds this year's theme as highlighted by the UN: *Gender Equality today for a sustainable tomorrow – recognising the contribution of women and girls around the world in building a more sustainable future for all.*

The goals of Agenda 2030, for a sustainable tomorrow, cannot be realised without ***recognising the role that organised crime, trafficking, illicit production, and drug abuse play in undermining sustainable development whilst unequally affecting women and girls across the globe.*** To ensure a sustainable future for women and girls without the above-mentioned risks, it is vital to recognise and integrate the goals of Agenda 2030, including sustainable Development Goal 3 – ensuring healthy lives and promote well-being for all, with particular focus on target 3.5 – to strengthen prevention and treatment.

However, still this day, women face significant disadvantages within the realm of prevention, treatment, recovery, and reintegration services. With the lack of gender-specific and trauma-informed services, intersected by stigmatisation and violence, women around the world are hindered from accessing adequate support. Therefore, ***advancing gender-equality in the context of Drug Policy, ensuring equal access to services, reducing barriers in accessing these services, and reducing stigma against women who use drugs and women in recovery are essential*** to achieve an inclusive and sustainable development and ensure the needs of women are met.

Women and Girls as champions of prevention and recovery function as change-makers for inclusion and development. Their participation and leadership are needed when ensuring equal access to evidence-based and trauma-informed services that recognise substance use as a health care issue. whilst address housing, employment, and educational needs, which are all important in the enhancement of gender equality. It is high time that ***society acknowledges the important role of supportive communities and recovery champions in providing recovery-oriented systems of care.***

People can and do recover –***lived experiences and best practices are critical*** in the reintegration of women in recovery, and in showcasing that recovery is possible.