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UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
Background Guide 2019

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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2019 National Model United Nations New York Conference (NMUN•NY)! We are pleased to welcome you to the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women). This year's staff are: Directors Kelsea Gillespie (Conference A) and Mariam Bojang (Conference B), and Assistant Directors Johanna Barton (Conference A) and Anisa Ricci (Conference B). Kelsea holds a BA in English at Concordia University of Edmonton and is pursuing a joint JD/MA at the University of Ottawa and Carleton University. Mariam holds an MA in Political Science and Government from the University of Texas at Tyler and works for the Seattle Downtown Emergency Service Center. Johanna holds a BA in European Studies and is pursuing an MSc in Public Sector Innovation and eGovernance at the Catholic University of Leuven. Anisa holds a BA in Political Science with emphases in International Relations and Comparative Politics and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and is now serving with AmeriCorps.

The topics under discussion for the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women are:

1. Eliminating Child, Early, and Forced Marriage by 2030
2. Addressing Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies and Post-Disaster Recovery
3. Supporting the Involvement of Women in Governance and Decision-Making

UN-Women serves as the primary organ to promote gender equality, women's empowerment, and women's rights as crosscutting issues related to development. UN-Women works to formulate new standards and norms within the United Nations (UN) and support Member States adapting to these standards. Further, UN-Women provides expert knowledge to the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) on political considerations and reports to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the General Assembly on its operational activities.

This Background Guide serves as an introduction to the topics for this committee. However, it is not intended to replace individual research. We encourage you to explore your Member State's policies in depth and use the Annotated Bibliography and Bibliography to further your knowledge on these topics. In preparation for the Conference, each delegation will submit a Position Paper by 11:59 p.m. (Eastern) on 1 March 2019 in accordance with the guidelines in the *NMUN Position Paper Guide*.

Two resources, available to download from the NMUN website, that serve as essential instruments in preparing for the Conference and as a reference during committee sessions are the:

1. *NMUN Delegate Preparation Guide* - explains each step in the delegate process, from pre-Conference research to the committee debate and resolution drafting processes. Please take note of the information on plagiarism, and the prohibition on pre-written working papers and resolutions. Delegates should not start discussion on the topics with other members of their committee until the first committee session.
2. *NMUN Rules of Procedure* - include the long and short form of the rules, as well as an explanatory narrative and example script of the flow of procedure.

In addition, please review the mandatory NMUN Conduct Expectations on the NMUN website. They include the Conference dress code and other expectations of all attendees. We want to emphasize that any instances of sexual harassment or discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, or disability will not be tolerated. If you have any questions concerning your preparation for the committee or the Conference itself, please contact the Under-Secretaries-General for the Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs Department, Collin King (Conference A) and Martina Vetrovcova (Conference B), at usg.hr_ha@nmun.org.

We wish you all the best in your preparations and look forward to seeing you at the Conference!

Conference A

Kelsea Gillespie, Director
Johanna Barton, Assistant Director

Conference B

Mariam Bojang, Director
Anisa Ricci, Assistant Director

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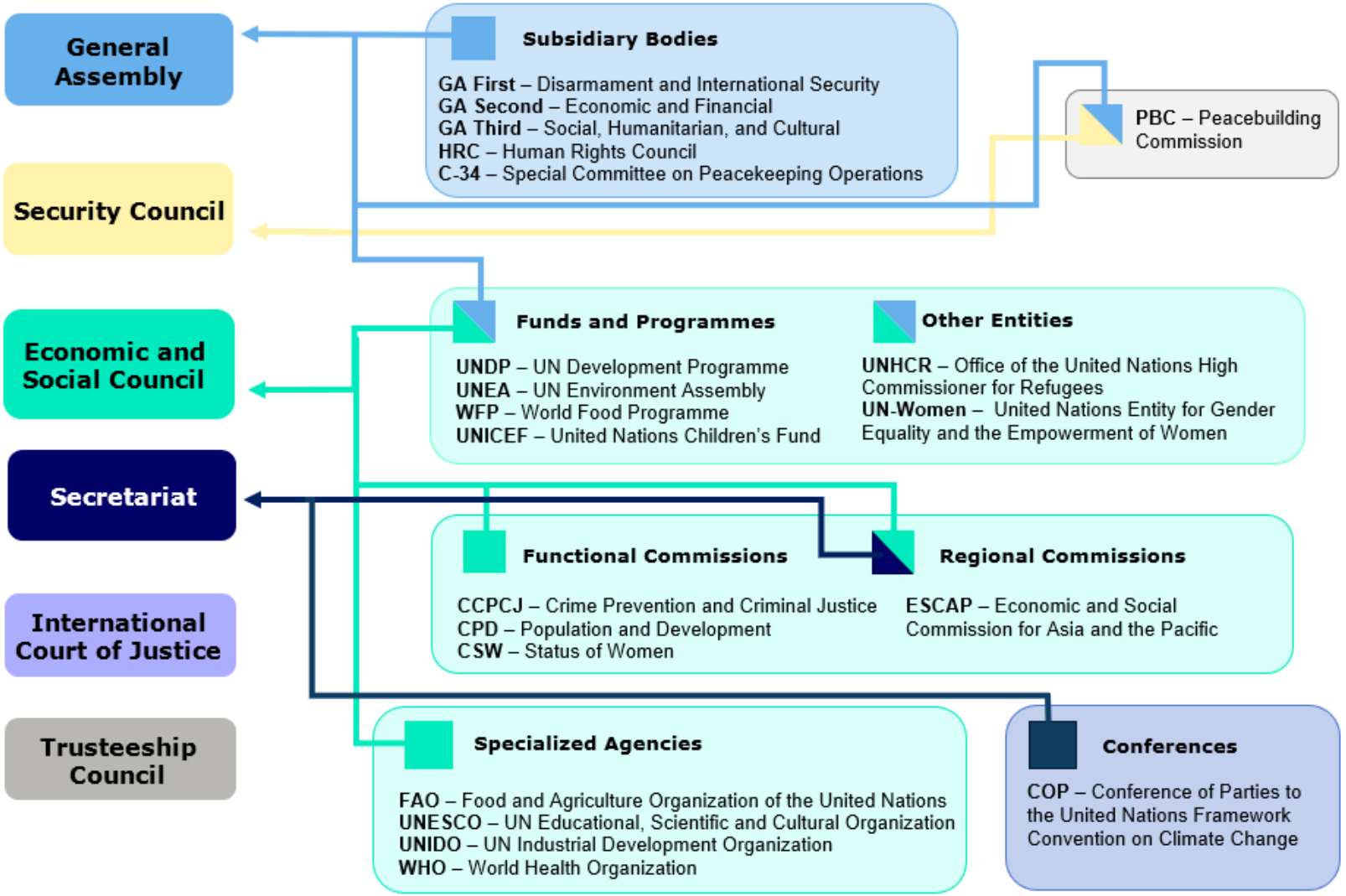
United Nations System at NMUN•NY

This diagram illustrates the UN system simulated at NMUN•NY and demonstrates the reportage and relationships between entities. Examine the diagram alongside the Committee Overview to gain a clear picture of the committee's position, purpose, and powers within the UN system.



Committee Overview

Introduction

Up to this day, no country has achieved complete gender equality.[1] With current rates of progress, it will take the international community 170 years to fully close the economic gender gap.[2] To advance efforts at an international level, the General Assembly established the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) in July 2010 with the universal directive "to achieve gender equality, women's empowerment, and upholding women's rights."[3] In 2010, civil society organizations (CSOs) and activists celebrated the decision of the General Assembly to consolidate the resources and mandates of the four existing gender equality-focused UN programs into one entity, in General Assembly resolution 64/289 titled "System-wide coherence."[4]

The work of UN-Women is guided by the principles established in the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW), the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* (BPfA), UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on *Women and Peace and Security*, the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2030 Agenda), which contains the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other norms related to women's rights and gender equality.[5] CEDAW and the BPfA are the cornerstones of the activity of UN-Women and provide the overall guiding principles for its work.[6] Over the past 15 years, UN Member States have also gained greater awareness and understanding regarding the role women play in peace and security due in part to the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on "Women and Peace and Security," and subsequent resolutions: 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013), and 2242 (2015).[7] These resolutions establish a foundation for improving the lives of women and girls in areas affected by armed conflict, and guide efforts at the international, regional, national and local levels.[8] Supporting efforts to mainstream implementation of these global norms, as well as the principle of gender equality is central to UN-Women's mandate and at the heart of the organization's mission.[9]

At NMUN•NY 2019, we are simulating the **Executive Board of UN-Women** in terms of composition and size; however, delegates are not limited to the strict mandate of the Executive Board, as a budgetary and administrative body, during the conference. On the contrary, for the purposes of NMUN•NY 2019, and in line with the educational mission of the conference, the committee has the ability to make programmatic and policy decisions on issues within the mandate of UN-Women in line with the overall function of the organization.

[1] UN-Women, *United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women strategic plan, 2018-2021*, 2017, p. 7.
[2] Ibid.
[3] UN General Assembly, *System-wide coherence (A/RES/64/289)*, 2010.
[4] UN General Assembly, *System-wide coherence (A/RES/64/289)*, 2010, p. 8; Women's Environment & Development Organization, *GEAR Campaign*, 2014.
[5] UN-Women, *Guiding Documents*, 2018.
[6] Ibid.
[7] UN-Women, *Guiding Documents*, 2018; UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/1325 (2000))*, 2000; UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/1820 (2008))*, 2008; UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/1888 (2009))*, 2009; UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/1889 (2009))*, 2009; UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/1960 (2010))*, 2010; UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/2106 (2013))*, 2013; UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/2122 (2013))*, 2013; UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/2242 (2015))*, 2015.
[8] UN-Women, *Guiding Documents*, 2018.
[9] UN-Women, *United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women strategic plan, 2018-2021*, 2017.

Governance, Structure, and Membership

UN-Women is governed by an Executive Board, which is responsible for intergovernmental support and supervision of all operational activities.[10] The Board consists of 41 members that are elected by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for a term of three years and are allocated by regions as follows: 10 from the group of African states, 10 from the group of Asian states, four from the group of Eastern European states, six from the group of Latin American and Caribbean states, and five from the group of Western European and Other states.[11] The final six seats are allocated to contributing countries, from which four seats go to the countries that provide the highest voluntary contribution to UN-Women and two seats to developing countries.[12]

UN-Women is headed by an Executive Director.[13] The current Executive Director, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, was appointed in 2013.[14] The Directorate performs the administrative functions of UN-Women and is responsible for human resources, including employment in operational activities.[15] The Executive Director also reports to the Secretary-General and works to improve system-wide coordination by seeking exchange with other agencies and programs both inside and outside the UN system.[16] The normative processes of UN-Women are funded by the regular budget of the UN.[17] However, its operational activities depend on voluntary contributions from its members.[18] In 2017, voluntary contributions from governments and member organizations to UN-Women added up to a total budget of $296.8 million.[19]

Mandate, Functions, and Powers

The mandate for UN-Women, articulated in General Assembly resolution 64/289, is to provide "guidance and technical support to all Member States, across all levels of development and in all regions, at their request, on gender equality, the empowerment and rights of women and gender mainstreaming."[20] The mandate is separated into policy and norm-setting activities, and operational activities in cooperation with UN Member States.[21] The work of UN-Women is a combination of four formerly separate UN agencies: the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI), the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Secretariat (DAW), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW).[22]

UN-Women serves as the secretariat to the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).[23] CSW is overall responsible for the formulation of standard-setting policies, while UN-Women is responsible for carrying out these policies in its operational activities in the field.[24] UN-Women also provides substantive policy support to the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), and the Security

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[10] UN General Assembly, *System-wide coherence (A/RES/64/289)*, 2010.
[11] *UN-Women, UN-Women Executive Board: Members, 2018;* UN General Assembly*, System-wide coherence (A/RES/64/289)*, 2010, p. 10.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid
[14] UN-Women, *Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka*, 2018.
[15] UN General Assembly, *System-wide coherence (A/RES/64/289)*, 2010, pp. 11-12; UN-Women, *About Us: Directorate*, 2018.
[16] UN General Assembly, *System-wide coherence (A/RES/64/289)*, 2010, p. 12.
[17] Ibid., p. 10.
[18] Ibid., p. 12.
[19] UN-Women, *Annual Report 2017-2018*, 2017, p. 46.
[20] UN General Assembly, *System-wide coherence (A/RES/64/289)*, 2010, p. 9; UN-Women, *About UN Women*, 2018.
[21] UN ECOSOC, *Normative aspects of the work of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (E/CN.6/2018/2)*, 2017.
[22] UN-Women, *About UN Women*, 2018.
[23] UN General Assembly, *System-wide coherence (A/RES/64/289)*, 2010, p.11.
[24] UN ECOSOC, *Normative aspects of the work of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (E/CN.6/2018/2)*, 2017.

Council in their efforts to advance the global agenda on gender equality.[25] UN-Women is also mandated to hold the UN system accountable for its efforts to mainstream gender across all aspects of its work, including coordinating the UN's work for gender equality under the 2030 Agenda.[26]

UN-Women's areas of activity include ensuring gender equality in leadership and political participation, economic empowerment, ending gender-based violence, issues of peace and security, humanitarian response, youth and girls, the response to HIV/AIDS, governance and national planning, and supporting the 2030 Agenda.[27] To fulfill part of its mandate as a normative body, UN-Women works closely with other UN bodies, programs, and funds, as well as CSOs and Member States, in designing adequate policies, laws, programs, and services.[28] Within the UN system, UN-Women supports CSW in setting global standards and norms.[29] It supports the work of CSW by submitting an annual report to the Commission informing it about the implementation of the Commission's policy guidance, and submits a second annual report to the General Assembly through ECOSOC on UN-Women's operational activities, as well as research, policy analysis, and recommendations for further action.[30] The chairperson of CSW can also be invited to address the Executive Board of UN-Women directly.[31] The General Assembly and ECOSOC can also request UN-Women to hold additional sessions when deemed necessary on specific issues.[32]

On an operational level, UN-Women facilitates regional conferences and meetings with CSOs and national policymakers and provides training for Member States to help them implement standards through technical and financial support.[33] This includes support in formulating new laws or strategies, working on national educational programs, training women to run more efficient political campaigns, or assisting CSOs in becoming national advocates for gender equality.[34] Depending on the area of action, UN-Women works together with other programs and funds, among them the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Food Programme (WFP), and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).[35] The results of UN-Women operational programs help drive the development of evidence-based normative standards and policies by CSW.[36]

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[25] UN ECOSOC, *Normative aspects of the work of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (E/CN.6/2018/2)*, 2017; UN General Assembly, *Comprehensive proposal for the composite entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women (A/64/588)*, 2010, p. 5.
[26] UN General Assembly, *System-wide coherence (A/RES/64/289)*, 2010, p. 9.
[27] UN-Women, *What we do*, 2018.
[28] UN-Women, *Annual Report 2017-2018*, 2017, p. ii.
[29] UN-Women, *About UN Women*, 2018.
[30] UN General Assembly, *System-wide coherence (A/RES/64/289)*, 2010, p. 11; UN ECOSOC, *Normative aspects of the work of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (E/CN.6/2018/2)*, 2017; UN-Women, *About UN Women*, 2018.
[31] UN General Assembly, *Comprehensive proposal for the composite entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women (A/64/588)*, 2010, p. 16.
[32] UN-Women Executive Board, *Draft rules of procedure of the Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) (UNW/2011/6)*, 2011.
[33] UN-Women, *Annual Report 2017-2018*, 2017; UN General Assembly, *Comprehensive proposal for the composite entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women: Report of the Secretary-General (A/64/588)*, 2010.
[34] UN-Women, *United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women strategic plan, 2018-2021*, 2017; UN General Assembly, *Comprehensive proposal for the composite entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women: Report of the Secretary-General (A/64/588)*, 2010.
[35] UN-Women, *United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women strategic plan, 2018-2021*, 2017, p. 3.
[36] UN-Women, *United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women strategic plan, 2018-2021*, 2017, p. 13; UN General Assembly, *Comprehensive proposal for the composite entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women: Report of the Secretary-General (A/64/588)*, 2010.

Recent Sessions and Current Priorities

UN-Women has a significant role to play in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the SDGs.[37] The 2030 Agenda provides a strategic roadmap for the international community to enhance human rights, ensure greater and equal access to basic services, and build capacity for the development of inclusive societies.[38] UN-Women is responsible for creating indicators for SDG 5 on gender equality, and has developed an action plan to work with Member States, CSOs, and other UN agencies to develop the indicators for reporting on progress for SDG 5.[39] Of the 17 SDGs, 11 have gender-specific indicators, while the remaining six do not include gender targets.[40]

UN-Women's *Strategic Plan 2018-2021* outlines the organization's priorities and expected outcomes, lessons learned, guiding principles, and outputs for UN-Women to achieve greater organizational efficiency.[41] UN-Women's *Strategic Plan 2018-2021* creates five key outcomes, driven by the 2030 Agenda, that intersect multiple SDGs and SDG targets.[42] The strategic plan notes that the organization's combination of a normative and operational mandate is beneficial, and although there is progress being made in achieving normative policy frameworks supporting women, peace, and security, that there is still a significant gap when it comes to operational implementation.[43]

UN-Women provided secretariat support for the fifty-eighth session of CSW, held in March 2018.[44] The meeting had a special emphasis on "empowering rural women and girls."[45] UN-Women's Executive Board held its annual session from 19-20 June 2018 at the UN Headquarters.[46] The meeting assessed the implementation of the *Strategic Plan 2014-2017*, as well as administrative and financial matters.[47] The report of the USG on the *Strategic Plan 2014-2017* highlighted important successes, such as increased visibility and media coverage of gender issues, but also noted the need for improvements in areas such as data collection and sustainable funding.[48] The Executive Board received a report on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 71/243 on the *Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities for Development of the United Nations System* (QCPR), which reviewed progress on UN-Women's core programs and initiatives.[49] The annual session also reviewed the summary results for the Fund for Gender Equality and the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, which together funded more than 145 projects and reached more than 390,000 direct beneficiaries.[50] These funds provide sponsorship of programs that directly aid women in: starting new businesses; gaining greater access to training and education; and preventing violence against women,

[37] UN-Women, *Turning Promises into Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2018.
[38] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.
[39] UN-Women, *Turning Promises into Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,* 2018, p. 53.
[40] Ibid.
[41] UN-Women, *United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women strategic plan, 2018-2021*, 2017.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid., p. 9.
[44] UN General Assembly, *System-wide coherence (A/RES/64/289)*, 2010, p.11.
[45] UN-Women, *CSW62 (2018)*, 2018.
[46] UN-Women Executive Board, *Annotated provisional agenda and workplan for the Annual Session 19 and 20 June 2018 (UNW/2018/L.3/Rev.1)*, 2018.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid.
[49] UN-Women Executive Board, *Annex III: Implementation of General Assembly resolution 71/243 on the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities for Development of the United Nations System (QCPR)*, 2018.
[50] UN-Women Executive Board, *Annex IV: Summary Results of the Fund for Gender Equality and the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women*, 2018.

including refugees, and women with disabilities.[51] The Executive Board met for the second annual session from 10-11 September 2018, where they discussed field visits, organizational and financial matters, and joint work with the secretariats of UNDP, UNFPA, the UN Office for Project Services, UNICEF, and WFP.[52] Another area of concern discussed at the second regular session included the implications of General Assembly resolution 72/279 on transforming the UN system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda and specific impacts to UN-Women.[53]

Conclusion

Since 2011, UN-Women has played a pivotal role in leading and coordinating the UN system in actions to achieve gender equality.[54] UN-Women's three part mandate of strengthening normative policy frameworks, assisting Member States in operational activities, and coordinating the UN system on issues related to gender equality positions UN-Women to have substantial impact on achieving gender equality globally.[55] Upcoming priorities for UN-Women include: work related to the SDGs, and more particularly SDG 5 and ensuring that women and girls are safe and free from violence, have access to decent work and economic autonomy, play a greater role in peace-building, and benefit equally from humanitarian responses.[56] While UN-Women takes action in a number of important areas, their work relies on cooperation from the international community and commitments from Member States to implement policies and frameworks that support gender equality.[57]

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> *This report of the USG of UN-Women to ECOSOC clarifies the linkage between UN-Women and the CSW. This source will help delegates identify the distinct features of the CSW as a functional commission reporting to ECOSOC, and UN-Women as a composite, operational entity. The report of the Executive Director of UN-Women will be helpful to understand how UN-Women supports and complements the work of CSW. The report highlights key CSW reports, the relationship with the General Assembly, ECOSOC, and the Security Council, and UN-Women's role in implementing policy advice and guidance from CSW.*

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women. (2018). *Annual Report 2017-2018*. Retrieved 7 July 2018 from: http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/annual%20report/attachments/sections/library/un-women-annual-report-2017-2018-en.pdf?la=en&vs=2849

> *UN-Women's annual report gives a comprehensive overview of UN-Women's programs and operational activities. The 2017-2018 annual report provides detailed information on the key results, by performance area for UN-Women, as well as reporting on trust funds, campaigns, and efforts to coordinate the UN system to achieve gender equality.*

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[51] UN-Women Executive Board, *Annex IV: Summary Results of the Fund for Gender Equality and the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women*, 2018.
[52] UN-Women Executive Board, *Annotated provisional agenda and workplan for the Second Regular Session 10 and 11 September 2018*, 2018.
[53] UN-Women Executive Board, *Preliminary analysis of the financial and other implications of General Assembly resolution 72/279 for UN-Women*, 2018.
[54] UN-Women, *United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women strategic plan, 2018-2021*, 2017, p. 7.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid.
[57] UN-Women, *Turning Promises into Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2018.

Delegates will find this source useful in developing proposals to enhance the work of UN-Women.

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women, Second regular session. (2017). *United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 (UNW/2017/6/Rev.1).* Retrieved 7 July 2018 from: http://undocs.org/en/UNW/2017/6/Rev.1

The strategic plan gives a comprehensive outlook on UN-Women's current priorities and those over the next years, including UN-Women's work on the SDGs. It also deepens the understanding how UN-Women achieves its goals. It puts the work of UN-Women in context of the UN system and explains how UN-Women is influencing the work of other UN bodies. Delegates will find this source helpful as it also clarifies the UN-Women's role in improving coherence and coordination within the UN system, as well as the key outcomes that will be achieved by the work of UN-Women under the guidance of the strategic plan.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-fourth session. (2010). *System-wide coherence (A/RES/64/289)* [Resolution]. Adopted without reference to a Main Committee (A/64/L.56). Retrieved 9 July 2018 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/64/289

General Assembly resolution 64/289 of 21 July 2010 established UN-Women and is the guiding document to understand the role and mandate of UN-Women and its work. The resolution establishes the structure and function of UN-Women in detail and establishes the UN-Women's standing in the UN system. Delegates will find this source very helpful in becoming familiar with UN-Women's mandate.

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women. (2018). *Turning Promises into Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* [Report]. Retrieved 9 July 2018 from: http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2018/sdg-report-gender-equality-in-the-2030-agenda-for-sustainable-development-2018-en.pdf?la=en&vs=5653

UN-Women's flagship report, Turning Promises into Action on the SDGs provides detailed information on the progress and ongoing difficulties in implementing the 2030 Agenda, specifically regarding gender equality. Delegates will find this report an authoritative source on how gender issues are incorporated in the 2030 Agenda, and how data is being collected, monitored, and in some cases, where additional data is needed. The report focuses on the intersectionality of issues that face women and girls, and how mainstreaming gender equality is a critical component in implementing the 2030 Agenda.

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United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women. (2018). *About Us: Directorate* [Website]. Retrieved 7 July 2018 from: http://www.unwomen.org/en/about-us/directorate

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women. (2018). *Annex III: Implementation of General Assembly resolution 71/243 on the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities for Development of the United Nations System (QCPR).* Retrieved 9 August 2018 from: http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/executive%20board/2018/annual%20session%202018/annex%20iii-%20qcpr.pdf?la=en&vs=5452

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women. (2018). *Annex IV: Summary Results of the Fund for Gender Equality and the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women.* Retrieved 9 August 2018 from: http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/executive%20board/2018/annual%20session%202018/annex%20iii-%20qcpr.pdf?la=en&vs=5452

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United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women. (2018). *Annotated provisional agenda and workplan for the Second Regular Session 10 and 11 September 2018 (UNW/2018/L.4).* Retrieved 16 September 2018 from: http://undocs.org/en/UNW/2018/L.4

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women. (2018). *Annual Report 2017-2018*. Retrieved 7 July 2018 from: http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/annual%20report/attachments/sections/library/un-women-annual-report-2017-2018-en.pdf?la=en&vs=2849

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United Nations, Security Council, 6196th Meeting. (2009). *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/1889 (2009))* [Resolution]. Retrieved 9 July 2018 from: http://undocs.org/S/RES/1889(2009)

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United Nations, Security Council, 6984th Meeting. (2013). *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/2106 (2013))* [Resolution]. Retrieved 9 July 2018 from: http://undocs.org/S/RES/2106(2013)

United Nations, Security Council, 7044th Meeting. (2013). *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/2122 (2013))* [Resolution]. Retrieved 9 July 2018 from: http://www.undocs.org/S/RES/2122(2013)

United Nations, Security Council, 7533rd Meeting. (2015). *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/2242 (2015))* [Resolution]. Retrieved 9 July 2018 from: http://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2242(2015)

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I. Eliminating Child, Early, and Forced Marriage by 2030

Introduction

According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), one in every five girls is married off before her eighteenth birthday, resulting in about 12 million girls married off each year.[58] Further, according Girls not Brides, a global partnership of more than 1000 civil society organizations committed to ending child, early, and forced marriage (CEFM), the global number of women married off as children will be about 1.2 billion by 2050 in case there is no reduction in the practice.[59] UNFPA has estimated that this number could double for those living in developing countries, where 40% of women are married before the age of 18 and 12% of girls are married off even before the age of 15.[60] UNICEF defines child marriage or early marriage as a "human rights violation of a formal marriage or informal union where one or both parties are younger than the age of 18" and deprived of their childhood and potential to grow.[61] Forced marriage, which is another serious violation of basic human rights, is defined as "a marriage that takes place without the free or valid consent of one or both of the partners, and involves either physical or emotional duress."[62] Although victims of forced marriage can be anyone, independent of age or gender, the most affected are girls.[63] Therefore, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), with its focus on the empowerment of women and girls and the protection of their rights, plays a pivotal role when it comes to the elimination of CEFM.[64]

UNICEF and UN-Women have estimated that over 700 million women globally have been married off as children.[65] The main way the United Nations (UN) system works to eliminate CEFM is through programs offered by UNFPA, UNICEF, and UN-Women.[66] These programs mostly raise awareness and educate women and girls on their sexual and reproductive rights to contribute to their empowerment.[67] The organizations have also been working with the international community to establish laws, policies, and programs aiming to eliminate CEFM.[68] However, despite some gradual progress on the elimination of CEFM, the changes have not been fast enough and CEFM still remains a serious area of concern.[69] According to UN-Women, the elimination of CEFM is vital for the promotion of sustainable development, as CEFM is one of the greatest challenges to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women.[70]

International and Regional Framework

The topic of CEFM is a very complex one and it requires the consideration of frameworks related not only to children but also to girls and women, who are disproportionately affected by CEFM.[71] In 1948, the

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[58] UNFPA, *Child Marriage*, 2018; UNICEF, *Child protection from violence, exploitation, and abuse*, 2018.
[59] Girls Not Brides, *About Child Marriage*, 2018.
[60] Girls Not Brides, *About Child Marriage*, 2018; UNFPA, *Child Marriage*, 2018.
[61] UNICEF, *Child protection from violence, exploitation, and abuse*, 2018.
[62] Thomas, *Forced and Early Marriage: A focus on Central and Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union countries with selected laws from other countries*, 2009, p. 2.
[63] UNICEF, *Child protection from violence, exploitation, and abuse*, 2018.
[64] UN-Women, *Remarks by Under-Secretary-General of the UN and Executive Director of UN-Women, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, at the CSW62 side event Accelerating Efforts to Eliminate FGM and Child, Early and Forced Marriage by 2030*, 2018.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Human Rights Watch, *Ending Child Marriage- Meeting the Global Development Goals' Promise to Girls*, 2016.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Girls Not Brides, *About Child Marriage*, 2018; UN-Women, *UN-Women: approaches to end child marriage*, 2012.
[70] UN-Women, *Remarks by Under-Secretary-General of the UN and Executive Director of UN-Women, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, at the CSW62 side event Accelerating Efforts to Eliminate FGM and Child, Early and Forced Marriage by 2030*, 2018.
[71] UN OHCHR, *Child, early and forced marriage, including in humanitarian settings*, 2018.

General Assembly adopted the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR).[72] Article 16 of UDHR deals explicitly with the ability of "men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, to have the right to marry, and to found a family."[73] Further addressing the situation of women specifically, the General Assembly adopted the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW) in 1979, which became one of the landmark documents on combating gender inequality and discrimination against women.[74] Article 16 of CEDAW outlines the importance of eliminating all forms of discrimination against women and girls on all issues concerning marriage, and the necessity for women to have the same rights as men in marriage and to be free to choose who they marry.[75]

In 1994, the General Assembly adopted the *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women*, Article 2 of which broadened the application of the term "violence against women" to include CEFM.[76] Concretely, the Article elaborates on violence against women to include dowry-related violence, marital rape, sexual abuse of female children at home, and harmful traditional practices done to women.[77] The declaration stresses the importance of women having the same equal rights and enjoying the same freedom as men in practicing their sexual and reproductive rights.[78] In 1995, the UN held the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, leading to the adoption of the landmark agreement, *The Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action*.[79] The declaration focuses on the leading causes of CEFM and how CEFM harms affects the educational and employment prospects of its victims.[80]

The General Assembly also adopted frameworks that specifically concentrate on children and how to protect them from CEFM.[81] In 1959, the General Assembly adopted the *Declaration of the Rights of the Child*.[82] Principle 2 of the declaration gives children the right to be protected from all forms of violence and harmful practices such as CEFM, so that they can develop in a free and dignified manner.[83] The General Assembly also adopted the *Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage, and Registration of Marriage* (1962), which further affirms the importance of eliminating CEFM.[84] The document calls for the implementation of laws eliminating child and betrothal marriages, and the abolishment of customs and practices that support the practice of CEFM.[85]

In 2015, the General Assembly adopted the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2030 Agenda), which has further accelerated the international efforts toward the elimination of CEFM.[86] Specifically, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 concentrates on achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and its target 5.3 focuses on the "elimination of all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation."[87] One year later, in 2016, the

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[72] UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration on Human Rights (A/RES/217 A(III))*, 1948.
[73] Ibid.
[74] UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (A/RES/34/180)*, 1979; UN-Women, *About UN-Women*, 2018.
[75] UN OHCHR, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*, 1979; UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (A/RES/34/180)*, 1979.
[76] UN General Assembly, *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (A/RES/48/104)*, 1994, p. 3.
[77] Ibid., p. 3.
[78] Ibid., p. 3.
[79] UN-Women, *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women (A/CONF.177/20)*, 1995; UN-Women, *The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women*, 1995.
[80] UN-Women, *The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women*, 1995.
[81] UN General Assembly, *Declaration of the Rights of the Child (A/RES/1386(XIV))*, 1959.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Ibid.
[84] UN General Assembly, *Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage, and Registration of Marriage (A/RES/1763 (XVII))*, 1962, p. 20.
[85] Ibid., p. 28.
[86] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.
[87] Ibid., p. 18.

General Assembly adopted resolution 71/175 on the topic of CEFM, which reaffirms all previous resolutions addressing CEFM.[88] The resolution calls for the end of CEFM as a harmful practice that serves as a barrier to girls reaching their full potential and developing both physically and mentally.[89]

Role of the International System

The international community has realized that, in order to eliminate CEFM by 2030 and support both men and women in achieving their full sexual and reproductive rights, UN bodies, regional organizations, Member States, as well as private and civil society actors need to collaborate and cooperate in setting up strategic plans and implementing policies to address CEFM globally.[90] UN-Women, which advocates for women's empowerment as well as the protection and promotion of the human rights of all women and girls, is committed to supporting Member States, UN bodies, regional actors, and civil societies in their CEFM elimination efforts.[91] Among other activities, UN-Women works by lobbying for new laws that raise the legal age for marriage, annul underage marriages, and raise awareness about the harmful practice of CEFM.[92]

In 2011, UN-Women adopted the 4Ps (Prevention, Protection, Programmes and Participation) Campaign on Zero Tolerance to Domestic Violence, which also addresses forms of intimate partner violence, and violence against women and girls in general.[93] With its main focus on social and community mobilization, the campaign raises awareness about how to prevent and protect adolescents from CEFM.[94] It provides services such as education, employment, and financial assistance to victims of CEFM, and also prosecutes those found guilty of practicing CEFM.[95] UN-Women has also developed programs that focus on stopping bride kidnapping, which is a common traditional practice where about 12,000 girls and women globally are kidnapped every year and forcefully married off.[96] UN-Women, in partnership with national institutions, has been able to initiate school-based educational programs that empower girls to be able to make decisions pertaining to their marital life and future; these programs have also helped initiate inter-generational dialogues to change harmful traditional practices and attitudes that interfere with boys and girls reaching their full sexual and reproductive potentials. [97] These programs are aimed at putting an end to bride kidnapping, as well as the practice of CEFM in general.[98]

Knowing that it cannot take up this challenge alone, UN-Women has partnered with UNFPA and UNICEF through setting global standards and partnering with governments and civil society to outline laws and develop programs, services, and policies that aim for the elimination of CEFM.[99] In 2016, UNICEF and UNFPA jointly launched the Global Programme to Accelerate Actions to End Child Marriage, which consists of a 15-year strategy plan to promote the rights of girls to choose their spouse and marry after the age of 18.[100] The program highlights and addresses the conditions that lead to child marriage, such as poverty and lack of proper education.[101] More importantly, through the program, UNICEF and UNFPA provide financial, physical, and emotional support for girls that are at risk of CEFM or have already been married off.[102] In 2019, UN-Women, along with UNFPA and UNICEF, will be taking part in phase two of

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[88] UN General Assembly, *Child, early, and forced marriage (A/RES/71/175)*, 2016.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Parliamentarians for Global Action, *Global Parliamentary Campaign to End Child, Early and Forced Marriage (CEFM Campaign)*, 2018.
[91] UN-Women, *About UN-Women*, 2018.
[92] UN-Women, *International Day of the Girl Child*, 2016.
[93] UN-Women, *4Ps Campaign on Zero Tolerance to Domestic Violence*, 2011.
[94] Ibid.
[95] Ibid.
[96] UN-Women, *Stopping bride kidnapping in Kyrgyzstan*, 2016.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Ibid.
[99] UN-Women, *About UN-Women*, 2018.
[100] UNICEF, *Join us in ending child marriage*, 2017.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Ibid.

the Global Programme to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage.[103] This second phase of the program promotes the rights of girls and boys to be able to delay marriages, provides care for those already married, and helps those at risk of CEFM to make their own decisions on who they want to marry.[104]

The UN General Assembly plays an important role in the elimination of CEFM, as it not only acknowledges the practice as harmful, but, through bringing Member States together and adopting robust resolutions, it also helps build political will to end CEFM.[105] In December 2015, it adopted resolution 70/138 on "The girl child," which highlights the role played by the UN in ensuring that Member States' commitments to eliminating child marriages are being implemented.[106] The resolution stresses the importance of creating awareness, implementing legal and policy changes, and educating societies on the issues of CEFM.[107] The resolution further recognizes the heightened possibility of occurrence and risk of child and early marriages during conflicts and other emergencies.[108]

The Secretary-General has made youth empowerment one of the top priorities on his agenda.[109] Through global movements such as Every Woman Every Child, launched in 2010, the office of the Secretary-General has been able to bring together Member States to address the challenges caused by CEFM, such as physical and psychological health problems.[110] With the help of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth and UN-Women, together with the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), these partners were able to implement the Salasel Joint Programme in 2009.[111] This program provides divorced child brides with financial support and the opportunity to acquire new technical skills and to improve their entrepreneurial abilities through skills training workshops, which in turn helps them setup their own businesses and improve their standard of living.[112]

The participation of regional organizations plays an important role in the elimination of CEFM, as they know the specific challenges in their regions and can address them better than any other actors.[113] Regional organizations have pivotal in helping develop laws and policies and in setting the political agenda toward the elimination of child marriages.[114] In 2014, the African Union (AU) launched its campaign to end child marriage.[115] The campaign aims to accelerate change across Africa by urging governments to create strategies, policies, and programs to raise awareness about the importance of delaying marriage until after 18 years of age, and to address the challenges caused by CEFM.[116] With the help of this campaign, the AU Member States have been able to identify the socio-economic factors leading to CEFM, and are moving toward removing all obstacles that serve as barriers for law enforcement to prosecute those guilty of carrying out the practice of CEFM.[117]

Education for All to Eliminate Child, Early, and Forced Marriage

Education is an important aspect of sustainable development as it helps boys and girls reach their full growth potential, attain their sexual and reproductive rights, and contribute to the economic growth and the improvement of living standards of their respective communities.[118] However, due to child and early

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[103] UNICEF, *UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage*, 2018.
[104] Ibid.
[105] UN General Assembly, *The girl child (A/RES/70/138)*, 2015.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Ibid.
[108] Ibid.
[109] UN Youth Envoy, *Through Film and Life, Rural Women Address Poverty and Early Marriage in Egypt*, 2013.
[110] Ibid.
[111] Ibid.
[112] Ibid.
[113] Girls Not Brides, *African Union Extends Campaign to End Child Marriage Until 2017*, 2014.
[114] Ibid.
[115] Ibid.
[116] Ibid.
[117] Ibid.
[118] World Bank Group, *Eliminating Child Marriage to Boost Girls' Education*, 2014.

marriages, boys, but especially girls, tend to drop out of school early.[119] This contributes not only to gender inequality with regard to the attainment of various skills, but also further aggravates the problem of CEFM.[120] According to Girls Not Brides, girls with no education are three times more likely to end up as child brides before their eighteenth birthday than those with secondary or higher education.[121] In 2018, Girls Not Brides estimated over 60% of women globally between the ages 20-24 and with no form of education were married before the age of 18.[122] Girls Not Brides has also calculated that each year a girl stays in school, her chances of getting married before turning 18 decline by 5.6% or more.[123] In addition to increased safety and security, girls who stay in school longer have better opportunities to access decent work and can make more informed life choices and decisions.[124]

In as much as education is an important factor to eliminating CEFM, its high costs and unequal access have kept girls out of school.[125] Poverty has been one of the leading causes of CEFM because parents often use child marriage as a way to lessen the burden of having to take care of their female children.[126] Moreover, the dowry or bride price received in exchange for marriage is used to financially sustain the family.[127] As a consequence, girls are often married young, as younger brides attract higher bride prices, whereas boys are often prioritized when it comes to education.[128] Even when girls receive basic primary education, early marriages still deter girls from furthering their education due to early pregnancies, marital and household responsibilities, and the lack of time and resources to attend school.[129] In instances where the educational facility is far away, parents use child marriage as an excuse to avoid having their daughters become pregnant out of wedlock.[130]

In reaction to this, development agencies such as ActionAid, Plan International, and CARE have taken the legal approach to promote laws on free and compulsory education.[131] The approach encourages parents to follow laws on birth registrations so that local authorities can easily determine a girl's age at the time of marriage and marriage registration.[132] At the 62nd session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in March 2018, the Executive Director of UN-Women, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, commended the efforts of Member States such as Malawi, who have annulled over 850 CEFMs since the state enacted a law in 2012 that made child marriage illegal.[133]

To keep girls in school and deter child marriages, governments also use financial incentives to prevent child marriage, where cash or in-kind transfers are used to make schools affordable for girls.[134] Some Member States have taken up the initiative to supply girls with free educational materials.[135] Other initiatives aim at relieving parents off the financial burden of getting girls educated and, through the provision of cash economic incentives such as livestock, they offer parents an alternative to marrying off

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[119] Ibid.
[120] Girls Not Brides, *What is the Impact of Child Marriage: Sustainable Development Goals*, 2017.
[121] Girls Not Brides, *What is the Impact of Child Marriage: Education*, 2018.
[122] Ibid.
[123] Ibid.
[124] Girls Not Brides, *What is the Impact of Child Marriage: Education*, 2018; World Bank Group, *Educating Girls, Ending Child Marriage*, 2017.
[125] Walker, *Why Ending Child Marriage Needs to Be An Educational Goal*, 2016, p. 11.
[126] Girls Not Brides, *What is the Impact of Child Marriage: Education*, 2018.
[127] Ibid.
[128] Ibid.
[129] Ibid.
[130] Ibid.
[131] Walker, *Why Ending Child Marriage Needs to Be An Educational Goal*, 2016, p. 11.
[132] Ibid., p. 11.
[133] UN-Women, *Remarks by Under-Secretary-General of the UN and Executive Director of UN-Women, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, at the CSW62 side event Accelerating Efforts to Eliminate FGM and Child, Early and Forced Marriage by 2030*, 2018.
[134] Girls Not Brides, *What is the Impact of Child Marriage: Education*, 2018; World Bank Group, *Eliminating Child Marriage to Boost Girls' Education*, 2014.
[135] Human Rights Watch, *Ending Child Marriage- Meeting the Global Development Goals' Promise to Girls*, 2016.

their children at a young age.[136] Concretely, the financial incentives often include a cash grant at birth and a long-term financial savings bond that can be redeemed upon the girls' eighteenth birthday.[137] Parents who enroll their daughters in school during the entirety of this duration are also eligible for additional bonuses.[138]

According to the World Bank Group, educating and empowering girls is one of the most powerful strategies to ending CEFM, as it provides financial sustainability, promotes economic growth, and improves standards of living.[139] In 2016, the World Bank Group proposed to invest about $2.5 billion over a five year period on educational projects that facilitate economic skills-building among adolescent children at risk of CEFM.[140] The projects serve as a learning and safe space program for boys and girls, and also include cash incentives that encourage children to attend and stay in school, and therefore delay marriage.[141] Additionally, the international development organization BRAC has been successful in setting up girls' clubs globally, where participants are 58% less likely to be married as child brides.[142] The clubs offer trainings on sexual education, financial literacy, and vocational training, and provide women and girls with the access to microfinance to become young entrepreneurs.[143] In 2009, Save the Children also introduced its Choices Curriculum project, which focuses on improving boys' and girls' access to activities that challenge restrictive gender norms and promote gender equity.[144] With the help of this project, boys are encouraged to see conventional gender roles from a different perspective.[145]

Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women as a Solution to Child, Early, and Forced Marriage

CEFM disproportionately affects girls and women, and its elimination is therefore needed to achieve gender equality and empower women, as called for in SDG 5.[146] Empowerment in this aspect encompasses not only economic empowerment for women and girls, but also the recognition by boys and men that women are important agents of development and societal growth.[147] Many communities have little to no economic opportunities for women and girls, which limits them from being able to earn an income and step out of the vicious cycle of poverty.[148] According to Girls Not Brides, child marriage is one of the factors increasing poverty among women.[149] Child brides often come from poor families, and their parents use early marriage as a way to secure their daughters a better future.[150] The Saksham Programme, inaugurated by Plan International in 2011, is one example of a successful project helping CEFM victims escape poverty and gain economic freedom.[151] Thanks to the program, over 3,500 victims of CEFM have been able to find decent work through job fairs and job training workshops, and over 80% of the program's graduates have been able to double their monthly income within 2 years.[152]

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[136] Girls Not Brides, *How Ending Child Marriage is Critical to Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals*, 2017; World Bank Group, *Eliminating Child Marriage to Boost Girls' Education*, 2014.
[137] World Bank Group, *Eliminating Child Marriage to Boost Girls' Education*, 2014.
[138] Ibid.
[139] World Bank Group, *Educating Girls, Ending Child Marriage*, 2017.
[140] Ibid.
[141] Ibid.
[142] Ibid.
[143] Ibid.
[144] Greene et al., *Engaging Men and Boys To End The Practice of Child Marriage*, 2015, p. 4; Save the Children, *Choices: A Curriculum for 10 to 14 Year Olds in Nepal*, 2009.
[145] Save the Children, *Choices: A Curriculum for 10 to 14 Year Olds in Nepal*, 2009.
[146] Girls Not Brides, *What is the Impact of Child Marriage: Sustainable Development Goals*, 2017.
[147] Ibid.
[148] Girls Not Brides, *What is the Impact of Child Marriage: Education*, 2018.
[149] Girls Not Brides, *What is the Impact of Child Marriage: Sustainable Development Goals*, 2017.
[150] Ibid.
[151] Plan International, *Saksham: Economic Empowerment in India*, 2017; UNICEF, *UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage Progress Report 2016*, 2017, p. 17.
[152] Girls Not Brides, *What is the Impact of Child Marriage: Sustainable Development Goals*, 2017; Plan International, *Saksham: Economic Empowerment in India*, 2017.

Men and boys play a vital role as community leaders in eliminating CEFM, as they tend to be the primary decision-makers in areas with high rates of CEFM.[153] The insufficient involvement of men in the discussions on child and forced marriages continues to complicate the work done by the international community with regard to the elimination of child marriages.[154] In addressing this gap, UN-Women, through its HeForShe campaign and the IMPACT Champion Project, encourages men and boys to be agents of change for the advancement of women.[155] It fosters the participation of men and boys in women's empowerment through promoting respective laws, initiating door-to-door community campaigns, and conducting workshops teaching men and boys the harmful practices of CEFM.[156] Being a HeForShe IMPACT champion, the Malawian government and the Malawian president's dedicated task force has partnered with UN-Women Malawi, advocating to change traditional practices that allow child marriages.[157] Similarly, through its Implementing Norms, Changing Minds regional program, UN-Women has educated men on the issues of CEFM having detrimental effects on women.[158] In promoting gender equality, girls' empowerment, and girls' rights, Plan International has set up the Football for Change Project in Honduras and Tanzania.[159] The project partners with parents, community leaders, and girls and boys to prevent CEFM by setting up girls and boys football teams and training coaches on how to lead discussions of gender equality, female empowerment, and sexual and reproductive rights.[160]

Addressing Health Risks of Child, Early, and Forced Marriages

With the challenges of being married at a young age, child brides are prone to several health risks due to being underaged, their bodies not being physically fit and prepared for a marriage and childbirth, and lacking the access to reproductive health facilities and quality health care.[161] Child brides are at a higher risk of contracting sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and other diseases, as they are less likely than unmarried girls to practice unsafe sex.[162] This practice also leads to more pregnancies among girls, putting both their health and that of their babies at higher health risks.[163] CEFM also leads to obstetric complications, such as fistula, and an increase in maternal and infant mortality rates, as children born to child brides are more likely to die at infancy.[164] Moreover, children born to child brides are known to be underweight and are more likely to have low physical and cognitive development disorders.[165]

To address the health issues of CEFM, UN-Women is developing a regional European Union-UN spotlight initiative to support regional leaders in their approach to eliminate CEFM through promoting sexual and reproductive health rights across Africa.[166] UN-Women has taken up the initiative to promote birth spacing and to make reproductive, maternal, and child health services accessible to the local communities by partnering with religious and traditional leaders.[167] Managed by UN-Women, the UN Trust fund to End Violence against Women also supports Member States through encouraging practices

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[153] UN-Women, *Young men help to fight early marriages in Kosovo's minority communities*, 2018.
[154] International Center for Research on Women, *Solution to End Child Marriage- Summary of the Evidence*, 2013; UN-Women, *Young men help to fight early marriages in Kosovo's minority communities*, 2018.
[155] UN-Women, *HeForShe Global Champions for Gender Equality*, 2018.
[156] UN-Women, *Young men help to fight early marriages in Kosovo's minority communities*, 2018.
[157] UN-Women, *Malawi Chief Annuls 330 Child Marriages*, 2015.
[158] UN-Women, *Young men help to fight early marriages in Kosovo's minority communities*, 2018.
[159] Plan International, *A Working Future and a New Era of Collaboration*, 2017; Plan International, *Changing Gender Stereotypes Through Football*.
[160] Plan International, *Changing Gender Stereotypes Through Football*.
[161] USAID, *Child, Early, and Forced Marriage Resource Guide*, 2015, p. 2.
[162] Ibid., p. 9.
[163] Girls Not Brides, *What is the Impact of Child Marriage: Sustainable Development Goals*, 2017.
[164] Ibid.
[165] USAID, *Child, Early, and Forced Marriage Resource Guide*, 2015, p. 10.
[166] International Center for Research on Women, *Solution to End Child Marriage- Summary of the Evidence*, 2013; UN-Women, *Speech by UN Women Deputy Executive Director Asa Regner on eliminating child marriage in Africa*, 2018.
[167] UN-Women, *Child marriage: "an affront to human dignity and well-being and an impediment to sustainable development"*, 2016.

and laws to improve services for women's health and reproduction.[168] These health laws are meant to promote later and healthier pregnancies, improve care, and encourage better survival outcomes.[169] AmplifyChange, a program led by Plan International, has also been successful at promoting and advancing sexual and reproductive health services for young people and girls, including comprehensive education on sexuality, reproductive health, and CEFM.[170]

Conclusion

In order to achieve the SDGs by 2030, CEFM needs to be eliminated because it contributes to gender inequality, violates the rights of women and girls, but it also serves as a lifelong barrier to its victims, hindering them in the attainment of their full potential.[171] Although the international community, and UN-Women in particular, has taken the lead in addressing the elimination of CEFM, there is still immense work that needs to be done.[172] Traditional laws that support CEFM, the insufficient involvement of men in the discussions on child and forced marriages, poverty, the lack of proper education, and other challenges continue to complicate and challenges efforts for the elimination of CEFM.[173] UN-Women, UNFPA, and UNICEF have assumed the role of being key agencies that oversee the promotion, progress, and implementation of initiatives for the eradication of CEFM.[174] UN-Women, through its multiple initiatives, projects, and partnerships, continues to be the leading agency supporting the work of Member States to eliminate CEFM through female empowerment, gender equality, provision of health services and education, and poverty elimination.[175]

Further Research

Important questions delegates should reflect on as they prepare for the conference are: How does CEFM impairs the achievement of the SDGs? What are some of the main barriers to eliminating CEFM, and how can these barriers be effectively addressed? What are other alternatives to marriage that parents can rely on to incentivize keeping their children longer in school? How can UN agencies, governments, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and civil society promote laws and policies that are geared toward the elimination of CEFM? How can the participation of women and girls as well as men and boys in the elimination of CEFM be advanced? What are the benefits obtained by both men and women from its elimination? How does eliminating CEFM improve the international economy? How can programs, projects, and institutions be improved to facilitate a faster pace in eliminating CEFM?

Annotated Bibliography

Girls Not Brides. (2017). *How ending child marriage is critical to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals*. Retrieved 8 July 2018 from: https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Child-marriage-and-achieving-the-SDGs_DAC.pdf

Girls not Brides is a global partnership geared toward ending child marriage. It comprises over 900 CSO representing over 95 Member States from Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Europe, and the Americas. The website provides an excellent overview of the work various CSO are doing to end child marriage, and to make sure that every girl lives a life that she chooses. The website also creates global awareness on the issues of child marriage, and elaborates on how to eliminate CEFM, including through tailored laws, policies, and programs. Delegates should be familiar with the information covered on the

[168] UN-Women, *Young men help to fight early marriages in Kosovo's minority communities*, 2018.
[169] UN-Women, *Speech by UN Women Deputy Executive Director Asa Regner on eliminating child marriage in Africa*, 2018.
[170] AmplifyChange, *Sexual Health of Young People*, 2018; International Center for Research on Women, *Solution to End Child Marriage- Summary of the Evidence*, 2013.
[171] International Center for Research on Women, *Solution to End Child Marriage- Summary of the Evidence*, 2013.
[172] Ibid.
[173] Ibid.
[174] Ibid.
[175] Ibid.

website and focus primarily on the contents on how to eliminate child marriages, as it is critical in achieving goals set by the sustainable development agenda.

Greene, M. et al. (2015). *Engaging Men and Boys to End the Practice of Child Marriage*. GreeneWorks & Promundo. Retrieved 17 August 2018 from: https://promundoglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Engaging-Men-and-Boys-to-End-the-Practice-of-Child-Marriage1.pdf

The report is aimed at creating awareness on the issues of CEFM and how the involvement of men and boys can be promoted to eliminate the practice. The focus of the report is to encourage social and community mobilization as well as facilitating dialogue to address the challenges faced by victims of domestic violence and CEFM. The report informs delegates on how the involvement of men and boys in the elimination of CEFM is important as it helps challenge gender norms, recognizes women as equal agents, and promotes the involvement of both women and men in making decisions that impact their lives, health, and future.

Human Rights Watch. (2016). *Ending Child Marriage- Meeting the Global Development Goals' Promise to Girls*. Retrieved 8 July 2018 from: https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2016/ending-child-marriage

Human Rights Watch has conducted investigations on child marriage in different parts of the world, and this report contains individual stories of children married off at a young age. The personal stories will help delegates get a better understanding of what these girls and boys have gone through. The report is also an excellent source for delegates, as it provides information on current progress by Member States in addressing human rights violations related to CEFM, and offers recommendations on how to best address child marriage and related issues.

International Center for Research on Women. (2013). *Solutions to End Child Marriage: Summary of the Evidence*. Retrieved 8 July 2018 from: https://www.icrw.org/publications/solutions-to-end-child-marriage-2/

The International Center for Research on Women is one of the world's leading institutions addressing a variety of issues affecting the lives of women and girls worldwide. The institution is one of the first to conduct research as well as engage in advocacy on the issues of CEFM. The center's research provides detailed information on the root causes of child marriage and recommends actions that can be taken to prevent girls from being forced into early marriages. The report is also equipped with details on how girls that are already married can best be supported through programs and community integration. The report is a great source of information for delegates as it provides policy recommendations for both national and international policymakers that they can build upon when developing solutions for their own communities.

Plan International. (2016). *A Working Future and a New Era of Collaboration*. Retrieved 16 August 2018 from: https://plan-international.org/publications/working-future-and-new-era-collaboration

Plan International is a development and humanitarian organization working to promote children's rights and achieve equality for girls. The organization has set up different programs around the world to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, and has partnered with governments as well as UN agencies to achieve sustainable development. The report highlights the importance of partnerships between the intergovernmental organizations, CSOs, and the private sector to address social issues while generating economic growth. Delegates will find this source useful as it highlights some of the work Plan International is doing to eliminate gender role stereotypes, promote education and skills development for women, boys, and girls, and find ways by which girls can be kept longer in schools.

United Nations Children's Fund. (2017). *UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage Progress Report 2016*. Retrieved 15 August 2018 from: https://www.unicef.org/protection/files/ChildMarriage-Global-DonorReport-v7.pdf

The UNFPA-UNICEF Progress Report serves as a source for delegates to explore ways in which ending child marriage will help break the cycle of poverty. The report provides

information on the benefits of giving women and girls the ability to fully participate in society and contribute to nation-building as they wish. The report explores ways by which the elimination of CEFM promotes female empowerment and education, and how this will help women succeed and care for their children, leading to healthier families. The report also provides delegates with statistical analysis and data of each Member States' progress on eliminating child marriage, as well as recommendations on what can be done to end CEFM.

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. (2015, September 17). *Malawi Chief Annuls 330 Child Marriages* [News Article]. Retrieved 21 September 2018 from: http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2015/9/malawi-chief-annuls-330-child-marriages

This news article is a great example of the involvement of the national authorities and traditional leaders in the elimination of CEFM. It tells the story of a female village chief in Malawi that successfully annulled the marriages of 330 girl brides and young husbands through partnership with UN-Women Malawi. Through consistent advocacy, lobbying, and legislative training, these partners were able to change customs and laws that previously supported CEFM. One of the positive outcomes was also keeping girls longer in school and promoting women empowerment and gender equality. The article demonstrates the importance of partnerships and delegates should use it as inspiration when developing their own solutions to ending CEFM.

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. Retrieved 7 August 2018 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/70/1

The resolution serves as the groundbreaking document set by world leaders to adopt the SDGs, which succeed and build on the MDGs. It redefines the development agenda of the UN system and serves as the main plan of action in achieving the universal agenda in many dimensions. It is an excellent source of information with regards to the general identification of each goal to be achieved in the next 15 years. The resolution contains an overview of the history of child marriage and international definitions of CEFM. It also touches on important topics that the international community is facing regarding CEFM, and explains how child marriages affect women's growth and their opportunities to contribute to the economy. The resolution also goes into detail on international laws and agreements that address CEFM, and further highlights how the international community is contributing to ending child marriage.

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventy-first session. (2016). *Child, Early, and Forced Marriage (A/RES/71/175)* [Resolution]. Adopted on the report of the Third Committee (A/71/480). Retrieved 7 July 2018 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/71/175

As the main outcome document at the General Assembly 71st session on Ending Child, Early, and Forced Marriage in 2016, the resolution highlights Member States' commitments to ending child marriage and empowering women and girls. The resolution helps to frame the concept of CEFM and identifies several benefits by which the elimination of CEFM can help achieve the SDGs. Importantly, the resolution invites the UN system, in cooperation with relevant partners and international organizations, to coordinate programs and policies relating to education, the exchange of best practices, civil society engagement, and the establishment of platforms that can assist in eliminating CEFM. The resolution provides delegates with useful information on current targets and strategies toward the elimination of CEFM.

World Bank Group. (2017, August 24). *Educating Girls, Ending Child Marriage*. Retrieved 14 August 2018 from: https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/immersive-story/2017/08/22/educating-girls-ending-child-marriage

This World Bank Group news article contains testimonials from victims of child marriage as well as older women who have been married off before the age of 18. The article highlights some of the work being done by World Bank Group as well as its partnerships

with governments of numerous Member States. With the help of this article, delegates will be informed on some of the ongoing international programs geared toward keeping girls in school and providing them with safety and security, which can be achieved through quality education, sexual and reproductive health services, skills training, as well as financial incentives for parents to keep their daughters in school. The article is a valuable information tool for delegates as it also gives estimates and statistics on the international community's progress in eliminating CEFM and the progress attained in achieving the SDGs by 2030 through ending CEFM.

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II. Addressing Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies and Post-Disaster Recovery

Introduction

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) strives to end gender-based violence (GBV) in emergencies and post-disaster-recovery, as it presents a grave violation of human rights.[176] The use of the term GBV came into existence in 1993 with the adoption of the *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women* (DEVAW) by the General Assembly.[177] GBV is associated with gender-based motivated violence that is disproportionately perpetrated against women and girls, including the infliction of physical, mental, or sexual abuses.[178] Abuse and exploitation occur in the form of rape and attempted rape, as well as sexual exploitation, forced early marriage, domestic violence, marital rape, trafficking, and female genital mutilation.[179] Consequences that result from acts of GBV include: "sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancy, emotional and psychological consequences like guilt and shame, and social consequences like isolation and rejection."[180] These physical consequences may lead to long-term damage, as women who have experienced violence are "twice as likely to experience depression, almost twice as likely to have alcohol use disorders, and 16% more likely to have a low birth-weight baby."[181] The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) estimates that 35% of women worldwide have experienced physical and/or sexual violence, with regional incidences ranging from 16.3% in East Asia to 65.64% in Central sub-Saharan Africa.[182] Due to a growing number of disasters, greater unpredictability resulting from climate change, more extensive conflicts, and increasingly challenging emergencies, there has been a considerable increase in concern over GBV in the international community.[183]

Hazardous events including tropical cyclones, floods, earthquakes, or disease, can disrupt the functioning of communities and often result in conditions of exposure and vulnerability for women and girls, and to a lesser extent for men and boys.[184] The breakdown of normal protection structures makes women and girls in emergencies and post-disaster recovery more vulnerable to being raped, abused, or violated.[185] According to statistics, up to 70% of women are affected by GBV in emergency and post-disaster situations.[186] A recent survey indicates that in the Western Pacific Region, a region that is heavily affected by natural disasters, over 60% of women have experienced GBV.[187] While there is a good deal of information on GBV during conflict, there is far less understanding by the international community and humanitarian responders about the occurrence of GBV during emergencies and in their aftermath.[188]

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International and Regional Framework

The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948) is the primary international legal instrument for addressing violence against women.[189] GBV primarily violates articles 1, 2, 3, and 5, which highlight every persons' right to dignity, liberty, and security of person, as well as freedom from cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment without distinction based on sex.[190] Additionally, the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW), adopted by the General Assembly in 1979, is often referred to as the bill of rights for women.[191] The Convention is a legally binding treaty that provides an internationally recognized definition of what is considered discrimination against women and provides recommendations for Member States on how to end gender-based discrimination.[192]

DEVAW revives key elements from UDHR and CEDAW, and focused specifically to GBV.[193] After the adoption of DEVAW, the issue of GBV in disasters has been explicitly addressed in other international declarations, such as the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, (BPfA) adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995.[194] It provides institutional and financial arrangements at national, regional, and international level that can be taken to reach the declarations strategic objectives outlined in chapter five.[195] Existing regional frameworks addressing violence against women include the *Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women* (1994), the *Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's rights of Women in Africa* (2003) and the *Istanbul Convention* (2011).[196] While these frameworks address the issue of GBV, they discuss GBV more broadly and fail to provide specific provisions on GBV that occurs in emergencies and post-disaster recovery.[197]

The *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015* (2005) and the subsequent *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030* (Sendai Framework) (2015) both discuss the incidence of GBV in post-disaster recovery; the frameworks call for a gender perspective to be included throughout disaster risk reduction efforts to combat this problem.[198] The Hyogo Framework "suggests the integration of a gender perspective into all disaster risk management policies, plans, and decision-making processes, including those related to risk assessment, early warning, information management, and education and training as a preventive measure to GBV in post-disaster recovery."[199] It does so by suggesting five priority actions to focus on: policy implementation, monitoring, innovation, risk reduction, and disaster preparedness. [200] The Sendai Framework considers the promotion of an equitable and accessible response, recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction process, as the key to reducing and eliminating physical abuse of vulnerable groups, including women and girls.[201] It additionally highlights the role of stakeholders in civil society, academia, business, and media in the fight against GBV in emergencies and post-disaster recovery.[202]

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[201] UN General Assembly, *Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (A/RES/69/283)*, 2015, p. 21.
[202] Ibid.

The elimination of violence against women is also embedded in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) contained in the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2030 Agenda), adopted in 2015.[203] Target two of SDG 5 aims to "[e]liminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation."[204] SDG 16 on peace, justice, and strong institutions, and specifically target one also calls on the international community to reduce all forms of violence, including the rate of physical, sexual, and psychological violence.[205]

Role of the International System

To ensure the implementation of the Sendai Framework, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) created the *United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience: Towards a Risk-informed and Integrated Approach to Sustainable Development* (UN Plan of Action) (2016).[206] As a member of the UN Disaster Risk Reduction focal points group, UN-Women plays an active role in revising the UN Plan of Action to strengthen the integration of gender in disaster risk reduction to prevent GBV in emergency and post-disaster recovery.[207]

Along with the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), and others, UN-Women is a member of the Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility (GBV AoR) working group, established in 2008.[208] The GBV AoR aims to "facilitate a more predictable, accountable, and effective protection response to GBV in complex emergencies, natural disasters, and other such situations."[209] GBV AoR works by providing support to field operations in the form of technical support, knowledge, and capacity-building.[210] The biggest capacity deficit in emergencies and post-disaster recovery is the low number of trained professionals and lack of funding for GBV programming and coordination.[211] To contribute to the prevention of and response to GBV in emergencies, the GBV AoR created a Rapid Response Team (RRT) in 2011, composed of GBV Advisers who are be deployed early in a humanitarian response to an emergency to maximize their response capacity.[212] The team is responsible for mainstreaming GBV prevention and response into all humanitarian aid by establishing and supporting existing GBV coordination mechanisms, including providing assessments, conducting capacity audits, and planning development initiatives.[213] The team has also developed and tested a Gender-Based Violence Information Management System in order to more efficiently collect, store, analyze, and share reported data on GBV.[214]

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), which was established in 1992 and involves UN and non-UN humanitarian partners, also works to mainstream GBV services in humanitarian response in emergencies and post-disaster recovery.[215] Full members of IASC include UNICEF, UNHCR, and United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT).[216] While UN-Women is not a full member, since

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[203] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.
[204] Ibid.
[205] Ibid.
[206] UNISDR, *United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience Towards a Risk-informed and Integrated Approach to Sustainable Development*, 2017.
[207] UN-Women, *Global norms and standards: Humanitarian action*.
[208] UN-Women, *The Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility*, 2012.
[209] Ibid.
[210] Ibid.
[211] Martin, *Current State of GBV Response Capacity in Humanitarian Settings: A synthesis of information, resources, and opportunities*, 2014.
[212] UN-Women, *The Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility*, 2012.
[213] Ibid.
[214] Gender-Based Violence Information Management System, *Gender-Based violence information management system*, 2018.
[215] IASC, *Inter-Agency Standing Committee*, 2018.
[216] IASC, *IASC Membership*, 2018.

March 2018 it co-chairs the IASC Reference Group on Gender and Humanitarian Action.[217] In 2005, IASC published, *Guidelines for Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings*, which was revised and updated in 2015 by the GBV AoR.[218] A major reason for the revisions was the lack of expertise on GBV of those working in humanitarian response to implement the recommendations outlined in the guidelines.[219] Consequently, the revised guidelines place a larger focus on building capacity of non-GBV specialists working in humanitarian response.[220] The revised guidelines suggest that humanitarian stakeholders approach GBV in emergencies and post-disaster recovery by taking action in three key areas.[221] First, they recommend implementing GBV prevention strategies that cover pre-emergency as well as recovery stages of humanitarian action.[222] Second, they suggest strengthening systems that allow survivors and those at risk of GBV to access specialized care and support for both GBV prevention and response.[223] Third, the guidelines place importance on building capacity at the local and national level.[224]

The revised guidelines are an important technical resource to implement the *Call to Action in Protection from Gender-based Violence in Emergencies* (Call to Action) (2015), a multi-stakeholder initiative backed by 24 governments, non-governmental organizations such as Oxfam and Save the Children, and CSOs.[225] UN-Women has committed to ensuring the achievement of the principal goals of the Call to Action through its work in humanitarian action in the areas of coordination, programming, and capacity development.[226] The Call to Action emphasizes the engagement of the civil society in humanitarian response in order to adequately address unique contextual issues.[227] During the 2015 earthquake in Nepal, UN-Women established five multi-purpose women's centers in collaboration with the local government and run by local women's groups.[228] The local women could speak with women in need directly in the local dialect.[229] This resulted in a faster understanding of their needs and the development of trust and open communication between partners. [230]

UN-Women partners with Member States, UN agencies, civil society organizations (CSOs), and other institutions to address GBV in emergencies in post-disaster recovery, increase awareness of the causes and consequences of GBV, and support capacity-building.[231] As stated in the Sendai Framework, the involvement of CSOs is considered to be especially important as they can contribute to public awareness of GBV within a society.[232] The same can be done by private sector institutions and the media.[233] Businesses can raise awareness of GBV in emergencies and post-disaster recovery by training employees, informing their customers, or developing new technology for disaster risk reduction; the media can also disseminate accurate information and organize public education campaigns.[234]

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[217] IASC, *IASC Membership*, 2018; IASC, *IASC Reference Group on Gender and Humanitarian Action*, 2018.
[218] IASC, *Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action: Reducing risk, promoting resilience and aiding recovery*, 2015.
[219] Ward, *Revising the 2005 IASC Guidelines for Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings: prioritizing accountability*, 2014.
[220] Ibid.
[221] GBV Guidelines, *Guidelines for Integrating Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action - Home*, 2018.
[222] Ibid.
[223] Ibid.
[224] Ibid.
[225] Call to Action, *Call to Action on Protection from Gender-based Violence in Emergencies*, 2015, p. 9.
[226] United States of America, *Call to Actions Commitments*.
[227] Call to Action, *Call to Action on Protection from Gender-based Violence in Emergencies*, 2015, p. 11.
[228] UN Women, *Nepal: A year after the earthquakes*, 2016.
[229] UN-Women, *Speaking the same language in post-disaster Nepal*, 2016.
[230] Ibid.
[231] UN-Women, *Ending violence against women*.
[232] UN General Assembly, *Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (A/RES/69/283)*, 2015, p. 23.
[233] Ibid., p. 23.
[234] Ibid., p. 23.

Finally, the European Union, the current leader of the Call to Action, is organizing a series of events on GBV in emergencies.[235] The last event took place on the margins of the United Nations General Assembly with the participation of High-Level Panelists like Henrietta H. Fore, UNICEF Executive Director.[236] In her opening speech she stressed the need to establish safe spaces, the use of innovative technology for collecting and analyzing data on GBV, and cooperation between humanitarian partners to fight GBV in emergencies in the future.[237]

Improving Access to Services

While generally the root cause for GBV stems from societal attitudes on gender equality and its resulting practices, there are several situational contributing factors that can increase the risk of GBV in emergencies and post-disaster recovery.[238] One factor is that institutions such as health facilities and social services are either under-staffed or non-existent in these situations.[239] This leads to human rights challenges and GBV due to a lack of law enforcement and barriers to accessing health, justice, policing, and social services for victims of GBV in emergencies and post-disaster recovery.[240] Some of the challenges to providing these services for victims of GBV in emergencies and post-disaster recovery lies in making services available, accessible, and adaptable to all women.[241] In emergency situations, core services and institutions are not available in sufficient quantity and quality to all victims and survivors of GBV, and rural and isolated areas can be especially affected by the lack of services[242]. Additionally, women may face physical and communication barriers due to injuries or displacement.[243]

The United Nations Joint Global Programme on Essential Services for Women and Girls Subject to Violence was created In order to provide more accessible services for women and girls who have experienced GBV.[244] The program is a partnership between UN-Women, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).[245] The partners created an "essential services package," which identifies the essential services to be provided for victims of GBV by the healthcare, social services, police, and justice sectors.[246] The essential services package also comprises specific guidelines for the coordination of essential services and for government-led of coordination processes and mechanisms.[247] Implementing the essential services package, UN-Women supported a network of safe houses that provide counseling, legal assistance, medical services, and to victims of GBV in emergencies and post-disaster recovery in Haiti, one of the most exposed countries in the world to natural hazards.[248] Additionally, UN-Women assisted the Ministry for Women's Condition and Rights in establishing set procedures for emergency and disaster response to ensure services for victims and women at risk are reliably meeting needs.[249]

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[235] Call to Action, *News*, 2018.
[236] Ibid.
[237] UNICEF, *UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore's remarks at "Children and women under attack: Ending gender-based violence in emergencies,"* 2018.
[238] UN-Women & Ward, *Violence against Women in Conflict, Post-conflict and Emergency Settings*, 2013, p. 23.
[239] Ibid., p. 23.
[240] Ibid., p. 23.
[241] UN-Women, *Essential Services Package for Women and Girls Subject to Violence*, 2015.
[242] Ibid.
[243] Ibid.
[244] Ibid.
[245] Ibid.
[246] Ibid.
[247] Ibid.
[248] UN-Women, *Services for all women*.
[249] Ibid.

Providing Safe Spaces During Post-Disaster Recovery

In emergency situations there is often a lack of safe spaces and care for women who have been victims of GBV.[250] Temporary shelters for those affected by disasters are likely to be overcrowded, unsafe, located in isolated areas, and lack sufficient gender-adequate services and facilities.[251] Often, public spaces like places of worship or hotels are turned into temporary accommodation for men and women in emergencies and post-disaster recovery.[252] Most of the time, however, these temporary accommodations are planed without regard to gender dimensions and the special needs of women who have experienced GBV or of those seeking help.[253] Special needs can include the need for psychological care, privacy or adequate water, hygiene, and sanitation facilities.[254] The lack of visible and adequate services in emergency shelters makes it easier for women to be victimized and revictimized without detection and with few resources for protection.[255]

Challenges arising in the planning process of safe spaces for women in emergency and post-disaster recovery begin with reducing the risk of women seeking help from becoming victims of GBV or being revictimized.[256] Additionally, training humanitarian responders on the special needs of women after experiencing GBV is a necessity in order to be able to provide enough qualified experts who can offer specialized services like counseling and legal advice for victims of GBV in these situations.[257] It is particularly important in the aftermath of a disaster to support local and national capacity-building to create lasting solutions to the problem of GBV.[258]

In UN-Women's response to the Nepalese earthquake in 2015, UN-Women established five women's centers; it should be highlighted that they have reportedly served approximately 42,703 affected women within one year.[259] The women's centers offer a wide variety of services, including psychological counseling, trauma assistance, and a service to refer women to legal aid when they had experienced violence."[260]

Addressing GBV in Humanitarian Aid

In a 2015 global study on GBV in disasters, the IFRC identified three main challenges in humanitarian response to GBV in emergencies and post-disaster recovery.[261] The first is the lack of institutional frameworks addressing GBV in disasters.[262] Many Member States have adopted policies on disaster response and national legislation on gender, but lack arrangements specifically for preventing and addressing GBV in emergencies and post-disaster recovery.[263] Internationally, many Member States still lack knowledge of GBV in disasters due to poor data and monitoring, especially in settings where the level of GBV is already high and it is hard to determine whether violence against women has increased as a result of disaster.[264] The second challenge is a lack of awareness about GBV in emergency situations

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[250] UN-Women, *Emergency safe spaces*, 2012.
[251] UN-Women & Ward, *Violence against Women in Conflict, Post-conflict and Emergency Settings*, 2013, p. 23.
[252] UN-Women, *Emergency safe spaces*, 2012.
[253] Ibid.
[254] IASC*, Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action: Reducing risk, promoting resilience and aiding recovery*, 2015.
[255] UN-Women, *Emergency safe spaces*, 2012.
[256] Ibid.
[257] Ibid.
[258] IASC, *Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action: Reducing risk, promoting resilience and aiding recovery*, 2015.
[259] UN-Women, *Nepal: A year after the earthquakes*, 2016.
[260] Ibid.
[261] International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, *Unseen, unheard: Gender-based violence in disasters - Global study*, 2015.
[262] Ibid., p. 27.
[263] Ibid., p. 27.
[264] Ibid., p. 39.

among humanitarian responders.[265] Many responders have not been taught about GBV or that it should be looked for specifically and how to respond appropriately, especially in cases of disasters.[266] Responders have noted their lack of capacity to deal with GBV-related issues when they must take care of large numbers of distressed people in emergency situations.[267] Governments' and humanitarian workers' lack of awareness of GBV may be partly due to the disruption in reporting and enforcement mechanisms during an emergency, leading to a lack of data.[268] Third, the lack of reporting, in combination with the stigma and shame associated with GBV, results in little knowledge and awareness of GBV in emergencies and post-disaster recovery.[269]

Humanitarian responders' lack of knowledge about GBV is one primary reason there is a lack of data on GBV in emergencies and post-disaster recovery.[270] The difficulties in gathering data stems from: a lack of "security, logistical constraints, high mobility of people, reluctance of individuals who have suffered profound trauma to report, poor infrastructure, and lack of confidence in existing services."[271] To overcome the lack of awareness of GBV among humanitarian responders in emergencies and post-disaster recovery, UN-Women cooperated with the Ministry of Women and the National Disaster Management Office in Fiji after the floods in 2012.[272] The government had requested training on gender in humanitarian action to better prepare humanitarian responders for GBV in emergencies and post-disaster recovery.[273] Together, they developed Standard Operating Procedures for Gender-Based Violence, as well as a national Protection Cluster and Guidelines for Evacuation Centers to ensure protection of women and girls.[274] The Caribbean Development Bank and UN-Women launched a project in 2016 to strengthen the data collection on GBV in the region.[275] The project aims to achieve long-term capacity development through training field workers to "create a cadre of regional experts, knowledgeable of the methodology and tools and capacities required for fielding surveys."[276]

Conclusion

The international community can address GBV in emergencies and post-disaster recovery in many different ways, ranging from providing psychological care and legal assistance to victims of GBV in safe places, to offering training activities and capacity development for humanitarian responders.[277] When addressing GBV in emergencies and post-disaster recovery in the future, Member States should bear in mind the need for the collection of data on GBV.[278] Future programs may also be more successful where they are designed to meet survivors needs within the cultural and social context.[279] Lastly, it is important to build trained staff capacity and implement a gender dimension into national disaster risk reduction frameworks.[280]

Further Research

Moving forward, delegates can consider questions such as: How can the detection of GBV in emergencies be improved? What measures can be taken to prevent GBV in emergencies and post-disaster recovery? How can the gender dimension be included in disaster response plans and what are

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[265] Ibid., p. 28.
[266] Ibid., p. 28.
[267] Ibid., p. 28.
[268] Ibid., p. 29.
[269] Ibid., p. 29.
[270] Ibid.
[271] Ibid.
[272] UN-Women, *Crisis response and recovery*.
[273] Ibid.
[274] Ibid.
[275] Caribbean Development Bank, *Lack of comprehensive data on Gender-Based Violence in the Region*, 2016.
[276] Ibid.
[277] Bhuvanendra & Holmes, *Tackling gender-based violence in emergencies: what works?*, 2014.
[278] Ibid.
[279] Ibid.
[280] Ibid.

the limitations that cause Member States to have difficulty in implementing adequate response mechanisms? How can the international community ensure access to services for women and girls in emergencies? How can response plans be designed to better meet the needs of women and girls in emergencies and post-disaster recovery? What can be done to increase capacity in terms of expertise of humanitarian responders, resources, and data collection? How can the international community ensure there is sustainable funding to fight GBV in emergency and crisis situations?

Annotated Bibliography

Barclay, A. et al. (2016). *On the frontline: Catalyzing women's leadership in humanitarian action*. Action Aid International. Retrieved 30 July 2018 from: http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/on_the_frontline_catalysing_womens_leadership_in_humanitarian_action.pdf

This background paper includes information on the role of gender in the humanitarian system and barriers and opportunities for women's leadership in humanitarian response, such as a lack of awareness, capacity, and confidence. Delegates will find this source helpful because it provides valuable and recent information on gender responsive humanitarian programming to address GBV in emergencies and post-disaster recovery. Delegates should especially read the chapter on "Investing in women's leadership of emergency preparedness and resilience building," as it draws specific reference to the role of women in disaster preparedness.

Call to Action Partners. (2015). *Call to Action on Protection from Gender-based Violence in Emergencies.* Retrieved 10 August 2018 from: https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Call-to-Action-Roadmap.pdf

The actions described in this document transform the response to GBV in emergencies by the international community. The Call to Action includes an action plan and sets goals to be achieved by 2020 which aim at ensuring the use of all measures possible to prevent GBV and provide safe services for those affected by GBV. Delegates will gain information about present actions taken by the international community and NGOs for addressing GBV in emergencies and post-disaster recovery.

Gender-Based Violence Information Management System. (2018). *Gender-Based violence information management system* [Website]. Retrieved 16 September 2018 from: http://www.gbvims.com/

The Gender-Based violence information management system is a website to store, gather, and analyze data on GBV in emergencies and post-disaster recovery. The website gives general information about the information system itself and also explains tools used to gather data and how to implement them. When considering how to improve the lack of data on GBV in emergencies and post-disaster recovery, this source will be helpful for delegates in understanding the measures that are already in place.

Humanitarian Practice Network. (2014). *Gender-based violence in Emergencies*. Retrieved 30 July 2018 from: http://www.ifrc.org/docs/IDRL/HE_60_web_1%20(1).pdf

This magazine provides information about GBV in emergencies and is a result of field workers, managers, and policymakers in the humanitarian sector sharing information and experiences on GBV. The wide variety of articles provides delegates with valuable information on best practices, data collection, and humanitarian action in the fields of food security, water, and sanitation for health. This source will assist delegates in understanding the challenges facing the international community in addressing GBV in emergencies and post-disaster recovery, such as the lack of institutions and law enforcement, and the provision of safe places.

Inter-Agency Standing Committee. (2015). *Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action: Reducing risk, promoting resilience and aiding recovery*. Retrieved 10 August 2018 from:

https://gbvguidelines.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/2015-IASC-Gender-based-Violence-Guidelines_lo-res.pdf

This document is a revision of the original guidelines from 2005, serving as a resource for humanitarian actors and communities affected by armed conflict, natural disasters, or other humanitarian emergencies. It gives detailed thematic area guidance ranging from camp management, food security, and agriculture, to livelihood and protection. Delegates will gain an understanding of the role of GBV in all fields of humanitarian aid which is important for preventing GBV in emergency settings.

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. (2015). *Unseen, unheard: Gender-based violence in disasters: Global study.* Retrieved 10 August 2018 from: https://www.ifrc.org/Global/Documents/Secretariat/201511/1297700_GBV_in_Disasters_EN_LR2.pdf

This global study examines and explains the occurrence of GBV in disasters. It aims to answer the questions: what characterizes GBV in disaster, in what way it should be included in policy frameworks, and how can local actors be supported. Delegates should pay close attention to the chapter on challenges to disaster responders. Delegates will get a detailed understanding of the challenges in delivering humanitarian aid.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2014). *Gender equality and the empowerment of women in natural disasters: Report of the Secretary-General (E/RES/2014/13).* Retrieved 30 July 2018 from: http://undocs.org/E/CN.6/2014/13

This document is the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 56/2 titled "Gender equality and the empowerment of women in natural disasters." The report gives a great deal of information on actions taken by Member States, the United Nations, and humanitarian agencies in the fight against GBV in emergencies. Delegates will benefit from this source because it provides valuable information on relevant actions taken on the national level and gives recommendations for future actions in the fight against GBV in emergencies and post-disaster recovery.

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women. (n.d.). *Crisis response and recovery* [Website]. Retrieved 10 August 2018 from: http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/humanitarian-action/emergency-response

This website gives numerous examples of how UN-Women has become active in the fight against GBV in emergencies and post-disaster recovery by training humanitarian responders and creating safe spaces for victims of GBV. It provides links to best practice examples of the work of UN-Women in different emergencies and disasters. Among others, it gives information on action by UN-Women in Jordan, Cameroon, West Africa, Nepal and Fiji. Delegates will gain an understanding of how UN-Women becomes active on the ground and structures its programs and operational activities.

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women & J. Ward. (2013). *Violence against Women in Conflict, Post-conflict and Emergency Settings* [Report]. Retrieved 10 August 2018 from: http://www.endvawnow.org/uploads/modules/pdf/1405612658.pdf

This document on violence against women in conflict, post-conflict, and emergency settings was created by UN-Women. The paper covers guiding principles of UN-Women and gives an overview of basic approaches to the prevention and response of GBV in emergencies and post-disaster recovery, such as providing safe shelters or setting up referral services. Delegates will particularly gain an understanding of UN-Women's view on GBV in emergencies and post-disaster recovery; delegates are provided with an historical timeline, terminology and definitions relevant for the topic.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-ninth session. (2015). *Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 – 2030 (A/RES/69/283).* Retrieved 30 July 2018 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/69/283

The Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction *is the result of the Third UN World Conference in Sendai, Japan, on March 18, 2015 and serves as a successor instrument to the* Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters. *The document gives information on the four priorities set by the international community on disaster risk reduction, which are to understand disaster risk, governance of disaster risk reduction, investing in disaster risk reduction and preparedness for better recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction. Delegates will gain a general understanding on the international framework on disaster risk reduction and especially on how gender has been incorporated into disaster risk reduction.*

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III. Supporting the Involvement of Women in Governance and Decision-Making

"True political leadership can make the biggest difference for a world where men and women can lead the lives they want, rather than lives expected of them."[281]

Introduction

Gender diversity in government and public institutions is crucial as decision-making bodies create policies that affect men's and women's rights and choices.[282] Supporting the involvement of women in governance and decision-making promotes balance in policy making processes, and encourages the development of gender-inclusive policies and programs.[283] According to the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), women set a positive example for women and girls in their political leadership and decision-making.[284] Further, women leaders often put on the agenda issues that have been previously under-addressed, such as the elimination of gender-based violence, parental leave, and childcare, and make these topics priorities, leading to a more equitable society.[285] UN-Women has also noted that there is a window of opportunity to engage boys and young men in the support of women in leadership roles.[286]

Progress has been made toward achieving equitable participation between men and women in governance and decision-making, as demonstrated by the 11.5% increase in women's participation in national parliaments from 1995 to 2016.[287] However, UN-Women reports that, as of June 2016, only 22.8% of all national parliamentarians worldwide were women.[288] Another statistic from October 2017 shows that only 11 women were serving as a Head of State and only 12 as a Head of Government.[289] As of June 2018, the world average for female representation in government houses was merely 23.8%.[290] Nevertheless, the representation of women parliamentarians varies significantly across geographic regions.[291] In general, recent research shows that Nordic countries perform well, with a female representation in legislative houses over 40%.[292] The situation in other states differs, with Pacific countries having the lowest rate of women's participation with an average of only 15.6% of legislators being women.[293] According to UN-Women, no Member State has fully achieved gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and, based on the current rate of progress, it estimates that it will take 82 years until the gender gap in political participation is closed.[294] This topic will address the most important international and regional systems and documents related to the gender gap in governance and decision-making.[295] It will also examine the roles of various international bodies and organizations as well as other United Nations (UN) and non-UN actors in addressing the role of women in governance and decision-making.[296]

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[281] UN-Women, *Additional Partner Commitments*, 2018.
[282] OECD, *Better Governance for Gender Equality*, 2017.
[283] Ibid.
[284] UN-Women, *Women's Leadership and Political Participation*.
[285] Ibid.
[286] UN-Women, *Engaging Boys and Young Men in Gender Equality*.
[287] Inter-Parliamentary Union, *Women in National Parliaments*, 2018.
[288] Ibid.
[289] UN-Women, *Facts and Figures: Leadership and Political Participation*, 2017.
[290] Inter-Parliamentary Union, *Women in National Parliaments*, 2018.
[291] Ibid.
[292] Ibid.
[293] Ibid.
[294] UN-Women, *Strategic Plan 2018-2021*, 2017, p. 628.
[295] UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (A/RES/34/180)*, 1979; UN-Women, *Strategic Plan 2018-2021*, 2017.
[296] UN-Women, *Additional Partner Commitments*, 2018.

International and Regional Framework

The UN and its Member States have demonstrated commitment to supporting the involvement of women in governance and decision-making through foundational documents, including the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) (1948), the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW) (1979), and the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* (BPfA) (1995).[297] The UDHR states that all rights, freedoms, and international principles outlined in the document are applicable to all people without regard to sex, thereby establishing a foundation for gender equality.[298]

CEDAW, known by many as an international bill of rights for women, establishes in Article 7 that women should be granted the right to vote in all elections, be eligible for all publicly elected bodies, participate in the creation and implementation of government policies, and have the opportunity to perform public service at all levels of government.[299] Article 8 of CEDAW specifies that Member States should enact reasonable measures that ensure women are able to represent their Member States on an international level, and participate in the work of international organizations on equal terms with men.[300] In 1997, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women issued *General Recommendation No. 23*, which is related to the participation of women in political and public life.[301] It outlines that States parties should "take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country," and to ensure gender equality in the application of basic rights, including the right to vote, the right be elected to public office, and the right to participate in the formulation of government policy.[302] The General Recommendation further establishes that it is the Member State's responsibility to to address discriminatory public opinion against women.[303]

The BPfA adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, establishes a basis for the advancement of women and girls in many key areas such as education, the economy, and power and decision-making.[304] Chapter 4 Paragraph 181 outlines the importance of equal participation of women in decision-making in providing more accurate representation of the needs of society, balancing and strengthening democracy, and ensuring that the interests of women are addressed.[305] Paragraph 181 further acknowledges the need for gender equality in government and decision-making in order to progress the advancement of women in all other areas.[306]

The importance of increasing women's political participation has also been included in the UN's development agenda through the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of 2000 and the current Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) outlined in the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2030 Agenda), adopted in 2015.[307] SDG 3 on promoting gender equality and empowering women, provided a foundation for the increased involvement of women in governance.[308] SDG 5 aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, and SDG 10 focuses on the reduction of inequality within and among states, working to address the outstanding challenges that the MDGs did not resolve.[309] The progress and achievement of the 2030 Agenda is jeopardized without women's political empowerment and equal access to leadership positions.[310]

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[297] UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*, 1948, UN-Women, *Strategic Plan 2018-2021*, 2017.
[298] UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*, 1948.
[299] UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (A/RES/34/180)*, 1979, p. 195.
[300] Ibid.
[301] CEDAW, *General Recommendation No. 23: Political and Public Life (A/52/38)*, 1997, p. 1.
[302] Ibid.
[303] Ibid.
[304] UN Fourth World Conference on Women, *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, 1995.
[305] Ibid.
[306] Ibid.
[307] Ford, What is the millennium development goal on gender equality all about?, *The Guardian*, 2015.
[308] Ibid.
[309] Ibid.
[310] UN-Women, *Strategic Plan 2018-2021*, 2017, pp. 13-28.

Role of the International System

UN-Women works on an expansive range of areas to fundamentally address women's rights and empowerment in a manner that can ignite gender equality progress across all Member States.[311] The UN-Women's *Strategic Plan 2018-2021* (2017) provides current international context for supporting the involvement of women in governance and decision-making, as well as an overview of the work that the body will engage in between now and 2021.[312] Areas in which UN-Women focuses its work most relevant to the participation of women in governance can be found under the Strategic Plan's Outcome Two: "Women lead, participate in and benefit equally from governance systems."[313] UN-Women's efforts to achieve this outcome are focused in four areas: more female engagement with and leadership of political processes and institutions; more local and national plans, strategies, and budgets that are considered gender responsive; more data tracking on the progress of gender equality; and more justice institutions.[314] UN-Women predicts that Outcome Two will contribute to achieving numerous SDGs, including the goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 16, and 17.[315] In fact, UN-Women accounts for about one-third of total UN personnel contributing to the achievement of SDG 5.[316] UN-Women launched several projects to achieve the SDGs, including its Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step It Up for Gender Equality initiative, which asks Member States to make commitments to address challenges that affect women and girls specifically.[317]

UN-Women has recognized the need for collaboration to address challenges related to the unequal participation of women, and it therefore partners with a number of organizations in order to accomplish the outcomes outlined in its *Strategic Plan 2018-2021* and to foster the achievement of the SDGs.[318] UN-Women often collaborates with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to bolster gender equality goals related to women in governance and decision-making.[319] Additionally, UNDP independently supports partner organizations in the development of policy and legal reforms on this issue.[320] Another key UN-Women partnership is with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).[321] The two organizations collaborate to publish data and statistical information related to women in governance, which provides an important source for Member States.[322] The 2017 Women in Politics Map, which depicts global rankings for women in executive and parliamentary government positions, is one example of this partnership.[323] UN-Women also partners with the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), an organization that independently works to advance democracy globally through supporting and safeguarding democratic political institutions and processes.[324] UN-Women, in collaboration with the IPU, UNDP, and International IDEA initiated the International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics or, shortly, the iKNOW Network, in 2007.[325] Drawing upon the expertise of the four partner organizations, the iKNOW Network works to build knowledge about women in government worldwide, and provide a platform for women to share their experiences in politics.[326] UN-Women also engages in a number of regional partnerships to achieve the SDGs addressed in its Strategic Plan through the Step It Up program, and collaborates with regional organizations to support the progress of women in governance and decision-making.[327]

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[311] UN-Women, *What We Do.*
[312] UN-Women, *Strategic Plan 2018-2021*, 2017, pp. 3-28.
[313] Ibid., pp. 13-28.
[314] Ibid.
[315] Ibid.
[316] Ibid., pp. 14-28.
[317] UN-Women, *Additional Partner Commitments*, 2018.
[318] UN-Women, *Strategic Plan 2018-2021*, 2017, pp. 15-28.
[319] UNDP, *Women's participation in decision-making*, 2018.
[320] Ibid.
[321] UN-Women, *Strategic Plan 2018-2021*, 2017, pp. 15-28.
[322] UN-Women, *Women's political parity slow to grow as UN launches latest 'Women in Politics' map*, 2017.
[323] Ibid.
[324] International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, *Mission and Values*, 2018.
[325] iKNOW, *Who We Are.*
[326] Ibid.
[327] UN-Women, *Additional Partner Commitments*, 2018.

Regional actors have also advanced efforts to increase the role of women in governance and decision-making.[328] For example, 22 Member States of the African Union (AU) have managed to include 30% or more women in their respective parliaments since the adoption of the BPfA in 1995.[329] The League of Arab States addressed women's involvement in politics through the adoption of a regional plan of action in 2012.[330] The plan outlines a number of strategic areas and objectives, one of which calls for the participation of women at all levels of decision-making.[331] The plan also emphasizes the necessity of an increase in women's representation in the judiciary at all levels, including in international courts.[332] The Council of Europe demonstrated commitment to the Step It Up initiative through its *Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017*, which aimed to contribute to the achievement of SDG 5 by fostering balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making.[333] The Council also made commitments to put more women in top decision-making positions by setting a legally binding objective for 40% of listed company board members to be women by 2020.[334]

Codifying Women's Participation in Governance

Formalizing women's participation in governance through policies can support the involvement of women in governance and decision-making in a systematic manner.[335] This formalization is critical if the international community is to meet one of SDG 5's key targets to ensure women's full and effective participation in political life.[336] One way in which UN-Women works to codify the participation of women in governance is through supporting an increase of women in parliaments and local governments.[337] UN-Women's partnership with the IPU is key in achieving the SDGs through tracking mechanisms for data related to women's representation as government leaders, and in addressing Member States' specific barriers to the inclusion of women in governance.[338] This partnership also takes form in the shared support of gender quotas and women's coalitions, and in facilitating the inclusion of women's organizations in Member States' constitution development processes.[339] UN-Women has determined that constitutions and legal reform are a fundamental component in establishing a structure that can be expanded to include provisions such as quotas for female representation and equal opportunities for women in strategic plans and budgets.[340] This determination is based on CEDAW's call to signatory states to include the ideals and principles of gender equality in Member State constitutions.[341] UN-Women advances constitutional and legal reform through supporting the integration of gender equality principles in constitutions and promoting consensus surrounding the implementation of them.[342] Redrafted constitutions created in collaboration with UN-Women have resulted in more seats for women in parliaments.[343]

Another key component to codifying women's inclusion in governance is increasing women's participation in elections as both voters and candidates.[344] However, there are a number of gender-specific barriers

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[328] Ibid.
[329] Ibid.
[330] UN-Women et al., *Regional Strategy Protection of Arab Women: Peace and Security*, 2012, p. 95.
[331] Ibid.
[332] Ibid.
[333] UN-Women, *Additional Partner Commitments*, 2018.
[334] Ibid.
[335] UN-Women, *Stepping it up towards Goal Five: More women in politics make for stronger democracies*, 2016.
[336] Ibid.
[337] UN-Women, *Parliaments and Local Governance*, 2018.
[338] Ibid.
[339] UNDP, *Democratic governance and peacebuilding*, 2018.
[340] UN-Women, *Constitutions and legal reform,* 2018.
[341] UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (A/RES/34/180)*, 1979, p. 194.
[342] UN-Women, *Constitutions and legal reform*, 2018.
[343] Ibid.
[344] UN-Women, *Elections*.

that exist to women's participation in elections.[345] Examples include gaps in monetary resources for female candidates as compared to male candidates or unsafe locations of polling places that make some women voters to be reluctant to use them.[346] UN-Women notes that some electoral management bodies and governments are unaware of barriers to women's participation.[347] In order to address these voting challenges, UN-Women advocates for national election regulations that ensure fair opportunities in voter registration and campaigning.[348] These efforts include the implementation of temporary quotas, education campaigns to inform women about registering to vote, protections from election-related violence, and training for women to be effective political candidates and leaders.[349] Through its Fund for Gender Equality, UN-Women fosters global partnerships and codifies women's participation in governance by using the fund to mobilize women from across the political spectrum in Member States.[350] Additionally, UN-Women and UNDP collaborate on a number of regional and global initiatives related to electoral cycle support that aim to ensure women's equal participation as voters and candidates.[351] In addition to UN-Women, UNDP itself promotes gender-inclusive political processes through supporting civic engagement, constitutional reform, and parliamentary development.[352] Partnerships such as these prove to be necessary to promote meaningful collaboration with the diverse and unique parliaments and legislatures of all Member States.[353]

A study conducted by the IPU of 187 women in elected leadership positions in 65 different Member States found that hostile cultural attitudes surrounding women's participation in politics was noted as the second most significant barrier to women running for parliament.[354] Cultural barriers such as gender stereotypes, patriarchal values, and nascent democratic structures can present significant barriers to women's participation in governance, resulting in fewer women in decision-making institutions generally.[355]

Accountability in Governance and Decision-Making

The *UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP)*, agreed upon in 2012, is an effort to increase UN accountability and coherence related to gender issues.[356] UN-SWAP is the first organization to assign a standard set of performance indicators for the gender-related work of all UN entities.[357] UN-Women is one of the main bodies tasked with supporting and implementing these standards.[358] In her recent speech, Assistant Secretary-General of the UN and Deputy Executive Director of UN-Women, Åsa Regnér, discussed the importance of accountability, noting that a revolution in gender statistics and accountability for gender-related commitments is necessary to achieve gender equality and the 2030 Agenda.[359] Examples of accountability concerns are demonstrated through frustration surrounding Member States' commitments to gender equality that are ultimately deficient of allocated financial resources.[360] This frustration raises questions about how financial resources designated by Member States for gender equality efforts are actually expended, an additional accountability challenge.[361] Discrepancies in financial allocations and the tracking of funding for gender

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[345] Ibid.
[346] Ibid.
[347] Ibid.
[348] Ibid.
[349] Ibid.
[350] UN-Women, *Parliaments and Local Governance*, 2018.
[351] UNDP, *UNDP Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017*, 2014, p. 23.
[352] UNDP, *Democratic governance and peacebuilding*, 2018.
[353] UN-Women, *Parliaments and Local Governance*, 2018.
[354] Norris et al., *Cultural Obstacles to Equal Representation*, 2001, p. 4.
[355] Ibid.
[356] UN-Women, *Promoting UN Accountability (UN-SWAP)*.
[357] Ibid.
[358] UN-Women, *Accountability at UN-Women*; UN-Women, *Promoting UN Accountability (UN-SWAP)*.
[359] UN-Women, *Speech by Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and Deputy Executive Director of UN-Women Åsa Regnér on accountability for gender equality commitments at all levels on 18 July 2018*, 2018.
[360] UNDG, *Financing for Gender Equality and Tracking Systems*, 2013, p. 3.
[361] Ibid.

equality mechanisms, such as funding for programs and policy implementation, often result from challenges surrounding cultural attitudes about women as political leaders.[362]

According to UN-Women, tracking financial investments in gender equality is important to ensure accountability and progress of gender equality commitments made by Member States.[363] The 2015 Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) *Recommendation of the Council on Gender Equality in Public Life* also identifies financial and economic accountability for financial investments in gender equality and women's empowerment as important.[364] In order to increase accountability of Member States and other actors, the Council on Gender Equality in Public Life recommends establishing or strengthening independent institutions and advisory bodies to integrate gender concerns in policy, monitoring the implementation of gender equality efforts, and facilitating audits and measurements of these efforts.[365] The recommendations further support increased collaboration between data-collecting bodies to increase their effectiveness in addressing accountability challenges.[366]

Further efforts by UN-Women, Member States, and other actors are ongoing to develop ways to track investments in gender equality.[367] An example of these efforts is the creation of Gender Responsive Budgets (GRBs), which work to ensure that the allocation of public resources is conducted in a fashion that contributes to the advancement of gender equality.[368] GRBs have demonstrated usefulness and success in following money trails for gender equality and women's empowerment investments.[369] Challenges and solutions related to accountability must be addressed as they impact the implementation of all policies aimed to advance women's participation in governance and decision-making.[370]

The Role of Men and Boys in the Involvement of Women in Leadership Roles

A recent UN report notes that, while gender equality has been recognized as a principle of international law as early as 1948 in the UDHR, the notion that men and boys have a specific role in actualizing this principle has only been recently articulated.[371] UN-Women notes the benefits that gender equality provides for people of all genders, and the importance of the role of men and boys in promoting the empowerment of women and girls.[372] Given the existing pattern of gender inequality, men have predominant control of economic resources, political power, and cultural norms, meaning that men control many of the resources that are required for policy change to support women.[373] In addition, through recognizing their privileges, boys and men can alter existing norms and structures surrounding masculinity and patriarchal practices that currently perpetuate inequalities between men and women.[374]

Moving toward a more gender equal world requires men and boys to reconsider traditional constructions of masculinity and relationships with women and girls.[375] However, there are a number of challenges associated with changing the mindsets of men and boys with regard to supporting women in leadership roles, including their doubt and even explicit opposition.[376] For example, some men accept gender equality in theory, but still engage in practices that bolster male dominance in public and political

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[362] Norris et al., *Cultural Obstacles to Equal Representation*, 2001, p. 3.
[363] UN-Women, *Tracking Investments*, 2018.
[364] OECD, *OECD Recommendation of the Council on Gender Equality in Public Life*, 2015.
[365] Ibid.
[366] Ibid.
[367] UN-Women, *Tracking Investments*, 2018.
[368] UN-Women National Committee Australia, *Gender Responsive Budgeting*, 2018.
[369] UNDG, *Financing for Gender Equality and Tracking Systems*, 2013, p. 3.
[370] OECD, *OECD Recommendation of the Council on Gender Equality in Public Life*, 2015; UN-Women, *Tracking Investments*, 2018.
[371] UN DAW, *The role of men and boys in achieving gender equality*, 2003, p. 3.
[372] UN-Women, *Engaging Boys and Young Men in Gender Equality*.
[373] UN DAW, *The role of men and boys in achieving gender equality*, 2003, p. 3.
[374] UN-Women, *Engaging Boys and Young Men in Gender Equality*.
[375] UN DAW, *The role of men and boys in achieving gender equality*, 2003, p. 4.
[376] Ibid., p. 9.

spheres.[377] Other men demonstrate resentment toward gender equality programs, claiming that these programs give women undeserved advantages.[378]

To engage boys and men, UN-Women collaborates with Member States to take action through education campaigns and training young boys about gender issues.[379] UN-Women partners with the MenEngage Alliance, which works to engage men and boys in conversations surrounding gender equality.[380] They focus on joint advocacy activities addressing macro-level policies that perpetuate gender inequalities, and work to engage men from a positive perspective and address non-discrimination.[381] The HeForShe campaign is an organization that also aims to engage men and boys to create a visible force for gender equality.[382] Moreover, the HeForShe campaign is working to address the underrepresentation of women in governance by providing various suggestions and encouraging support for UN-Women's Step It Up Campaign to make diversity a priority in Member States.[383] Through these campaigns, UN-Women trains young male volunteers to give presentations about ending violence against women and girls in high schools and on radio shows, and organizes events emphasizing the necessity of the balance of genders.[384]

Conclusion

UN-Women, together with its partners and through numerous efforts, including those outlined in its *Strategic Plan 2018-2021*, is working to support women's involvement in governance and decision-making.[385] First, it focuses on codifying women's participation in governance through the promotion of their greater participation in decision-making bodies and elections, as well as by constitutional reforms.[386] Second, it strives to strengthen accountability in governance and decision-making through measures related to gender-based funding and tracking.[387] Finally, through the cooperation with the MenEngage Alliance, the HeForShe campaign, and Step It Up commitments, it highlights the importance of engaging men and boys in gender equality efforts.[388] Numerous challenges related to the key areas remain and should be addressed by the international community.

Further Research

A significant number of challenges to achieving gender equality in governance and decision-making remain. Moving forward, delegates should consider the following questions: What states or national plans have been effective in addressing challenges to women's participation in governance and decision-making? What global policies have been previously effective in increasing women's participation? Are there ways that effective plans can be broadened and implemented on larger scales, improving the situation in more Member States? In what ways can UN-Women continue to support the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs? What mechanisms can be developed to engage men and boys in women's participation in governance and decision-making specifically? What are some of the main barriers to reducing the global gender divide on the issue of women in politics?

Annotated Bibliography

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2015). *2015 OECD Recommendation of the Council on Gender Equality in Public Life.* Retrieved 18 September 2018 from: https://read.oecd-

[377] Ibid.
[378] Ibid.
[379] UN-Women, *Engaging Boys and Young Men in Gender Equality*.
[380] MenEngage, *Our Core Principles*.
[381] Ibid.
[382] HeForShe, *Our Mission*, 2018.
[383] HeForShe,*Take Action*, 2018.
[384] UN-Women, *Engaging Boys and Young Men in Gender Equality*.
[385] UN-Women, *Women's Leadership and Political Participation*.
[386] UN-Women, *Parliaments and Local Governance*, 2018.
[387] UN-Women, *Tracking Investments*, 2018.
[388] UN-Women, *Engaging Boys and Young Men in Gender Equality*.

ilibrary.org/governance/2015-oecd-recommendation-of-the-council-on-gender-equality-in-public-life_9789264252820-en#page1

This document by the Council on Gender Equality in Public Life contains a number of recommendations related to gender equality in budgets, accountability and oversight of government bodies, a gender balance in public life, and improving gender equality in public employment. Delegates can review recommendation two regarding accountability and oversight mechanisms for broad suggestions about how to address issues of accountability. This will benefit their ability to craft specific solutions or suggestions to address accountability and financial tracking.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2017). *Better Governance for Gender Equality*. Retrieved 3 September 2018 from: http://www.oecd.org/gov/gender-public-life-flyer.pdf

This flyer issued by the OECD provides a brief, digestible summary of the importance of governance in promoting gender equality. In addition, it poses questions regarding remaining challenges to sound governance for gender equality, and includes an overview of the tools that promote sound gender equality governance. Delegates will benefit from reviewing this source as a supplement to the OECD's 2015 recommendations as it provides simple and clear explanations.

United Nations Development Group. (2013). *Financing for Gender Equality and Tracking Systems* [Report]. Retrieved 5 September 2018 from: https://undg.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/UNDG-Gender-Equality-Marker-Background-Note-Final-Sep-2013.pdf

This background note prepared by the UN Development Group discusses financial tracking systems for gender equality and women's empowerment. The document provides extensive information about gender equality markers. Delegates will benefit from reading the Background and Context section of the report in order to best comprehend how tracking and monitoring systems work in practice, and gain a clearer understanding of these systems' limitations.

United Nations, Division for the Advancement of Women. (2003). *The role of men and boys in achieving gender equality* [Report]. Retrieved 12 September 2018 from: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/men-boys2003/Connell-bp.pdf

This report provides a clear and concise overview of the involvement of men and boys in gender equality. In this source, delegates will find significant information on the reasons why men and boys must participate in supporting women and gender equality, obstacles to the participation of men and boys, as well as interesting case studies. Delegates can take particular interest in the sections entitled "Introduction" and "Obstacles and challenges," as these sections will provide them with a clearer understanding of the topic as a whole in order to develop more robust and effective solutions on their own.

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. (n.d.). *Engaging Boys and Young Men in Gender Equality* [Website]. Retrieved 5 July 2018 from: http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/youth/engaging-boys-and-young-men-in-gender-equality

This article provides new information about the role boys and young men play in supporting the advancement of women. It provides specific examples of solutions and projects that have been implemented in different Member States that include men and boys. This source is beneficial to delegates in their preparation for the conference because it provides an overview of the general concept of engaging men and boys in gender equality as well as some best practices that can be emulated in other Member States.

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. (2017). *Strategic Plan 2018-2021*. Retrieved 20 August 2018 from: http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/executive%20board/2017/second%20regular%20session%202017/unw-2017-6-strategic%20plan-en-rev%2001.pdf

UN-Women's Strategic Plan 2018-2021 *contains the strategic direction, objectives, and approaches that UN-Women will employ to support efforts to achieve gender equality.*

The document outlines five strategic priorities, the most important of which for the purpose of this topic is Outcome 2. This outcome contains the direction of UN-Women related to women in governance as well as additional information regarding the specific SDGs relevant to the outcome. Delegates will benefit from reviewing Outcome 2 to have a clear understanding of the efforts of UN-Women surrounding the topic.

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. (2017). Women's political parity slow to grow as UN launches latest 'Women in Politics' map [Website]. Retrieved 10 September 2018 from: http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2017/4/women-in-politics-2017-map

This is the latest version of the "Women in Politics" map, which was jointly created by the IPU and UN-Women. It shows global rankings for women in head and parliamentary branches of government. Delegates can find Member State specific and regional information about the number of women in decision-making positions. This will benefit delegates when examining regional trends and their Member State's standing and understanding the data that exists for women in governance and decision-making.

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. (2018). *Additional Partner Commitments* [Website]. Retrieved 1 August 2018 from: http://www.unwomen.org/en/get-involved/step-it-up/additional-commitments

The Step It Up program was created by UN-Women to reach the 2030 Agenda and the therein included SDGs. The source provides hyperlinks to the pledges that a significant number of Member States have made to meet the 2030 Agenda. These pledges contain detailed information about Member States' specific actions and achievements. Delegates should read the link for the Member State that they represent as well as the links of regional partners. In addition, this source will be helpful for delegates as they can view the numerous commitments made by different Member States, and gather information on effective solutions that can be promoted on a global scale.

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. (2018). *Tracking Investments* [Website]. Retrieved 1 August 2018 from: http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/governance-and-national-planning/tracking-investments

This UN-Women webpage gives an overview of the concept of tracking investments, clarifies the topic in plain language, and discusses the solutions that UN-Women has pursued to address the tracking of financial resources. It also provides references to documents such as the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, which gives further insight into accountability efforts. Delegates will benefit from reading this source to gain clarity on the specific routes that UN-Women is pursuing with regard to tracking investments in gender equality and women's empowerment.

United Nations, Fourth World Conference on Women. (1995). *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*. Retrieved 29 July 2018 from: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/BDPfA%20E.pdf

The Beijing Declaration is a landmark agreement relating to the role of women in governance and decision-making, which provides insight into existing and historical mechanisms that have been established for the advancement of women. It outlines three primary strategic objectives, which are: to develop and strengthen governmental bodies, to integrate gender considerations in policy, and to gather and share data related to gender in order to support planning and evaluation. Paragraph 181 in particular is most significant and should be read to provide delegates with additional context, as it provides an overview of the importance and necessity of the participation of women in decision-making.

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