Let us show you what girl power looks like

Greetings everyone, my name is Cebile Manzini-Henwood, I am the executive director of the Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse (SWAGAA). Our work is essentially around prevention of GBV, providing support to survivors of GBV, promoting access to justice for survivors of GBV, and we also do quite a lot of advocacy work as well.

The work of civil society organizations globally began several decades ago. And discussions on how to harmonize this work, how to measure the work that's being done, how to assess whether the work is effective and results are being met. This has been occurring at a global level, at a regional level, and also at national levels.

But now the Istanbul CSO Development effectiveness principles actually provide a framework for ensuring that country-level responses actually do meet results. And it provides a framework on how to measure the work that is being done in a holistic, harmonized, coordinated manner.

For SWAGAA, we do this type of work in resource-limited-settings so the Istanbul principles are actually very appropriate and applicable. these principles actually enable us to look at the response to GBV in a more effective and sustainable way to see how, for my country, we can ensure that we are implementing the work that we are doing in a way that will best meet results in an effective way within a very resource limited setting.

Now the good thing about the principles, as well, is that they also provide tools for implementation. for example, there's the implementation tool kit, there’s the advocacy toolkit. and these, for us, are very applicable because we've been able to contextualize these toolkits and adapt them to our own setting. we've been able to look at these toolkits and learn from the experiences also of other countries.

Principle eight is perhaps the most relevant ones to us, in the sense that it's focusing on results and conditions for lasting change for people. In my country, for example, women and children are very vulnerable to the social ills and very marginalized. so now we are actually looking at, through principle eight, ensuring an enduring legacy for both present and future generations.

So all these principles actually do provide a framework for the work that we are doing, and actually enhance the work that we are doing as an organization.

One thing we know as civil society practitioners is that women face many barriers, and the complexity and form of these barriers to our development evolve over time. and so it's important to create and maintain solidarity and strength in the sisterhood with honesty, openness, and also acceptance of our differences as well as our strengths. And I have seen that in Canada actually and I am very encouraged by it.

I believe that we all have a purpose in life. And it is only when we begin to fulfill that purpose that we find personal fulfillment. I believe the purpose of those who have been blessed with opportunities and privileges is to share those gifts with those that are less fortunate. the purpose of women in the forefront of the women's movement is to pave the way, to chart the maze, and to break barriers as well as to open doors, so that others will be able to walk through.