

Committee: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN WOMEN)

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Topic: The Social, Professional and Academic Empowerment of Women.



I. INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, more known as UN Women is a committee established by the United Nations General Assembly in June of 2010, its main objective is to ensure and pursue the equality between genders as well as seeking the empowerment of women globally, taking into account the current global happenings and womens and girls needs.

UN Women works among governments member states of the United Nations in policy making, laws, programmes and services to ensure and pursue beneficial effects on the safety and equality of women. In addition the committee works globally to ensure as a reality the vision of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as well as the 2030 agenda. It also has 3 main roles which are to support inter-governmental bodies such as the Commission Status of Women (CSW), to help member states to implement and provide technical and financial support to those countries who request it, and to hold the UN system accountable for its own commitments on gender equality.

Gender equality plays an essential role for a peaceful and prosperous world, gender equality is a right that must be respected. The United Nations population fund, states that countries who have made social investments in education, have slower population growth and a faster economic growth than countries who have not made such investments to this and for the active and social participation of women including the empowerment of women, equality in education is needed.

In developing countries, women's value and integrity tends to be disrespected such as endangered. "Up to 12 million teenagers get married each year"- (UNICEF, 2018). Women and girls are forced to drop out of school to do domestic labor whether it is to provide

economic aid to their family or to become “worthy” for marriage, with the learning of domestic skills which in some cultures is more valuable than education itself; In the other hand women and girls who do receive access to education do not receive the same level of education due to prejudices and misogynistic behaviors linked to their gender this behavior towards women and girls great a learning gap between men and women, women's security in educational systems is also compromised since sexual harassment towards women is one of the main forms of school bullying. In addition to the fact that sexual harassment towards women also manifests in their daily life and their security and several rights get deprived as well as their social and professional participation.

II. HISTORY OF THE CONFLICT

1792: Several movements or protests were made for women to gain access to basic education such as Mary Wollstonecraft’s work titled “A Vindication of the Rights of Women” which created a great impact on today’s women education.

1837: The first only girls institution, Mount Holyoke Female Seminary was established in the United States of America motivating other countries of the world to do the same, this way providing women with superior education opportunities in an entirely female environment.

1837: In France the socialist Charles Fourier first uses the word ‘feminism’ to describe the liberation of women.

1840: In New York 1840, the first Convention for women's rights was held by the north americans Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott. On a declaration of sentiments and resolutions, they demanded for civil, social, political and religious rights.

1851: Sojourner Truth in her speech "Ain't I woman" raises awareness of the sexism women face.

1869: The University of London becomes the first British institution to admit women on equal terms with men.

1869: The first higher education institution in Latin America was established in Buenos Aires, Argentina in order to admit women as regular students.

1871: Cambridge University in the UK grants women the right to take exams and hold academic degrees.

1882: The Normal School of Costa Rica opens its doors to women, giving them the opportunity to train as teachers.

1893: In 1893 New Zealand became the first country to recognise women as citizens with the right to vote after 32,000 signed petitions of the women's suffrage movement.

1910: In Copenhagen with 17 countries present the second meeting for women's rights was held, demanding equal working conditions and rights. The german Clara Zetskin presented the idea of an international women's day, to put pressure on their demands unanimously it was approved.

1914: During the First World War, women started to take more active participation in non-traditional jobs which were only applied for men.

1919: Voting Rights are granted to women in various countries including the United States of America, United Kingdom, Germany, Netherlands and Canada.

1945: After World War Two, The United Nations was created to prevent belic conflicts and implement the participation between countries. In the United Nations letter the equality between genders is established as a global right.

1946: In the inauguration of the UN, Eleanor Roosevelt reads a powerful activist text named “An open letter to the women of the world” to encourage women to raise their voices and social participation in national and international matters.

1946: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights establishes the basic rights and the fundamental liberties that every human should enjoy regardless of their gender.

1950: In South Korea the Fundamental Education Laws were announced, establishing compulsory education for all boys and girls equally.

1965: In Brazil, the National Literacy Program was created in order to improve literacy rates throughout the country, including adult women.

1970: In Argentina, the National University of Rosario created the first national university to admit women in all professions.

1970: In the United States, Title IX is approved, legislation which prohibits gender discrimination in education, including access to educational and sports programs.

1970: The first global conference about women took place in Mexico, this conference opened a global discussion.

1979: In Iran after the Islamic Revolution, restrictions on women's education were implemented, including gender segregation in educational forms.

1979: The Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), an international treaty considered to be the declaration of women's rights, was signed. Which establishes on achieving substantive equality between genders.

1980: In Saudi Arabia women gain access to a higher education due to the opening of King Saud University.

1991: Law 30 was approved in Colombia, which guarantees equal opportunities for men and women in access to higher education.

1993: Internationally the forms of violence tackling women were recognized with the aim of eliminating them.

2000: In the first legal and regulatory framework of the United Nations, the recognition of the involvement of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts is established.

2000: Unanimously the members of the UN set the UN Millenium Declaration (which set the precedent for the SDGS). This declaration included seeking out the empowerment of women and gender equality.

2003: During the Liberian civil war, the activist Leymah Gbowee led several activism strikes to put an end to the conflict, the measures taken by Liberian women led to success. After the civil war came to a resolution, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was chosen to be the first woman head of state of Africa, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.

2003: In Saudi Arabia Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman, the largest university for women in the world opens, providing educational opportunities.

2010: In 2010 the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women was founded.

2013: The Activist Malala Yousafzai, talks in the UN forum about women's right to education, Malala suffered from a terrorist attack just for going to school which raised awareness on the unsafety of academic services in some regions of the world due to an inequality of gender.

III. CURRENT HAPPENINGS

One out of three women suffer from domestic violence. In 13 million, 1 out of 20 girls, between the ages of 15-19 have experienced forced sexual intercourse. Globally one out of four parliamentarians are women. The UN WOMEN committee estimates the wage gap between genders will not close until 2086 if the actual tendency is not counter. “Around the globe women are paid 20% less than men”- (International Labour Organization, 2022).

From the Arabian Peninsula to the capitals of North Africa, many women have been strongly protesting for their rights as part of an extensive movement called *The Pan-Arab movement*. This protest gives women global prominence or recognition, challenging society's perception that they are passive.; since then efforts have been made to empower women's education as well, the Ministry of National Education of Turkiye (MONE) and UNICEF signed a protocol agreeing to work together to achieve gender parity in 2003. In Iran the

regime forbids women from their liberty and free choice and women are protesting to have their right to free choice and integrity intact.

2,400 million women who count with the capabilities to work, are currently not counting with the economic equality of opportunities, 178 countries count with legal frameworks and restrictions as an impediment for women's active and full economic participation in addition in 86 countries women face these restrictions as an impediment to participate in the force of work. "Worldwide, nearly 1 in 4 girls between the ages of 15 and 19 are neither employed nor in education or training, compared to 1 in 10 boys" -(UNICEF, 2023)

IV. KEY POINTS

- **Gender based discrimination**

The discrimination of women based on their gender, affecting their mental health, security, dignity, social and political participation.

- **Sexual harassment both in educational and professional systems**

The inequality of security and treatment towards women affects their integrity and quality of education and professional development.

- **The unacceptance of trans women in social activities and working areas**

The discrimination towards transgender or transsexual women affects their integrity and social participation because they form part of the LGBTQ+ community.

- **The violation of policy and legal frameworks who look out for women's interests**

The violation of policies and legal frameworks established by governments to look out for women's interest, safety and rights.

- **Cultural and religious beliefs a barrier towards women's equality**

Cultural and religious ideologies are a factor that contributes to women's inequality by the enforcement of stereotypes and prejudices around a misogynistic ideology that result in harmful practices.

- **Harmful and violent practices against women**

Harmful practices such as, Child marriage putting at risk the integrity of women, their security, safety, social and economic participation as well as the right of free will and choice.

V. UN ACTIONS

Years prior in 1979, the General Assembly of the United Nations established the CEDAW, an international treaty to eradicate all forms of discrimination towards women. Currently, UNESCO has taken the following actions to increase gender equality: strengthening economies and building safer societies that allow everyone to fulfill their potential. To accelerate the achievement of gender equality UNICEF forms international alliances. Implements new strategies to prevent disadvantages based on gender, this implies forming alliances with national health systems, to increase the access to high-quality maternity care, and promote the professionalization of health workers, mainly women.

Achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls was added as a resolution in the SDG'S. To increase the economic independence of teenage girls and develop them as entrepreneurs, UNICEF invests specially on their education. In addition to developing support technologies for girls who have disabilities, expanding digital platforms, professional training and apprenticeships. In 2021 UNICEF signed and established an action plan to achieve gender equality, 'The Gender Action Plan (2022-2025)', Unicef claims the action plan to contain resolutions and actions that will deliver lasting results.

VI. BLOCK ANALYSIS

North American Group:

The United States of America as well as Canada, have made several and significant efforts to encourage the social, professional and academic empowerment of women such as creating several laws and policies to address the gender inequality and also including anti-discrimination laws, this in order to ensure equal access to education and protect women from discrimination in academic and professional matters. There are also several Gender-Based Violation Prevention and Support Services such as awareness campaigns, counseling services and help lines.

Latin American and the Caribbean Group:

Countries like Argentina, Mexico, Brazil and Chile have implemented legislation to ensure gender equality in the workplace and also to prevent gender-based discrimination. Many Latin-American countries have implemented programs to support women's empowerment as well as policies and laws to promote gender equality and women's participation in government contracts, in spite of this efforts, the countries located in this area still count with red statistics that are an impediment to an equality of gender, for example, women have a larger probability to report food insecurity than men per say in Belize the food insecurity is 10 points higher than men, according to the statistics reported by the UNWOMEN.

Women's physical integrity is endangered in their day to day life, in Mexico 10 women are victims of a femicide; in El Salvador a survey revealed that 7 out of 10 women have experienced some sort of gender based violence in their lifetimes and "Approximately every seven hours a women dies, just because she's a women in Brazil" -(The Wilson Center, 2020).

Southern and Eastern European Group:

Southern European as well as Eastern European countries have implemented laws and policies to combat gender-based discrimination in order to ensure equal opportunities in education, employment and professional advancement matters; these laws usually address situations such as pay equity, workplace discrimination and gender-based violence.

However, these countries have also taken action in increasing Women's representation in leadership positions and politics by reserving seats, making use of gender quotes and ensuring action policies to increase women's participation in the decision making process. Many of these countries have implemented initiatives or programs to support women's economic empowerment, these programs include providing entrepreneurship training, access to finance, mentoring and networking opportunities.

Asian and the Pacific Group:

Countries like Japan, New Zealand, Australia, South Korea, India, Philippines and Thailand have implemented laws and policies in order to address situations such as domestic violence, workplace discrimination and equal pay, Some of the Asian and the Pacific countries have also implemented creative actions or measures to increase women's representation in

leadership positions and political decision making, while in some other countries count with restrictions towards women that are an impediment to their full participation and liberty in society.

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