



# Network

The UN Women's Newsletter, Volume No. 15, Issue 2 May, June, July, August 2014

## Interview with Ms. Sylvia Lopez-Ekra, Chief of Mission for the International Organization for Migration Office in Ghana

Ms. Lopez-Ekra recently left the position of Head of the Gender Coordination Unit for the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to head the country office in Ghana. For 12 years, she ensured that a gender perspective was maintained within IOM and within migration policies



*Q. How did you come to dedicate yourself to the important issue of gender?*

A. I started working on gender issues by pure coincidence. Interestingly enough, it was never part of my academic training, which goes to show that opportunities to sensitize young people are lost in higher education. However, I believe things are starting to improve. My first acquaintance with gender issues, as an intern for IOM, was one of the toughest issues you can find, violence against women and girls affected by conflicts in the Great Lakes. I was asked to write a paper on the role that these women can play in peacebuilding. It was heartbreaking and a real eye-opener. By the time I finished working on this assignment I was hooked. [\(Continued on page 3\)](#)

## Letter from the Focal Point for Women



Dear Friends,  
Greetings to our readers!

We are happy to bring you the summer edition of Network newsletter for 2014. In this issue, we feature an interview with Ms. Sylvia Lopez-Ekra, Chief of Mission for the International Organization for Migration Office in Ghana. This edition highlights gender-focused happenings around the UN including the announcement of Ms. Emma Watson as UN Women Goodwill Ambassador; the launch of the Beijing+20 Campaign in New York and Australia; and news of the annual session of the UN Women Executive Board. This edition also features an article on how the UN Appeal Tribunal has weakened whistleblowers' rights through its recent decision.

We are delighted to share news on the UN and private sector partnerships with the launch of the Private Sector Leadership Council and the new technology focused awards launched by UN Women in partnership with the International Telecommunication Union on a new global technology award that recognizes outstanding contributions from women and men in leveraging the potential of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to promote gender equality.

Violence against women captured the spotlight in this edition. Worldwide events such as the launch of the first Summit on the girl child to end female genital mutilation and child marriages, cohosted by the UK government and UNICEF at which UN Women launched the guidance note on reparations for conflict related sexual violence. The Global summit on Ending Sexual Violence in Conflict co-chaired by Ms. Angelina Jolie, Special Envoy for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and UK Foreign Secretary William Hague; the UN Women report on gender-based violence among Syrian refugees in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq; and a new smartphone app *Clique 180* launched during the World Cup in Brazil.

In bringing actions related to representation of women this edition of Network looks at Twitter's first time release of its diversity report – white, male and just like the rest of Silicon Valley and some interesting research on how gender quotas are not fixing sexism as well as gender quotas on corporate boards.

Other news includes on the launch of *HeForShe* campaign action kit and the need to engage men and boys in gender equality efforts.

We strive to present an array of substantive and interesting news and trust that you find these narratives inspire your advocacy and work for promoting the unmet goals of gender equality and women's empowerment wherever you may be around the world.

In solidarity,

***Aparna Mehrotra***

**Focal Point for Women in the UN System &  
Senior Advisor for Coordination,  
Division for Coordination, UN Women**

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## **Interview with Ms. Sylvia Lopez-Ekra Chief of Mission for the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Office in Ghana (continued from page 1)**

***Q. You have successfully combined family-life and career advancement. How can one achieve work-life balance?***

A. Well, I am not sure you could say that I have succeeded at work-life balance but I have found an equilibrium that works for now. Currently, my husband and I are not living in the same country because of our respective professions. This makes me appreciate even more the challenges that single mothers face. However, I have realized that many UN staff, both men and women, face similar challenges. Dual career couples are increasingly becoming the norm nowadays making it more difficult to adjust to mobility requirements by having one spouse/partner follow the other one. And when it does happen, it often means a lot of sacrifices on the part of the “trailing” spouse/partner. These are key issues that deserve more visibility. On a daily basis, I try to balance life and family by never staying late in the office, however, I work every night from home after putting my children to bed.

***Q. What has been the greatest challenge in your career as an advocate for women’s empowerment, rights and security?***

A. I remember when I started working on gender issues 12 years ago that we would often get open resistance and “flat out no”s from staff regarding gender mainstreaming. Fortunately, this is mostly no longer the case. However, there is a more insidious way of resisting change. As it is no longer acceptable to voice disagreement on gender issues, you more often hear people complain: “you say that you promote gender but it is all about women”. This in itself is a valid point in some instances, but I often see it used as a back handed way to discredit efforts and stall initiatives, without bringing anything constructive to the discussion. Other big challenges are the lack of accountability, resources and training. These are challenges that the recently introduced UN System Wide Action Plan on Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equality (UN SWAP) should positively affect.

***Q. What has been your greatest achievement and career highlight?***

A. I will always look back with a great sense of achievement on the IOM’s global sensitization of sexual exploitation and abuse, which I led in 2011. I was heavily pregnant when I finished drafting the training modules. Four months later when I came back from maternity leave, the most amazing thing had happened, all IOM staff worldwide had started a conversation on survival sex, power differentials, consent for sexual activity, ethics and conduct, etc... For the first time, staff were given a safe space to discuss these issues that make many of us uncomfortable but that are also key in empowering staff to understand some of the root causes of violence against women. At the last count, we had trained more than 7,300 IOM staff!

***Q. What do you think are the central challenges regarding gender-related issues, both in the workplace and in the home? Ideally, how might they be overcome?***

A. Frankly, there is so much to do. I’ll give you an example. I have tried to raise my children in a gender-neutral way. Even being a specialist I could not overcome the external influence from daycare centers, schools, extended family, television, books, toys, etc. Today my daughter and son are as gender stereotypical as it gets. I hope that somewhere in the middle of all these daily reinforcements that “girls should be like this” and “boys should play like that”, my regular speeches on gender equality will sink in and find their way into their subconscious.

The socialization to accept and uphold inequalities starts at a very early age and even campaigns to encourage men to champion gender issues sometimes tend to reinforce that. Appealing to men’s strength or honor to ask them to reject violence against women for example can have a positive impact, but when the messages are not well crafted we miss an opportunity to really reframe the discussion and challenge the underlying causes of inequality.

**Q. You are an effective female leader. What drives you? What advice do you have for other women who aspire to become leaders?**

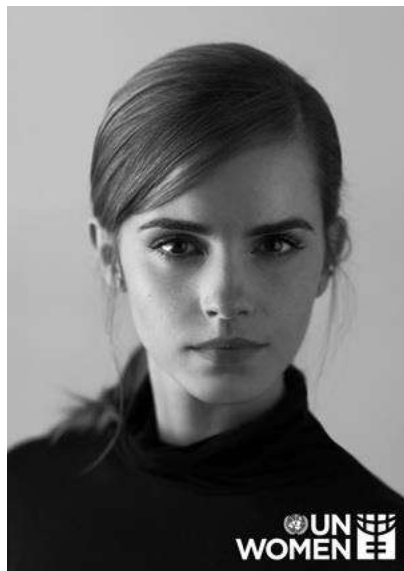
A. I don't know if I can be called a leader. I increasingly wonder what we put under that concept? For women rising through the ranks, it is still very much "damned if you do, damned if you don't". However, there are as many life trajectories as there are women and I am not sure general advice is helpful. This was illustrated by the varied and heated both positive and negative reactions to Sheryl Sandberg's "Lean In". What seems like great advice to one woman will enrage the other. At the end of the day, women should not feel compelled to demonstrate what society considers to be "men-like" behavior to succeed but on the other hand, if they want to, by all means they should go for it.

**Q. What message would you give to younger women and men?**

A. To young women, I'd like to say don't take gender equality for granted. Great strides have been made, it was hard earned but we are not yet there and the progress achieved is definitely not cast in stone. Some young women today will try to avoid being associated with "feminism" at all cost, which makes them lose sight of the bigger issues. To young men I would say, don't support gender equality because it is the politically correct thing to do. Do it because men are losing out a lot in our societies too. I recently read some fascinating articles about how men in developed countries receive less emotional support and generally have friendships that involve lower levels of self-disclosure and intimacy than women. This as you can imagine is rooted in societies' expectations about what it is to be a "real man". It is something that is rarely discussed but that has a clear impact on men's general well-being. There are lot of other examples of the burdens of masculinity as it is understood today. Let's stop telling young men that they have to support gender equality because they have mothers, sisters and girlfriends, they should do for their own sake.

## Congratulations

### UN Women announces Emma Watson as Goodwill Ambassador



Congratulations to **Ms. Emma Watson**, on her appointment as UN Women Goodwill Ambassador on July 8, 2014.

Ms. Watson best known for her role as *Hermione Granger* in the *Harry Potter* film series, the accomplished actor, humanitarian, and recent graduate of Ivy League institution Brown University, will dedicate her efforts as UN Women Goodwill Ambassador towards the empowerment of young women and will serve as an advocate for UN Women's *HeForShe* campaign in promoting gender equality.

"We are thrilled and honoured to work with Emma, whom we believe embodies the values of UN Women," stated Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director, UN Women. "The engagement of young people is critical for the advancement of gender equality in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and I am convinced that Emma's intellect and passion will enable UN Women's messages to reach the hearts and minds of young people globally," added Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka.

Ms. Watson has been involved in the promotion of girls' education for several years, and previously visited Bangladesh and Zambia as part of her humanitarian efforts.

“Being asked to serve as UN Women’s Goodwill Ambassador is truly humbling. The chance to make a real difference is not an opportunity that everyone is given and is one I have no intention of taking lightly. Women’s rights are something so inextricably linked with who I am, so deeply personal and rooted in my life that I can’t imagine an opportunity more exciting. I still have so much to learn, but as I progress I hope to bring more of my individual knowledge, experience and awareness to this role,” said Ms. Watson. Ms. Watson is the first Goodwill Ambassador appointment under Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka’s leadership.

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2014/7/un-women-announces-emma-watson-as-goodwill-ambassador#sthash.pK0FPobx.dpuf>



Congratulations to **Ms. Hiroute Guebre Sellassie** of Ethiopia on her appointment as Special Envoy for the Sahel and Head of Office, by the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on May 3, 2014

Ms. Guebre Sellassie succeeds Mr. Romano Prodi of Italy, who completed his assignment on 31 January 2014.

Ms. Guebre Sellassie brings to the position extensive experience that combines strategic and managerial leadership, operational planning and policy formulation in the area of peace and security in Africa. She recently served as the Director of the Political Affairs Division and Head of the Goma Regional Office in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) from 2007 to 2014.

Before joining the United Nations, Ms. Guebre Sellassie was Oxfam Regional Peace Building and Conflict Management Advisor for Horn, East and Central Africa. From 1998 to 2004, she was the CEO of the African Women Committee on Peace and Development, established jointly by the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Union to serve as an advisory organ on women’s involvement in peace and security issues.

As a law graduate of the University of the Sorbonne in Paris and with many years as a practicing lawyer, Ms. Guebre Sellassie has served in different capacities in the Ethiopian Government.

## Around the UN

### *UN Women calls on global citizens to bring gender equality into focus*

#### *Launches Beijing+20 Campaign: Empowering Women, Empowering Humanity: Picture it!*



On May 22, 2014, UN Women launched a major campaign in the lead-up to the commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the historic Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in New York. A year of activities around the world will aim to mobilize governments and citizens alike to picture a world where gender equality is a reality and to join a global conversation on empowering women to empower humanity.

Events will focus on achievements and gaps in gender equality and women’s empowerment since 189 governments adopted the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. This visionary



blueprint paves the way for women's full and equal participation in all spheres of life and decision-making.

"The Beijing Platform for Action is an unfulfilled promise to women and girls," says UN Women Executive Director Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka (pictured above briefing journalists at United Nations Headquarters). "Our goal is straightforward: renewed commitment, strengthened action and increased resources to realize gender equality, women's empowerment and the human rights of women and girls."

The Beijing Women's Conference drew an unprecedented 17,000 participants while 30,000 representatives attended the NGO Forum. Next year, in 2015, the United Nations will assess progress on implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action over the past 20 years, based on national reports currently being prepared by UN Member States.

The campaign kicked off with an all-day Tweetathon spanning the globe. Participating groups will include the UN, Lean In, the World YWCA, the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, Half the Sky, the European Women's Lobby, the Women's Media Centre, Devex and other regional and national experts.

UN Women will unveil a global information hub featuring diverse voices, testimonies of personal experiences and achievement, celebrity champions and a calendar to track Beijing+20 events. The *HeforShe* web platform will spotlight prominent men standing up to end violence against women and advance equality. UN Women will support engagement through its network of country offices and release an interactive Facebook app, "Close the Gap".

"This anniversary takes place at an historic moment," stresses UN Women's Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka, "as the nations of the world are coming together to accelerate progress to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 and define a new global development framework. We must seize this once-in-a-generation opportunity to position gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment at the centre of the global agenda and make it a reality."

Major campaign events are being planned around the world. This June, tens of thousands of people will gather in Sweden to advocate for the protection of the human rights of women and girls. In September, at the Climate Summit in New York, a special event will be held with women heads of State and activists. In India in November, men and boys will make a show of force for gender equality.

June 27 launched the Campaign at New York's historic Apollo Theatre. In the packed theatre and to



thunderous applause, UN officials, feminist activists, celebrities and performers took the stage and brought the audience to their feet as they raised their voices in support of the UN Women campaign.

"Our goal is to rekindle the spirit of Beijing to reenergize all of us in our work to advance women's rights, women's empowerment and gender equality," said UN Women Executive Director Ms.

Mlambo-Ngcuka. Rousing the crowds, she added, "the vision laid out in Beijing, with 12 critical areas of concern for women, still resonates deeply around the world. It is still unfinished business."

Urging participation from all corners of the world and society, UN Deputy Secretary-General Mr. Jan Eliasson emphasized the need to fulfil the Beijing promise. "The essence of the Beijing vision is that equality

for women and girls, equal rights, equal opportunities and equal participation will build a better world for us all...Remember: nobody can do everything – but everybody can do something. Let's go to work!"

The formal commemoration of the 20th anniversary will take place during the 59th session of the Commission on the Status of Women and International Women's Day 2015 will be dedicated to Beijing+20. A high-level commitment meeting is expected in September 2015.

"Today I call on everyone to be part of the solution," said Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka. "Picture It! Together, we can realize the promise of Beijing: equality between women and men."

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2014/5/press-release-beijing-plus-20-launch#sthash.K9vxpIhN.dpuf>

### ***UN Women Executive Board meets for its Annual Session***

The Annual Session of the UN Women Executive Board was held from 17 to 19 June 2014. Chaired by Executive Board President, Permanent Representative of Uruguay to the United Nations, His Excellency Ambassador Koncke Pizzorno, the Executive Board discussed recommendations stemming from its 2014 Joint Field Visit to Panama and El Salvador along with the Executive Boards of UNDP, UNFPA, UNOPS, UNICEF and WFP from 23 March to 1 April. It was the first time UN Women led the yearly field visit.

To encourage Member States to show their commitment to UN Women, a pledging event was also held at this session following the success of the 2013 pledging event. The Executive Board reviewed an annual report on the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2011–2013 and applied lessons learned to the next Strategic Plan 2014-17. It reviewed also a "Corporate Joint Evaluation of Joint Programmes on Gender Equality in the United Nations system" which includes recommendations for improving coordination and effectiveness of the UN system's efforts to advance gender equality and women's empowerment.

In her closing remarks, UN Women Executive Director Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka said that "ending all forms of discrimination and violence against women by 2030 is the mission of our time".

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2014/6/executive-board-to-hold-annual-session-2014#sthash.Tq28OSxR.dpuf>

### ***UN Women Launches Private Sector Leadership Advisory Council***

UN Women on June 2, 2014 launched a new Private Sector Leadership Advisory Council with leading businesses to advance women's rights and empowerment. At a special event at United Nations Headquarters, the 10 founding corporate leaders were welcomed by the Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women, Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka.

Under the Executive Director's leadership, the influential Council will offer advice on three specific areas: accelerating women's economic empowerment, ending violence against women and helping to close the funding gap for UN Women.

"This Council's focus is to accelerate economic and social progress for women and girls worldwide by combining our expertise, reach and resources for greater results," said Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka. "The Council is being launched at just the right time, as UN Women mobilizes for the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Women's Conference under the theme: Empowering Women, Empowering Humanity."

The invitation-only Council is comprised of prominent private sector leaders, whose companies have a global footprint and identify as corporate citizens that already demonstrate a strong commitment to supporting women and girls.

“Given our mandate in advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women, we hope that the Council will provide the foundation necessary to further expand diversified representation in terms of company size, region, and increased female membership,” said Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka.



“Empowering women is one of the most important ways we can accelerate growth across the global economy,” said Mr. Muhtar Kent, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of The Coca-Cola Company and first Chair of the UN Women Private Sector Leadership Advisory Council. “By bringing together corporations, government and civil society through Golden Triangle partnerships, we can positively impact women, their families and their communities. I’m honoured to chair this new council and confident that we can make meaningful progress engaging with the private sector on this important work.”

The UN Women Private Sector Leadership Advisory Council will meet twice a year to review progress and provide strategic input to guide advocacy and resource mobilization efforts.

Pictured above right are the 10 founding members at United Nations Headquarters on 2 June 2014, from left to right, first row: Mr. Christopher Graves, Global CEO of Ogilvy Public Relations; Mr. Michael Goltzman, Vice-President of International Government Relations and Public Affairs, The Coca-Cola Company; Ms. Marcela Manubens, Global Vice-President for Social Impact, Unilever; Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director, UN Women; Ms. Khanyisile Kweyama, Executive Director and CEO, Anglo American South Africa; Ms. Dina Habib Powell, President, Goldman Sachs Foundation and Global Head of Corporate Engagement; Mr. Andrew Bruce, North America CEO, Publicis. Second row: Ms. Sarah François-Poncet, Chief Legal Council and Secretary General, Chanel Foundation; Mr. Dominic Barton, Managing Director, CEO, McKinsey and Company; Mr. Emmanuel Lulin, Senior VP and Chief Ethics Officer, L’Oréal; and Mr. Rick Goings, Chairman and CEO, Tupperware Brands Corporation.

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2014/6/private-sector-leadership-advisory-council-launched#sthash.RQYfSWNs.dpuf>

### ***UN Tribunal Weakens Whistleblowers' Rights, Disregards U.S. Appropriations Law***

The United Nations Appeals Tribunal (UNAT) - the court of last resort in the UN internal justice system, and its decisions are final and binding - issued a decision in the whistleblower protection appeal of Government Accountability Project (GAP) client Mr. James Wasserstrom, a former senior staff member at the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). In overturning the strongly worded decision of the UN Dispute Tribunal (UNDT) in Mr. Wasserstrom's favor, the UNAT has eviscerated UNDT's precedent protecting whistleblowers and has significantly weakened their rights within the UN's internal justice system, notes the GAP project website.

"This Labor Day weekend, the United Nations significantly weakened the rights of its own employees," said GAP international program consultant Ms. Shelley Walden. "As a result of this judgment, some cases filed by UN whistleblowers will likely be thrown out by the Tribunal. This judgment may also further exacerbate the chilling effect that prevents UN employees from speaking out about misconduct. This is a sad day for whistleblowers and those who wish the UN was more accountable and effective."

"With this judgment, the walls of impunity surrounding UN officials engaged in corruption have been further fortified," Wasserstrom said. "Neither the Secretary General nor some of the key offices who serve him, including the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the Ethics Office, have demonstrated a credible interest beyond words in protecting the brave individuals who come forward after witnessing wrongdoing."



The US State Department and the US Congress should consider this UNAT decision as all the evidence they need to act on the withholding requirement of US law."

In its decision, the UNAT applied its previous restrictive rulings that only certain "administrative decisions" by specific UN entities confer jurisdiction on the UNDT to entertain staff complaints. In Mr. Wasserstrom's case, UNAT determined "recommendations" made by the UN Ethics Office – the unit established to protect UN whistleblowers – are not administrative decisions subject to judicial review by the UNDT. As a result of this precedent, UN whistleblowers will no longer be able to challenge the decisions of the Ethics Office, an admittedly dubious channel for redress, which has historically failed to protect 99 percent of the whistleblowers who have sought its support, including Mr. Wasserstrom. Without a clear and effective procedure for protecting whistleblowers, the United Nations fails to meet international best practices.

The judgment (2014-UNAT-457) was made by majority with Judge Faherty dissenting. The majority reversed the judgments on liability and relief made in Mr. Wasserstrom's favor by UNDT. The judges unanimously upheld an award of \$15,000 in costs against the Secretary-General for having abused the judicial process by refusing to comply with the production and discovery orders.

UNAT did not consider the merits of Mr. Wasserstrom's retaliation claims and therefore he did not receive comprehensive relief from retaliation. Moreover, this decision will make it even more difficult for other UN whistleblowers to receive results that eliminate retaliation. Many whistleblowers previously believed that they could file only with the Ethics Office – which has a much longer statute of limitations for reviewing retaliation claims than the formal justice system – and wait for its decision before seeking relief from UNDT. But, since the UNAT judges decided this is not the correct procedure, these cases will likely be dismissed.

Future whistleblowers will have to file claims before UNDT within 60 days of the alleged retaliation to preserve their rights. But in GAP's experience, most whistleblowers are not aware of their rights or the full extent of retaliation within that time frame. This 60-day limit is a clear violation of best practices in whistleblower protection, which require at least a six-month statute of limitations to challenge retaliatory decisions through formal channels.

"This verdict provides further evidence of the United Nations' failure to comply with the 2014 US Consolidated Appropriations Act," Walden said. "The State Department cannot, in good conscience, claim that the United Nations meets best practices in whistleblower protection."

The Government Accountability Project is the United States' leading whistleblower protection organization which through litigating whistleblower cases, publicizing concerns and developing legal reforms, seeks to protect the public interest by promoting government and corporate accountability

See more at: <http://whistleblower.org/press/un-tribunal-weakens-whistleblowers-rights-disregards-us-appropriations-law#sthash.5E7oFJz4.dpuf> and <http://whistleblower.org/press/un-tribunal-weakens-whistleblowers-rights-disregards-us-appropriations-law#sthash.5E7oFJz4.dpuf>

### *Ensuring protection and care for older persons*



The Fifth Session of the Open Ended Working Group on Ageing was held in New York from 30 July to 1 August. In the Working Group, established by the General Assembly on 21 December 2010, Member States, Civil Society Representatives and experts consider the existing international framework of the human rights of older persons, identify possible gaps and review how best to address them, including by considering the feasibility of further instruments and measures.

The Fifth Session of the Open Ended Working Group on Ageing included four panel discussion themes: Human Rights and Care of

Older Persons; Violence and Abuse against Older Persons (with a focus on older women and financial abuse); Planning for End of Life Care: Legal and Financial issues; and Recent Developments and how to strengthen the rights of older persons through enhanced implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing.

The Human Rights Council appointed Independent Expert on the Enjoyment of All Human Rights by Older persons, Ms. Rosita Kornfeld-Matte who addressed the working group on 'Post-2015 Development' and the Special Advisor of the Secretary General addressed the Working Group on the theme 'Older Persons and the Post-2015 Agenda'.

See more at: <http://social.un.org/ageing-working-group/fifthsession.shtml>

## **Sustainable Development Goals Still Lacking Real Ambition for Urgent Transformational Change the World Needs to Achieve Gender Equality**

### ***Women's Major Group calls for stronger rights-based targets in the post 2015 agenda***

At the 68<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly as part of the 'Post 2015' process, the UN General Assembly's Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) submitted a report with a proposal for sustainable development goals proposed by member states. These new goals will follow in the footsteps of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and will determine new commitments and funding for sustainable development. Welcoming the openness of the SDG process, the Women's Major Groups (WMGs) - comprised of over 500 women's human rights, environment and development organizations, activists and academia - noted that civil society's full and meaningful participation in decision-making are among the essential aspects of the new post 2015 global development agenda.

Although the outcome was a significant step, the Women's Major Groups highlighted that women's rights were not adequately reflected in the outcome document. The WMGs stressed that the proposed SDGs were still not sufficiently ambitious, transformative or rights-based, and presented eight 'red flags' for attention:

1. absence of human rights;
2. sexual and reproductive health targets were insufficiently addressed;
3. concentration of power and wealth imbalances that deepen poverty and inequalities within and between countries were insufficiently addressed, and the agenda lacks targets to reverse this trend;
4. the burden of unpaid domestic and care work still rely on women;
5. lack of recognition of women as farmers and fishers, particularly for indigenous peoples which is key for sustainable natural resource management;
6. insufficient attention to women's role in peace and justice;
7. concern around 'partnership(s)'; and
8. technology focus remains on trade and private access.

The WMGs commended the governments that fought hard to secure and advance gender equality and the women's human rights throughout the two-year process, and deplored the countries that consistently tried to delete language around women and girl's rights. They commended the co-chairs for forging a compromise with all member states, despite pressures to reduce the goals to the lowest common denominator.

The WMGs welcomed the standalone Goal 5: 'Achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls'. Goal 5 seeks to end all forms of violence, discrimination, early and forced marriage and harmful practices against women and girls, universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, to ensure women's full participation in decision-making, and equal rights to land and economic

resources. Gender equality and women's rights were central to many goals and the agenda comprehensively aims to end poverty and hunger, ensure healthy lives, universal access to water and sanitation for all.

See more at <http://www.womenmajorgroup.org/womens-8-red-flags-following-the-conclusion-of-the-open-working-group-on-sustainable-development-goals-sdgs/>

## Around the World

### *UN Women launches the Beijing+20 campaign in Australia*

During her first visit to Australia in August as UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women, Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka kicked off the Beijing+20 campaign in the country, focusing on how Australians can be involved in an international conversation about progress made since the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995.

Pictured right at the official Beijing+20 Australia campaign launch at Parliament House in the Australian capital, Canberra on 27 August along with (from left to right) Ms. Julie McKay, Executive Director, Australian National Committee for UN Women; Ms. Donelle Wheeler, President, Australian National Committee for UN Women; and Senator Michaelia Cash, Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Women, Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka said



“Empowering Women, Empowering Humanity: Picture it! It is an invitation to every Australian to join the movement, take action, and make your voice heard. In your workplace, your school, your community, online and in the streets, let’s make gender equality a reality – now!”

As part of the worldwide mobilization in the lead-up to the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Conference and Declaration, Australia’s Beijing+20 campaign highlights four of these areas of concern in particular, which reflect the Government’s priorities, including: eliminating violence against women; advancing economic empowerment and opportunity; women’s leadership; and involving women in peace and security.

“These focus areas can improve the lives of women in our region, and will ensure we don’t wait another 20 years until gender equality becomes a reality,” said Senator Ms. Michaelia Cash, Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Women. “The Australian Government is pleased to be working closely with UN Women globally to support women and girls.”

The Australian National Committee for UN Women coordinates the Australian campaign. The campaign will include public events, community education and diverse media platforms to enable the community to reflect on and state their views on gender equality progress and goals achieved since 1995, and work to be done.

See more at: <http://beijing20.unwomen.org/en/news-and-events/stories/2014/8/un-women-launches-the-beijing-20-campaign-in-australia#sthash.Ebgc6FLT.dpuf>

## ***ITU, UN Women launch award for gender equality technology***

In Geneva in July 2014, The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and UN Women announced new global awards for outstanding work in technology for gender equality - GEM-TECH awards - recognizing leaders, organizations using the power of technology to drive change. ITU and UN Women partnered to launch the global technology awards that recognizes outstanding contributions from women and men in leveraging the potential of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to promote gender equality. The GEM-TECH Awards were conferred on seven winners from government, the private sector, academia and civil society at ITU's Plenipotentiary Conference, held in Busan, Korea, from 20 October to 7 November. Winners accepted their awards in Busan and joined a global celebration on 21 October promoting the power of ICTs to transform lives.

Awards were presented by ITU Secretary-General Dr. Hamadoun I. Touré and UN Women Executive Director Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka as part of a day-long programme of activities around gender issues. 'Diversity' figures released by major tech companies, including Google, Facebook, Yahoo and LinkedIn, revealed that the number of women in tech jobs is well under 20 percent, with women in leadership roles also low – reflecting a global lack of women coming into the ICT field. "ICTs are the most powerful tool we have ever had to make a difference to the lives of today's and tomorrow's women, and to build a more equitable world for all," said ITU Secretary-General Dr. Touré. "This new award will provide much-deserved global recognition for some of the many outstanding gender champions – both female and male – who are driving exciting, innovative and effective ICT and gender initiatives."

The 2015 GEM-TECH awards have been launched in the context of commemorations for the 20-year anniversary of the UN Beijing Platform for Action, which emphasized the importance of ICTs for women's empowerment and the achievement of gender equality. The awards are one of the first results of a new memorandum of understanding between ITU and UN Women to improve women's access to, and engagement with, ICTs; enhancing women's involvement in ICT policy-making; and promoting the power of ICTs in future UN priority action areas, including the post-2015 framework for sustainable development. "ICTs can and should be a game-changer for girls and women around the world, providing them with avenues for empowerment and for exercising their rights," said UN Women Executive Director Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka. "We must be deliberate in making this happen and these awards celebrate those that are leading this charge." ITU is already active in the field of gender and technology, particularly through its global 'Girls in ICT Day' event, which takes place annually on the fourth Thursday in April, raising awareness of the advantages and opportunities offered by tech careers to a new generation of girls and young women. Prominent actor and advocate Ms. Geena Davis serves as ITU Special Envoy on Women and Girls in ICT.

ITU estimates a global skills shortfall of over two million ICT jobs in the coming 10 years. With digital technologies now pervading every business sector, girls and young women who learn coding, applications development and computer science will have a significant advantage over their non-tech-trained peers, regardless of the field they eventually choose to work in. "Empowering girls and young women to fulfil their potential through ICTs will benefit not only young women and girls themselves, but entire societies and their economies," said Dr Touré.

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2014/7/itu-awards-for-gender-equality#sthash.d9HJIN5Y.dpuf>

## ***Strengthening capacities to produce gender statistics***



As part of a series of workshops conducted by the Statistics Division, under the Global Gender Statistics Programme, to provide training and assistance to strengthen the capacity of countries to produce and disseminate gender statistics and to use gender statistics for policymaking, UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs - DESA's Statistics Division, in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), organized a workshop on Gender Statistics for countries from the Pacific region in Nadi, Fiji, from 4 to 6 August, 2014.

The workshops focused primarily on Integrating a Gender Perspective into Statistics, Time Use Statistics and Statistics on Violence against Women. They aim to promote and train national statisticians on agreed international standards, share best practices and ensure collaboration and networking among gender statisticians and other relevant stakeholders, for the production, dissemination and communication of gender statistics that are policy relevant, internationally comparable and technically sound.



The workshop for the Pacific region assisted national statisticians with translating international guidelines into practice at the national level, taking into account the specific contexts of countries in the region.

See more at <http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/newsletter/desanews/capacity/2014/08/index.html>

### ***Innovative women-led enterprises win SEED Gender Equality Awards***

Three women-led social and environmental enterprises have been presented with the 2014 SEED Gender Equality Award for tackling sustainable development challenges while promoting gender equality. The



United Nations Environment Programme leads the SEED Gender Equality Awards, supported by UN Women and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization. Awards were presented on 10 September at the 2014 Africa Awards Symposium in Nairobi, Kenya. The three recipients, from Bangladesh, Nepal and Zimbabwe, provide a valuable contribution to their economy. JITA Social Business in Bangladesh, is an innovative rural distribution network that provides jobs and a regular income for poor women across Bangladesh, who gain a commission for selling products ranging from solar lamps to food and sanitary items door-to-door. The Women's Off-season Vegetable Production Group in

Nepal uses agricultural techniques, notably poly-tunnels and greenhouses, to help improve food security and nutrition while empowering marginalized women through job creation. The Precious Life Foundation's Outgrower Project in Zimbabwe teaches bio-intensive, organic agricultural techniques to vulnerable women living at its shelter who then pass on their knowledge to their community in Zimbabwe's Matabeleland South Region. "Women's economic empowerment is central to achieving gender equality," said UN Women Executive Director Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka at the event. "With a livelihood and an income of their own, women have increased status, can provide for their families, and become empowered in other parts of their lives as well, such as making decisions about education, housing, food choices, and medical care." "We are pleased to be working with SEED and supporting the SEED Gender Equality Awards for the outstanding women-led social and environmental enterprises that are leading the way," she said. Each year, the SEED awards recognize enterprises that address sustainable development challenges at the community level. Organizations from 84 countries applied this year and 41 green entrepreneurs were recognized overall. The SEED award includes a \$5,000 financial contribution and technical support for the start-up enterprises.

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2014/9/seed-gender-equality-awards-2014#sthash.ErBLtnkJ.dpuf>

## UNICEF and UK Government hold first Girl Summit

### *Female genital mutilation (FGM) and childhood forced marriage should be stopped worldwide "within this generation"*

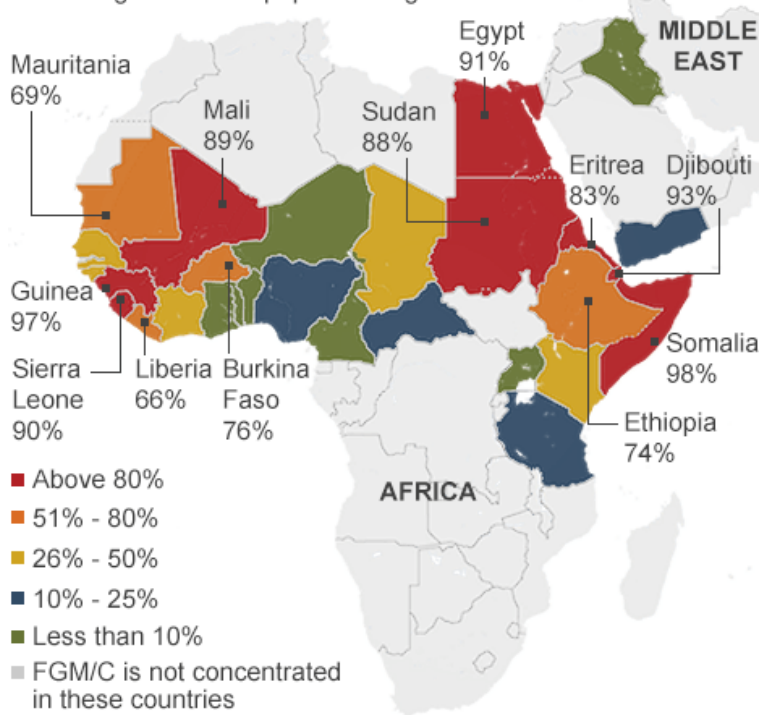


On 22 July 2014, the UK government and UNICEF hosted the first Girl Summit, aimed at mobilizing domestic and international efforts to end female genital mutilation (FGM) and child, early and forced marriage within a generation.

Speaking at a global summit in London, UK Prime Minister David Cameron said Britain had no 'special magic' to stop the practices - so global action was needed. He told the Girl Summit that the existence of the practices were "standing rebukes to our world". Mr. Cameron also unveiled measures to tackle FGM in England and Wales. As part of this, parents will face prosecution if they fail to stop their daughters undergoing FGM. He said the Summit was intended to use the "power of convening people to come up with ideas and commitments to outlaw these practices".

#### Countries where FGM is concentrated

Percentage of female population age 15-49 affected



Source: Unicef

The Girl Summit Charter on ending female genital mutilation and child, early and forced marriage was signed by hundreds of signatories who stated that these practices violated the fundamental rights of all girls and women to live free from violence and discrimination. Such violations not only harm individual girls; by undermining girls' ability to make their own choices and reach their full potential, they also diminish the strength of families, communities and society.

The summit was attended by international politicians, campaigners including the Pakistani teenager Ms. Malala Yousafzai, and women who have undergone FGM.

Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN Women, said the situation was improving but many girls remained at risk. "The fact that 30 million girls are at risk of being cut in the coming years clearly means that we have a big challenge

on our hands," she said.

Often motivated by beliefs about what is considered proper sexual behavior, to prepare a girl or woman for adulthood and marriage and to ensure "pure femininity", FGM is practiced in 29 countries in Africa and some countries in Asia and the Middle East with an estimated three million girls and women worldwide are at risk each year. About 125 million victims are estimated to be living with the consequences.

In December 2012, the UN General Assembly approved a resolution calling for all member states to ban the practice.

See more at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/girl-summit-2014-outcomes-and-commitments>

## World Cup Fans to be greeted with new app: ending violence against women is the goal

*Posters, billboards and ads on public transit will promote a new smartphone app that provides information for women who've experienced violence.*



During the World Cup in Brazil, locals and tourists came across posters, billboards and ads on buses and subways with an image of women and men holding a cellphone with the following message: “Violência contra as mulheres? Eu ligo 180” (“Violence against women? I’ll call 180”).

Mr. Wendely Leal (pictured) is one of the designers and programmers of Clique 180 in the official launch of the app in Brasília, capital of Brazil. He used the information of the app to help a friend in a situation of gender violence.

Launched on May 22, 2014 the government campaign emphasizes the public’s responsibility to end violence against women. It promotes a 24-hour women’s helpline (Central de Atendimento à Mulher – Ligue 180), where survivors of violence can access information about their rights, where and how to seek help, and report cases. The hotline has received over 3 million calls since its creation in 2005 – an impressive number that they hope to increase.

Around 40 percent of Brazilian women have experienced domestic violence at some point in their lives. In 2012, 50,617 rapes were reported in Brazil and more than 92,000 women were killed between 1980 and 2012. Building an app to promote the hotline was an imperative step for Brazil which ranks fourth in the world in the number of smartphones – with some 70 million handsets in the country in 2013. More than 100 million Brazilians – which is around half of the total population of nearly 200 million – use the Internet.

The newly developed smartphone app Clique 180 provides information about the types of violence against women and the country’s legislation for each crime, as well as guidelines on what to do and where to go for women who have suffered different types of violence. It includes a button to dial the Women’s Helpline and a collaborative tool that allows users to pin areas of the city that pose safety risks on a map. The app is supported by a website ([www.clique180.org.br](http://www.clique180.org.br)).

Developed for iOS and Android operating systems by UN Women, in partnership with the British Embassy, the Clique 180 app builds on a previous SmartWomen App piloted in 2013 under the Rio de Janeiro Safe and Sustainable City for All Joint Programme “Rio por Elas”, in partnership with UN-Habitat and UNICEF. It was tested in 10 favelas (shantytowns) in Rio de Janeiro.

In addition to developing the app, UN Women has also been researching how mobile technologies can be used to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls. A Global Mapping project with Microsoft is underway on women’s access to and use of mobile phones to prevent, document and respond to violence in public spaces – in the cities of Rio de Janeiro, New Delhi and Marrakech. The results of this research will be released later this year.

“It is essential that information that can save the lives of women reaches everyone, everywhere,” says Ms. Nadine Gasman, Representative of UN Women Brazil. “We are proud to be able to offer this tool that will help women recognize the situations of violence they experience and access public services to break this vicious cycle of patriarchal domination.”



See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2014/6/world-cup-fans-to-be-greeted-with-new-app#sthash.IZ0PIG0O.dpuf>

## Violence against Women

### Turning the tide on sexual violence in conflict, new UN guidance on reparations launched

#### *Move beyond business as usual to ensure survivors are reform agents, says UN Women*

British Foreign Secretary the Mr. William Hague and Special Envoy for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees Ms. Angelina Jolie co-chaired the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict on from 10 to 13 June 2014 in London, United Kingdom. The Summit attendees agreed on actions to end the use of sexual violence in conflict, to seek reparations for those affected, and to shatter the culture of impunity by bringing those who commit these crimes to justice.

This was the largest gathering ever brought together on the issue, with over 1,200 attendees including 100 NGOs and international partners, 48 foreign ministers and over 600 government delegates from 113 countries. The Summit comes at a time when the world is witnessing a run of shocking cases of violence against women including the kidnapping of 200 schoolgirls in Nigeria by the rebel group Boko Haram, the stoning to death of a pregnant woman in Pakistan in a so-called 'honor killing', and the recent gang-rape and murder of two Indian teenagers. UN Women Executive Director, Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka, attended the summit to advocate for greater global action and to continue to advance the work of UN Women in this area at a global level.

At the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict UN Women launched along with OHCHR the UN Secretary-General's Guidance Note on Reparations for Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, a blueprint for promoting gender-sensitive approaches to the design and delivery of reparations for victims of conflict-related sexual violence.

During the opening plenary of the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict in London on 11 June 2014, UN Women Executive Director Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka joins the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Dr. Zainab Bangura, in asking delegates to stand and cross hands in solidarity to stop rape in conflict.

Against the backdrop of the Summit, UN Women Executive Director Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka presented the newly adopted guidelines and called for the urgent need to focus on reparations, which are the most victim-focused, and yet most underfunded justice tool in post-conflict countries.

Global outrage has grown as grim reports from northern Nigeria, Syria, South Sudan, Central African Republic, Afghanistan and other crises pour in daily detailing the horrors of conflicts that affect women. Highlighting that the conviction of perpetrators, while essential, does not address the root causes of violence or deliver the redress due to victims, the Guidance Note makes a strong call to the international community to usher in transformative reparations for individuals and communities affected by sexual violence in conflict.





Reparations, most often overlooked in access to justice processes, are of great importance for women as direct victims and as widows, wives, mothers and caregivers in settings where there is social and economic discrimination. Ranging from specialized healthcare and education programmes for victims of violations to land restitution, formal apologies and victim commemoration days, reparations can provide acknowledgement of survivors' rights as equal citizens and crucial resources for recovery.

“Stronger action is the need of the hour, and sexual violence in conflict is a front line concern for us. Reparations are routinely left out of peace negotiations or sidelined in funding priorities, even though they are of utmost importance to survivors. We need to move this agenda forward in order to ensure real change in the lives of survivors who have seen the horrors of sexual violence in conflict up close,” said Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka. “UN Women stands ready to support the international community in delivering on the promise of reparations as a means for substantive change in the lives of women and men, boys and girls affected by conflict and to reflect the needs of victims for both courtroom justice as well as comprehensive redress.”

The Guidance Note is the result of extensive consultations and research, and seeks to distill experiences across the globe into actionable principles to inform access to justice policy and programming in post-conflict societies. Studies show that often policy and laws are in place, yet implementation and gender-sensitive delivery of reparations programmes continue to lag behind. To address these challenges, UN Women and OHCHR developed the guidance for the UN system, with principles applicable to all parties, including Member States and civil society actors who are developing, supporting, and implementing reparations policies and programming.

Gender equality is the foundation of lasting peace. The principles call for long-term, in-depth solutions, such as, not just a once-off cash payment, but access to land and inheritance rights for the wives of the disappeared; land restitution for those affected, coupled with land redistribution and access to credit, skills and means to transform that land into a source of livelihood; and providing fistula surgery to rape victims, as well as income-generating skills to help them build a future.

Find out more about UN Women's work on addressing sexual violence in conflict here:

<https://unwomen.org.au/focus-areas/ending-violence-against-women>

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2014/6/new-un-guidance-on-reparations-launched#sthash.s1WWkw9e.dpuf>

***[New UN data shows need for urgent action to end female genital mutilation, child marriage](#)***



Kalpona was 12 when her parents arranged for her to marry a man more than twice her age. A few days before the wedding, they agreed to let her continue with school instead.

New data released in July 2014 in conjunction with the first-ever Girl Summit by UNICEF shows the need for urgent action to end female genital mutilation and child marriage – two practices that affect millions of girls across the globe and to rally support for faster progress to end child marriage and FGM.

“FGM and child marriage profoundly and permanently harm girls, denying

them their right to make their own decisions and to reach their full potential. They are detriments to the girls themselves, their families, and their societies,” said UNICEF Executive Director Mr. Anthony Lake. “Girls are not property; they have the right to determine their destiny. When they do so, everyone benefits.

According to the newly-released data, more than 130 million girls and women have experienced some form of female genital mutilation, also known as FGM, in the 29 countries in Africa and the Middle East where the harmful practice is most common.

In addition, child marriage is widespread, the agency pointed out in a news release. More than 700 million women alive today were married as children. More than 1 in 3 – or some 250 million – were married before the age of 15.



“The numbers tell us we must accelerate our efforts. And let’s not forget that these numbers represent real lives. While these are problems of a global scale, the solutions must be local, driven by communities, families and girls themselves to change mindsets and break the cycles that perpetuate FGM/C and child marriage,” said Mr. Lake. “We can’t let the staggering numbers numb us – they must compel us to act.”

See more at: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=48320#.U-dPuuOSzqG>

### ***We Just Keep Silent: A report on gender-based violence among Syrian refugees in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq***

In April 2014, UN Women launched a new report on gender-based violence among Syrian refugees in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq revealing increased levels of intimate partner violence, high levels of sexual harassment by employers and taxi drivers, and a significant number of reports of sexual commercial transactions inside and outside camps. Almost all men also reported feeling afraid for the safety of their wives and daughters.



“‘We Just Keep Silent’ is what Syrian women do after they have been violently attacked or harassed or pushed to do some sexually-related act against their will,” disclosed UN Women Representative Ms. Frances Guy at the launch ceremony. “They complain that often there is no one to speak to, no one who can take action,” she said, underlining that “low numbers of reported cases of gender-based violence do not mean that the issue is not significant.”

Thanking the Kurdistan Regional Government for its strong commitment to improve the welfare of Syrian refugees throughout the Region, as well as all international and national NGOs for their hard work in supporting Syrian refugees, Ms. Guy called, on behalf of UN Women, for yet more to be done to prevent Syrian women and girls from being exploited, and to create livelihood opportunities inside and outside the camps.

She also stressed that more is needed to ensure that those who are committing violence against women are held accountable for their acts. “Let us be clear, exploiting vulnerable women and girls for sexual purposes is a crime and should be addressed as such,” Ms. Guy concluded.

See more at: <http://new-hq.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2014/4/press-release-we-just-keep-silent#sthash.Nc2bgS5L.dpuf>

## Ending violence against women and girls: 25 policies nominated for Future Policy Award 2014

### *World Future Council partners with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and UN Women to highlight solutions to a global human rights emergency*

Twenty-five policies on ending violence against women and girls were nominated in June 2014 for the Future Policy Award 2014. This was announced by the World Future Council, the Inter-Parliamentary Union and UN Women today. Violence against women and girls is one of the most pervasive and predominant forms of human rights abuses in the world.

One in three women worldwide will suffer sexual and/or physical violence in her lifetime. A human rights violation of pandemic proportions, the pervasive violence also impedes economic development and poverty reduction by limiting women’s choices and their ability to act. Tackling violence against women on all levels is, therefore, a necessary prerequisite for gender equality and sustainable development.

The 25 nominated policies competing for the prestigious prize represent all continents. International organizations, NGOs and noted experts in the field nominated the policies. They represent the wide range of policy dimensions from comprehensive international treaties and national action plans to measures that ensure coordinated support of women who report an attack and press charges.

The Future Policy Award is the first and only award that celebrates policies rather than people on an international level. Since 2009, it has been awarded in a different policy field each year to showcase existing and working policy solutions to an international audience.

For the full list of nominated policies and winners as well as jury members, see [www.worldfuturecouncil.org/fpa\\_2014.html](http://www.worldfuturecouncil.org/fpa_2014.html)

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2014/6/25-policies-nominated-for-future-policy-award-2014#sthash.U1kocw4w.dpuf>

## Engaging Men and Boys on Gender Equality



Mr. Brian Heilman, Gender and Evaluation Specialist at the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) authored a new report that shows that gender norms and behaviors that lead to violence develop when boys are young. He told Daybreak Asia's Ms. Frances Alonzo of the importance of engaging men and boys to advance gender equality, and the success of school based programs to help boys and girls build gender-equitable, healthy, non-violent lifestyles at a pivotal

time when attitudes and behaviors are still being developed.

A major finding of the study is that across countries, socio-economic backgrounds, different demographic characteristics, is consistent attitudes of male privilege and male sexual entitlement. "Attitudes of gender inequality that link most strongly with a man's likelihood of perpetrating rape" said Mr. Heilman. As local and international communities are more and more vocal about their outrage of the treatment of women and girls, the tide is turning - to truly see change; the root causes of violence must be challenged.

See more at: <http://www.voanews.com/content/qa-brian-heilman-engaging-men-and-boys-gender-equality/1959277.html>

## Women's Representation

### *Along with Facebook and Google, Twitter's diversity report reveals a homogenous industry lacking women and minorities*

Twitter released its diversity report in July 2014 revealing that overall, 70 percent of Twitter's employees are male. That number increases to 90 percent when counting just Twitter's tech employees. In leadership positions, 79 percent are male. Diversity reports from Facebook and Google are consistent with that of Twitter.

Worldwide, only 31 percent of Facebook's employees are female. The gender gap was larger in the tech space, with only 15 percent being female employees. Representation of women at Google's is at 30 percent.

"We are committed to making inclusiveness a cornerstone of our culture," Twitter said in its report. It might not be much, but it's a significant shift in tone since CEO Mr. Dick Costolo's Twitter spat with critics of its boys' club mentality, which publicized the diversity issue ahead of its initial public offering last year.



Last year, Mr. Vivek Wadhwa criticised the “elite arrogance of the Silicon Valley mafia” for the company’s all white, all male board, and its “male chauvinist thinking” in the New York Times. Mr. Costolo took to name-calling on Twitter, branding Mr. Wadhwa “the Carrot Top of academic sources”.

The two went on to have a somewhat more nuanced debate, in which Mr. Costolo said diversity was about more than “checking a box [and] saying ‘We did it!’”

Twitter has also since appointed Ms. Marjorie Scardino, the highly regarded former Pearson chief executive, to its board – a sign, at least, that the company is serious about change even if it has a long, long way to go. This is an industry-wide issue. About 49 percent of information technology businesses have no women on their boards, compared with 36 percent of the 2,770 largest public companies in the country, according to a report released by GMI Ratings last year. Apple’s Mr. Tim Cook has promised a diversity report in the near future.

Google would like, in part, to blame the system – as will its peers, if you ask – pointing out lower rates of computer science degrees for women, and minorities’ college education and graduation rates, as reasons for its homogeneity.

Mr. Rashad Robinson, executive director of Color of Change, a lobby group that pressed for Twitter to release the report, said he was pleased Silicon Valley was at last recognizing it had a problem but he said the numbers showed the tech firms had issues across the board – not just in tech jobs.

“The stats show that a skills gap in tech alone is no explanation for why so many jobs in marketing, sales and other areas were so disproportionately going to white, male candidates”, he said. The lack of diversity across the companies suggest tech firms had issues across the board, and had failed to move far from the cultural roots even as they have become massive, international businesses. “It’s time for these companies to grow up and become part of the larger culture,” he said. “They are no longer running businesses in their parents’ garages.”

See more at <https://blog.twitter.com/2014/building-a-twitter-we-can-be-proud-of>

### ***Corporate Gender Quotas will not fix Sexism***

Lately there’s been a lot of talk about the lack of women on corporate boards. All this talk is certainly justified – the numbers are truly dismal such as in Canada, women only comprise ten percent of corporate board members. Those are the kind of numbers you’d expect to see in 1972, not in 2014 writes Ms. Kathryn Marshall on her website <http://www.kathrynmarshall.ca>.

Yes, it’s a problem, but no, it’s not something that can be truly “fixed” overnight with law. Merit, not the law, is the right place to start if we want to see more women in the boardroom, she says. Women should be on boards, in public office, and on judicial benches not because they tick a box on a form, but because they are smart, talented and have earned these positions through hard work and merit.

Gender quotas result in good numbers on paper, but that’s about all they do for the advancement of women. In reality, gender quotas simply reinforce tokenism and push the sexist belief that women somehow aren’t “good enough” to earn power on their own. Quotas are downright patronizing, insulting and marginalizing. Let’s be honest, how many of us women would actually want to sit on a board if it’s just to fill some quota?

Women, like all people, want to be recognized for their hard work and merit, not their anatomy. There are many real barriers facing women in the corporate world, but quotas just create another barrier to substantive female involvement. There is no lack of amazing women out there with incredible talents to contribute — so what can be done to start seeing more of them on corporate boards? Encouraging women to be involved in organizations within their professions helps them get their names out there and network with other movers and shakers.

Finally, the corporate sector needs to step up to the plate. Saying they can't find enough women to fill board spots is not an acceptable. If companies want to find strong female talent for their boards, they need to get out the office and recruit, just like they would to find good staff. This is not an easy process and sometimes means looking in unlikely places.

The Liberal-NDP 'solution' of gender quotas is about as good of an idea as implementing government printed 'binders full of women'. At the end of the day, it's just paper deep. Let's focus on getting women a real voice in the boardroom, not just a reserved seat at the table.

See more at: <http://www.kathrynmarshall.ca/uncategorized/corporate-gender-quotas-will-not-fix-sexism/>

### *The Glass Ceiling Index - The spread of gender quotas for company boards*

When Norway introduced a 40 percent quota for female directors of listed companies in 2006, to come into force in 2008, it was a first. Non-complying firms could theoretically be forcibly dissolved, though none has in fact suffered such a fate. Since then gender quotas for boards have been imposed in Belgium, Iceland, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain (though with less severe sanctions: non-complying firms must generally explain in their annual reports why they fell short and what they plan to do about it). The European Commission is considering imposing quotas across the EU. Malaysia has imposed a 30 percent quota for new appointments to boards, and Brazil a 40 percent target, though only for state-controlled firms. The governments of several other countries, including Australia, Britain and Sweden, have threatened to impose quotas if firms do not appoint more female directors voluntarily. So why are gender quotas becoming more common?

One reason is a growing impatience with the glacial pace of voluntary change: women are the majority of all graduates almost everywhere in the developed world, but make up a smaller share of the workforce the further up the corporate ladder they go. Another is that Norway's quota law has not been the disaster some predicted. "As a principle, I don't like quotas," Mr. Idar Kreutzer, the former chief executive of Storebrand, an insurance group, told the Financial Times the year after the law came into force. "But I have not been able to find any big problems with the legislation in practice." Some had worried that they would actually decrease diversity by forcing companies to dive for the same small pool of eligible women, nicknamed the 'golden skirts'. In fact, Norway still has more 'golden trousers' - male directors are twice as likely to sit on more than one board. Nor did it obviously lead to less qualified boards: female Norwegian board members are more likely to have a degree than male ones.

That is not to say quotas are now uncontroversial. Whether you think robust measures to increase the share of women in senior management are a good thing in the first place depends partly on how convinced you are that diversity in management is important. It might improve performance by mirroring the diversity of customers—or, as our Schumpeter columnist recently argued (though about cultural rather than gender diversity), it might increase conflict, worsen communication and reduce workplace trust. Easier to dismiss is the still-common objection that quotas are anti-meritocratic: that is more true of the status quo. Oodles of research demonstrates that women are evaluated less positively than identically qualified men when applying for stereotypically male jobs, such as leadership roles. One study found that a commitment by hiring committees to shortlists with at least 25 percent women helped to remove anti-woman bias.

Over time, advocates of quotas hope that a sudden large increase in the number of women in leadership will change attitudes. They point to the results of a law passed in 1993 in India that reserved positions for women in randomly selected village councils. A decade later women were more likely to stand for, and win, elected positions in those villages that had by chance reserved positions for women in the previous two elections. But life is likely to be hard for the pioneers. In a review of the effects of gender targets and quotas, Dr. Jennifer Whelan and Professor Robert Wood of Melbourne Business School found that women who were appointed to senior management under American affirmative-action policies are seen as "less

qualified, less competent and less legitimate in their role" than their male colleagues, or women appointed without targets or quotas—though there is no research evidence that they actually are.

The Economist also has created a “glass-ceiling index”, to show where women have the best chances of equal treatment at work. It combines data on higher education, labor-force participation, pay, child-care costs, maternity rights, business-school applications and representation in senior jobs. Each country's score is a weighted average of its performance on nine indicators.

To no one's surprise, Nordic countries come out well on educational attainment and labor-force participation. Women are also relatively well represented in their parliaments; Finland and Sweden were among the first countries to allow women to vote and stand for election. Yet even there women are paid less than men for similar work. In Finland and Sweden the gap is close to the OECD average of 15 percent, though in Norway it has fallen to 8 percent.

See more at: <http://www.economist.com/blogs/economist-explains/2014/03/economist-explains-14> and <http://www.economist.com/news/business/21598669-bestand-worstplaces-be-working-woman-glass-ceiling-index?fsrc=explainsdig>

## In your Interest

### *HeForShe Action Kit*

This kit has been developed to guide the overall implementation of the UN Women sponsored *HeForShe* solidarity movement for gender equality that brings together one half of humanity in support of the other half of humanity, for the benefit of all. It provides general information about the campaign, simple-to-follow implementation steps and a list of accessible campaign tools and resources. It is tailored for the following implementing partners; UN Women and UN entities and their country offices; Civil Society Organizations and Gender Equality Advocates and University/College students.

Access at: <http://www.heforshe.org/action-kit/>

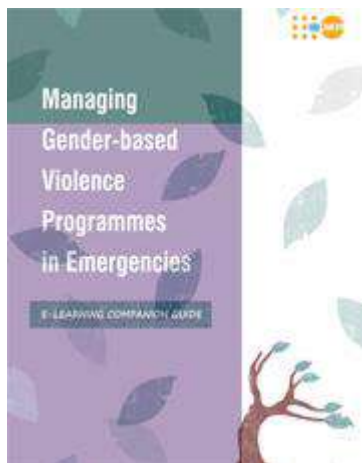
### *Violence Against Women and Girls - VAWG Helpdesk*

The Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Helpdesk is a research and advice service for DFID run by a Social Development Direct led consortium that publishes quarterly reports. It includes information on the latest research, policy, news, and DFID programmes on violence against women

See more at: <http://preventgbvafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/digest-spring-2014.pdf>

### *New Tool to Manage Gender-Based Violence Programmes in Emergencies*

Gender-based violence (GBV) kills or disables as many women aged between 15 and 44 as cancer does. In nearly every modern day conflict and disaster, reports of gender-based violence have revealed the various ways in which emergencies can increase vulnerabilities to abuse amongst populations already deeply disadvantaged by the effects of the crisis. Every day the media reports on gender-based violence happening in countless crises around the world and on a scale that seems un-imaginable.



Following on from UNFPA's 2011 free e-learning course for professionals working to address GBV in humanitarian contexts, the developed e-learning guide responds to a request for learning and reinforcing course content. The 2014 E-learning Companion Guide covers all of the content in the e-learning and provides new case studies, sample tools, best practices, and activities. "The stories of so many women such as Fatima, who during her ten-day journey from Somalia to Kenya's Dadaab refugee camps was attacked at gunpoint by bandits who dragged her into the bush and raped her repeatedly, illustrates the crucial importance of addressing gender-based violence in emergencies," said the Chief of UNFPA's Humanitarian Response Branch, Ms. Christine Ouellette.

As part of this project, UNFPA also completed a series of Face-to-Face Training Workshops in February 2012 and the curriculum is currently being revised for broader review. A Community of Practice that enables ongoing field-based learning and mentorship is still being conceptualized based on

the evaluation of a similar COP that was developed under the ECHO-funded GBV Capacity Development Project (2010-2011).

See more at: [http://www.unfpa.org/webdav/site/global/shared/documents/publications/2012/GBV%20E-Learning%20Companion%20Guide\\_ENGLISH.pdf](http://www.unfpa.org/webdav/site/global/shared/documents/publications/2012/GBV%20E-Learning%20Companion%20Guide_ENGLISH.pdf)

## Recommended Reading

### *Changing Corporate Culture Key to Closing Japan's Gender Gap*

Gender parity is imperative to Japan's competitiveness and addressing long-term economic challenges brought on by an ageing workforce, low fertility and an acute talent shortage, according to the Closing the Gender Gap in Japan report published on June 3 2014 by the World Economic Forum, in collaboration with McKinsey & Company.



## Closing the Gender Gap in Japan

In collaboration with McKinsey & Company



According to the report, the rate of female participation in Japan's labor force is only 63 percent, compared to 85 percent for men. It is one of the lowest female labor participation rates among OECD countries and 79<sup>th</sup> globally. Among the employed, 35 percent of women are in part-time employment, compared to 10 percent of men.

At the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2014 in Davos, Switzerland, Japanese Prime Minister Mr. Shinzo Abe identified Japan's female workforce as the country's most underused resource and stated his intention for 30 percent of all senior leadership posts to be occupied by women in 2020.

"This is an ambitious target, but it is also attainable one, provided it is backed by the correct mix of interventions, exchange between companies to share their experiences and strong support across all stakeholder groups to create a level playing field," said Ms. Saadia Zahidi, Senior Director, Head of Gender Parity Initiatives, at the World Economic Forum.

Despite some improvements in recent years in terms of the economic participation of women in the workforce, Japan continues to fall behind relative to other countries,

ranking 104<sup>th</sup> out of 136 countries on the Forum's 2013 Global Gender Gap Index. To close the gap and better leverage the female talent base, the report points to five areas where Japanese companies can improve their gender parity strategies. They include:

- visible leadership and commitment to gender parity from chief executive officers and other top leaders;
- measurement and target setting to track gender parity goals;
- awareness and capacity building, including training for male and female managers;
- incentives and accountability for all managers on gender parity goals; and
- improvements to the work environment and work-life balance.

Research shows that 80 percent of Japanese companies have adopted elements around parental leave and other work-life balance policies, but only 20 percent of companies have established programmes around talent development, which is essential for women's progression.

"This report highlights the specific need for Japanese companies to focus on talent development as they look to advance women in their organizations," said Georges Desvaux, Managing Director of the Tokyo office of McKinsey & Company.

The report shows that gender diversity is increasingly being recognized as a necessity for reputation and serves as an impetus for change in some Japanese companies, while others have made gender diversity a strategic priority to leverage the gains from diversity-fuelled innovation and improve insights into consumer behavior.

Findings from *Closing the Gender Gap in Japan* are drawn from surveys of companies conducted jointly with the Keizai Doyukai and J-Win, as well as from the World Economic Forum's Japan Gender Parity Task Force, which serves as a platform for private-private and public-private dialogue and analysis to support the efforts of multiple stakeholders on closing the gender gap.

See more at: <http://www.weforum.org/reports/closing-gender-gap-japan>

## Millennium Development Goals Report 2014

Millions of people's lives have improved due to concerted global, regional, national and local efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which serve as the foundation for the next global development agenda, according to the report launched by Secretary-General Mr. Ban Ki Moon on 7 July 2014.

With many MDG targets already met on reducing poverty, increasing access to improved drinking water sources, improving the lives of slum dwellers and achieving gender parity in primary school, the report says many more targets are within reach by their 2015 target date. If trends continue, the world will surpass MDG targets on malaria, tuberculosis and access to HIV treatment, and the hunger target looks within reach. Other targets, such as access to technologies, reduction of average tariffs, debt relief, and growing political participation by women, show great progress.

The MDG report is based on comprehensive official statistics and provides the most up-to-date summary of all Goals and their targets at global and regional levels, with additional national statistics available online. Results show that concentrated efforts to achieve MDG targets by national governments, the international community, civil society and the private sector are working to lift people out of extreme poverty and improve their futures.



“The Millennium Development Goals were a pledge to uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity, and free the world from extreme poverty,” Mr. Ban said. “The MDGs, with eight goals and a set of measurable time-bound targets, established a blueprint for tackling the most pressing development challenges of our time.”

According to the report, big MDG gains continue. Over the past 20 years, the likelihood of a child dying before age five has been nearly cut in half, which means about 17,000 children are saved every day. Globally, the maternal mortality ratio dropped by 45 percent between 1990 and 2013. Antiretroviral therapy for HIV-infected people has saved 6.6 million lives since 1995, and expanding its coverage could save many more. Between 2000 and 2012, an estimated 3.3 million deaths from malaria were averted due to substantial expansion of malaria interventions. Since 1995, efforts to fight tuberculosis saved an estimated 22 million lives.

With the targets for the MDGs set to conclude at the end of 2015, UN Member States are in the midst of considering a broader set of goals to follow that are likely to be agreed to by world leaders in September 2015. The report says continued progress towards the MDGs in the remaining year is essential for what comes next. “Member States are now fully engaged in discussions to define Sustainable Development Goals, which will serve as the core of a universal post-2015 development agenda,” Mr. Ban said. “Our efforts to achieve the MDGs are a critical building block towards establishing a stable foundation for our development efforts beyond 2015.” However, some MDG targets related to largely preventable problems

with available solutions, such as reducing child and maternal mortality and increasing access to sanitation, are slipping away from achievement by 2015, despite major progress. The report calls on all stakeholders to focus and intensify efforts on the areas where advances have been too slow or not reached all.

Despite considerable advancements in recent years, the report says reliable statistics for monitoring development remain inadequate in many countries, but better statistical reporting on the MDGs has led to real results. For example, the number of Member States submitting progress reports on HIV/AIDS increased from 102 in 2004 to 186 in 2012. This helped galvanize global efforts. Funding for HIV programmes more than tripled compared to 2004, and 9.5 million people living with HIV were accessing antiretroviral treatment in 2012. The Millennium Development Goals Report, an annual assessment of global and regional progress towards the Goals, reflects the most comprehensive, up-to-date data compiled by over 28 UN and international agencies and is produced by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. A complete set of the data used to prepare the report is available at [mdgs.un.org](http://mdgs.un.org)

### ***World Bank, UN Women and Hillary Clinton to launch groundbreaking report***

After two years of research and many in-depth consultations, on 14 May the World Bank team launched a groundbreaking report, with Former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, World Bank Group President Dr. Jim Yong Kim, and UN Women Executive Director Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka. The new report, *Voice and Agency: Empowering Women and Girls for Shared Prosperity*, focuses on freedom from violence, control over sexual and reproductive health, ownership and control of land and housing, and voice and collective action. It shines a spotlight on the value of enabling women and girls to fulfil their potential and of amplifying their voices. It distills vast data and hundreds of studies to cast important new light on the constraints women and girls face worldwide, from epidemic gender-based violence to biased laws and norms that prevent them from making decisions about their own lives. It explores the power of social norms in dictating how men and women can and cannot behave - deterring women from owning property or working even where laws permit, for example, because those who do become outcasts. In 128 countries, laws treat men and women differently - making it impossible, for example, for a woman to independently obtain an ID card, own or use property, access credit, or get a job. While highlighting gaps, the report equally reviews promising policies and interventions.

Among its keys findings: Girls with little or no education are far more likely to be married as children, suffer domestic violence, live in poverty, and lack a say over household spending or their own health care than better-educated peers, which harms them, their children, and communities.

Across 18 of the 20 countries with the highest prevalence of child marriage, girls with no education were up to six times more likely to marry than girls with high school education, the report finds. Nearly one in five girls in developing countries meanwhile becomes pregnant before age 18, while pregnancy-related causes account for most deaths among girls 15-19 in the developing world, nearly 70,000 die each year.

Despite recent advances in important aspects of the lives of girls and women, pervasive challenges remain, frequently as a result of widespread deprivations and constraints. These often violate women's most basic rights and are magnified and multiplied by poverty and lack of education.

In all regions, better-educated women tend to marry later and have fewer children. Enhanced agency - the ability to make decisions and act on them - is a key reason why children of better educated women are less likely to be stunted: Educated mothers have greater autonomy in making decisions and more power to act for their children's benefit.

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2014/5/womencan-world-bank-un-women-and-hillary-clinton-to-launch-groundbreaking-report#sthash.5BjD30Lf.dpuf> and [http://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/Gender/Voice\\_and\\_agency\\_LOWRES.pdf](http://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/Gender/Voice_and_agency_LOWRES.pdf)

## Recommended Websites

### *Gender Equality Principles: Building a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Workplace*

The award-winning San Francisco Gender Equality Principles Initiative is a groundbreaking program that helps organizations achieve greater gender equality through implementation of the seven Gender Equality Principles.

This website provides organizations with many valuable resources, including:

- a confidential assessment to track their progress toward a more equitable workplace;
- Bay Area model practices from the Gender Equality Challenge;
- summaries and updates from our roundtables and events; and
- an extensive database of relevant resources and innovative new research.

Learn more about the Gender Equality Principles and take your first step toward optimizing your gender advantage.

See more at: <http://www.genderprinciples.org/>

### *New Online Course on Care Economy offered by UN Women Training Centre*

The UN Women Training Centre, ITC-ILO ILSGEN Programme partner, is offering a new online course on Care Economy: *Why we care about Care: An online moderated course on Care Economy*. The course runs for eight weeks from 27 October to 19 December 2014 in English and Spanish.

The course provides a global perspective on Care. It enhances awareness, knowledge and understanding on the critical place Care occupies in development, while simultaneously providing skills and tools for analyzing and identifying types of interventions and policies for a fair and equal social organization of Care to advance human development, gender equality and women's empowerment.



For more information, contact: [info.trainingcentre@unwomen.org](mailto:info.trainingcentre@unwomen.org)



## Info

### Employment opportunities

Find a monthly list of vacancy announcements at: <http://www.unwomen.org/about-us/employment>

Read Network online at: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/fpnetworks.htm>

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