



Network

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Letter from the Focal Point for Women

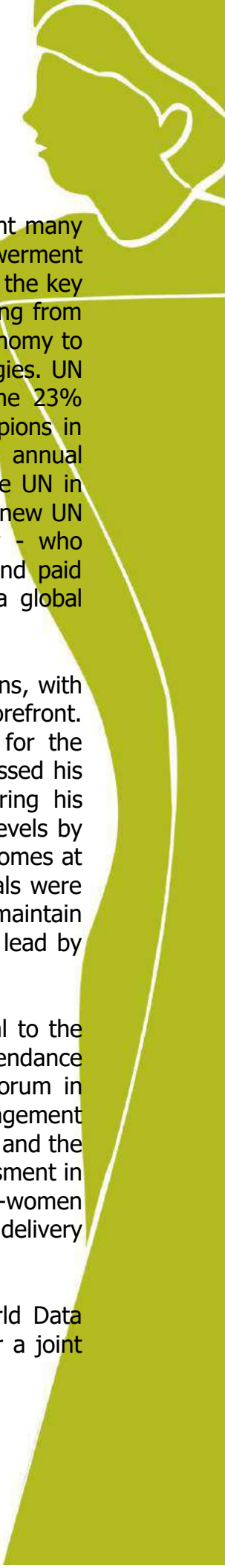
Dear Friends,

Greetings for the new year! I sincerely hope you have started 2017 with renewed vigour and the positive energies needed to continue to illuminate and propell gender equality and the empowerment of women. In this first issue of the NETWORK in 2017, we share with you the happenings and advances in the global arena of gender equality and the empowerment of women over the past few months.

We open this edition with an exclusive interview with Dr. Sania Nishtar, one of the three final candidates for the next Director-General of the World Health Organisation, the election for which will be held in last week of May 2017. Then, there are many congratulations to be shared, with appointments of women in leading positions by the new Secretary-General António Guterres, as part of his new team. These include Amina J. Muhammed of Nigeria, as the new UN Deputy Secretary General.



As is always the case in March, the United Nations hosted the annual meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women, CSW 61st session - the biggest congregation



of world leaders, civil society activists, and government officials - who spent many days and hours deliberating this year's theme - "Women's Economic Empowerment in a Changing World of Work". The multitude of sessions this year looked at the key issues significantly impacting women and girls in the sphere of work, ranging from the gender pay gap to unpaid work, from the challenges of the informal economy to the opportunities created by care and green economies, and new technologies. UN Women also kicked off the "Stop the Robbery Campaign" to highlight the 23% gender pay gap, as well as the launch of an equal pay platform of champions in partnership with the ILO. Along with CSW 61, March also sees the annual commemoration of International Women's Day. This was celebrated at the UN in New York with a well-attended event with key speakers which included the new UN Women Goodwill Ambassador - award winning actress Anne Hathaway - who delivered a keynote address focusing on the issue of unpaid care work and paid parental leave. Worldwide events from Myanmar to Tanzania also shed a global spotlight on women empowerment in the sphere of work.

This issue of the Network also focuses on gender parity in the United Nations, with the transition in Secretary-General leadership bringing the issue to the forefront. Secretary-General António Guterres has emerged as a strong champion for the cause of gender parity within the UN system, and he has repeatedly expressed his commitment to achieve gender balance at all levels within the UN. During his inauguration, the SG pledged to achieve gender parity at the senior-most levels by the end of his first-term in 2021. This high-level support for gender parity comes at a critical time. It has been nearly 30 years since the first gender parity goals were initially set in 1998, and achieving them at last is essential if the UN is to maintain its efficacy and credibility as a standard-setting organization which aims to lead by example.

News from around the world includes the visit of the UN Secretary-General to the UN Women centre in the Syrian Za'atari refugee camp in Jordan, and the attendance by UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka to the W7 Forum in Italy - a first official convening of a formally recognized G7 women's engagement group. From Mexico, we share news of a campaign launched by UN Women and the Government of Mexico City, called #NoEsDeHombres, to tackle sexual harassment in public transport, and in Punjab in Pakistan, the first ever multi-functional all-women staffed "*Violence Against Women Center*", which converges all justice delivery services at one point under one roof, was launched in March 2017.

Also included in this quarter's issue is coverage on the first-ever UN World Data Forum held in Cape Town, the partnership of UNCTAD and UN Women for a joint

programme to promote gender-inclusive macroeconomic policies, and the adoption of new bill in Malawi to end child marriage.

Finally, as always, the newsletter also includes information on interesting websites and publications, including the UN Women report on “Strengthening organizational structure for delivering gender equality results: Corporate evaluation of the regional architecture of UN Women”, and the “Empower Women” website, which is referred to as the Knowledge Gateway on Women’s Economic Empowerment.

We hope that the range of news and updates we bring through this newsletter impassions you as promoters of gender equality and empowerment of women to continue to make cracks in the glass ceilings until there is no more ceiling to break.

Let’s Step It UP for Gender Equality!

We look towards your continued support as we move forward in this task!

In solidarity,

Aparna Mehrotra
Director, UN system Coordination Division and
Focal Point for Women in the UN System,
UN Women

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Interview with Dr. Sania Nishtar

Pakistan's candidate for Director-General of the World Health Organisation

Meet Dr. Sania Nishtar, a former Pakistani Federal Minister and prominent global health leader with extensive experience in public healthcare.


She is among the three finalists nominated as the next Director-General of the World Health Organisation, the election for which will take place at the next World Health Assembly in May 2017. This election is seen as one of the world's most critical appointments, especially at a time when WHO is facing pressing challenges and criticisms. If elected Dr. Nishtar will be the first leader in the organization's history to come from a developing country. She is running against Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus of Ethiopia, and David Nabarro from the United Kingdom.



In 1999, Dr. Nishtar moved on from her cardiology career to establish *Heartfile*, a health information-focused NGO that has evolved into one of the loudest health policy voices and proponents of healthcare reform in Pakistan. In 2013, she served as a cabinet-level minister in Pakistan's interim government and oversaw four portfolios, including public health. During this time she successfully worked with her government to advance health reforms in the country.

She is the author in 2009 of a book called "Choked Pipes", which details a revolutionary health reform plan and a compendium of health statistics. Her narrative of how health has evolved into a right, how this right is determining political agendas and societal change, and how this struggle has marked Pakistan has made Dr. Nishtar a key voice catalyzing change within Pakistan's healthcare system.

Outside of Pakistan, Dr. Nishtar has held leadership roles on international health panels and advisory groups including the WHO Commission on Ending Childhood



Obesity and the U.N. Secretary General's Independent Accountability Panel for the Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health.

Dr. Nishtar is a recipient of multiple national and international awards and honors, including the Presidential Award (1986), the Sitar-e-Imtiaz (2005), the European Societies Population Sciences Award (2005), and the first Global Innovation Award of the Rockefeller Foundation (2011).

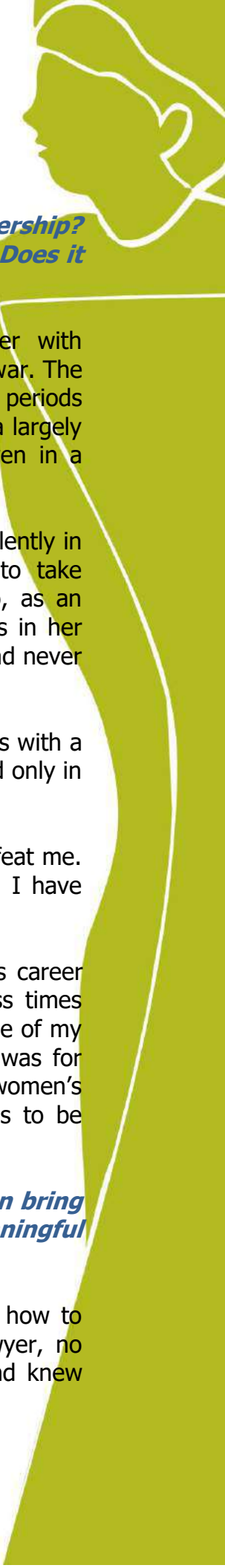
Dr. Nishtar studied at Khyber Medical College, Peshawar, graduating with an MBBS in 1986. She holds a PhD in Medicine from Kings College London (2002) with an FRCP (UK-2005), MRCP (UK-1996) and MCPS Pakistan (1991).

Q.1 Congratulations on your nomination as a finalist in the running to lead the World Health Organisation. You have had a diverse career in the areas of health, civil society, the government sector and the multilateral system. How did you come to dedicate yourself to these issues and to take on this internationally recognized leadership role?

A month after I graduated from medical school, I got married and made the decision to keep professional life on hold for a few years. Six years later and following the birth of my two children, I attempted the Royal College of Physicians exam while vacationing in London. To everybody's surprise I got through at the first attempt. I completed my training in hospitals in Islamabad and London while juggling, home, children, and family and got appointed as a cardiologist at a tertiary care centre in Islamabad.

As the first woman cardiologist in Pakistan, I was sought after in particular by female patients and my practice did well. However, one of the things that disturbed me most were the financial access barriers, and the lack of Universal Health Coverage, which forced people to forgo care, suffer impoverishment and indebtedness as a result of healthcare costs.

One day, when I was working as a clinician, I was advised by the hospital that some of the disposables we were using should only be used for people who could pay. Those who could not afford to pay would receive disinfected and recycled materials. And that was the day I chose to make a change. From that moment forward I embarked on a journey to find a solution - which has taken me from *people to hospitals to systems to governance* and finally the *government*, and the multilateral world.



Q.2 What have you experienced as a women in your path to leadership? In what ways do you think gender has affected your career path? Does it continue to affect how you lead in your current position?

I was born and raised in Peshawar, a city close to Pakistan's border with Afghanistan, which saw millions of refugees pass through as they fled from war. The city has been ravished by terrorist attacks several times. But there were also periods of relative calm. In the 1970's, as a small child, I remember growing up in a largely progressive society. I attended a co-ed school and played sports. But even in a supportive environment, individual circumstances can be challenging.

My own life suddenly changed when I was 15 and my father passed away silently in his sleep. It was as if I turned into someone else overnight. I had to take responsibility at home and carry my family back to normal life. De facto, as an adolescent girl, I became the head of our household. My mother who was in her own right a strong woman and my role model for so many aspects of life, had never worked outside the home. It was not an easy time.

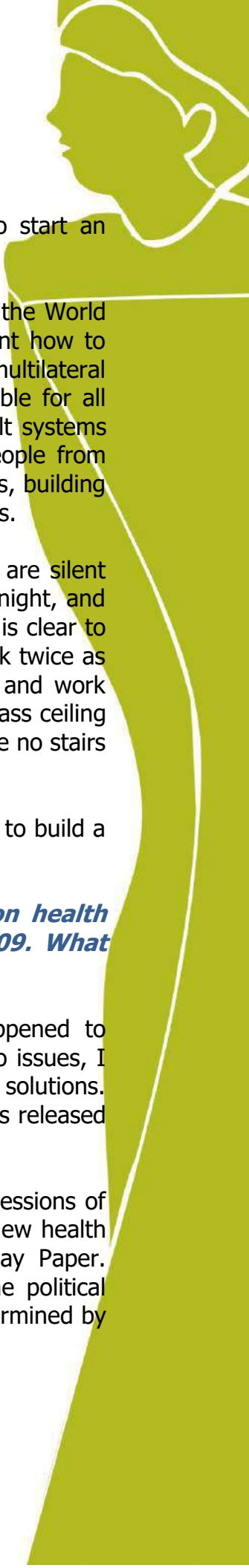
Pakistan was then – and is still now – a country of strong gender stereotypes with a strong concept of patriarchy. Women are supposed to manage the home and only in exceptional circumstances engage in public life.

But I have never let other people's bias or preconceptions about women defeat me. And, thanks to my mother and father and now my husband and children, I have always been supported to forge my own way ahead.

That said, it has not been an easy road. The more one progresses in ones career outside of the home, the more the pressure grows. I can recall countless times when I was the only woman in the room, denied access to meetings because of my gender, or denied access to discussions on power and politics because it was for men only. At the same time, one of the lessons I also learned is that women's conversation is just as important as the men's. Everyone's voice deserves to be heard.

Q. 3 How has your work affected your appreciation of what women bring to the table to alter the paradigm for the greater good in meaningful ways?

When I started Heartfile, I had no organizational experience, didn't know how to create an NGO, had no idea about interaction with an accountant or lawyer, no human resource experience, no finance background; I was a physician and knew



how to treat patients and save lives. In addition, a woman wanting to start an organization was not taken seriously in those days.

The road from starting Heartfile to this campaign for Director-General of the World Health Organization has been a long one. From treating patients, I learnt how to build and fix institutions, forge consensus on a governing board and multilateral forum, and to deliver results in different settings. I have been responsible for all fiscal and managerial aspects of running an organization and I have built systems for change and safeguards against abuse. I have also worked with people from every region of the world and have convened widely diverse constituencies, building bridges across different cultural, social, economic, and political perspectives.

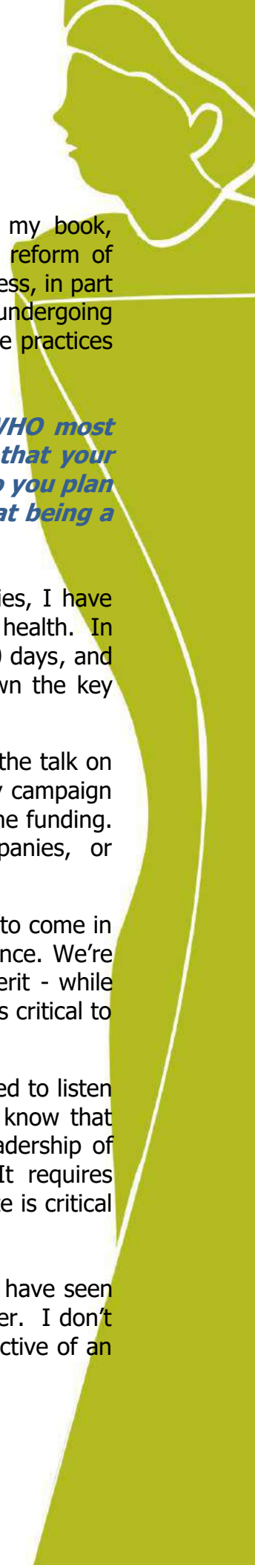
I have seen so many women changemakers. More often than not these are silent heroes, women who take care of their families, work from morning until night, and have the ability to multitask in the most challenging of circumstances. As is clear to so many of us, I understand that being a woman means you need to work twice as hard as the men, and perform to higher standards. In all areas of life and work there is a men's club into which one cannot break – and women face a glass ceiling to make change – where they can see what needs to be done but there are no stairs for access.

As a leader, my philosophy has been not only to break that glass but also to build a wide staircase so that others can follow.

Q. 4 You have successfully authored a best-selling book on health system development and reforms, called "Choked Pipes" in 2009. What compelled you to write this book?

I studied the Government of Pakistan's documents on what had happened to Pakistan's health system over the past fifty years. As I dug my teeth into issues, I realized I was collating a compendium of issues and articulating proposed solutions. This compendium was ultimately published as the [Gateway Paper](#) and was released by the Prime Minister in 2006.

The Gateway Paper generated a lot of interest and soon there were expressions of interest from the Federal and Provincial Government alike to develop a new health policy based on the approach to health I had outlined in the Gateway Paper. However, despite the momentum, I realized that decision-making at the political level has little to do with evidence and technical inputs, but is largely determined by political expediency.



This led me to accelerate my advocacy for change and to complete my book, [“Choked Pipes”](#), in which I presented my thesis on the imperative for reform of Pakistan’s health system. The book was published by Oxford University Press, in part because of its relevance to other low- and middle-income countries undergoing reform. I wrote that book because I wanted to expose the many collusive practices which constrain the ability of nation states to deliver health for all.

Q. 5 At many campaign forums you have voiced that what WHO most needs in its next Director-General is a “changemaker.” Given that your candidacy comes at a time of mounting criticism of WHO, how do you plan to fulfill the role as an effective changemaker? Do you think that being a woman candidate will work for or against you?


While in government, civil society and working with international agencies, I have worked to reform systems to ensure that more people can access health. In government I reestablished the federal ministry of health in less than 100 days, and on leaving government I wrote a full [Handover Paper](#), which broke down the key decision points to improve transparency in government.

Throughout my campaign for Director-General, I have continued to walk the talk on transparency. I was the first candidate to pledge that I would publish my campaign finances and I have provided fully itemized expenses and the source of the funding. I have not hired public relations agencies, political strategy companies, or advertising firms.

Most importantly, I’ve made no deals with anyone because it’s important to come in with clean hands and to deliver good governance with no outside influence. We’re going to build a new WHO where staff earn their positions based on merit - while also paying heed to gender and geographic diversity and equality, which is critical to reflect a global organization.

As a woman leader, and often the only woman in the room, I have learned to listen and to try to understand other people’s perspectives. That said, I also know that being the loudest does not mean you have the most to contribute. Leadership of WHO requires agility and an ability to respond to the unexpected. It requires building an open-minded institutional culture of mutual respect and debate is critical to remaining nimble, efficient, and creative.

Indeed, as I have never been and never will be part of the boy’s club, I have seen my role as trying to give a voice to the voiceless and speak truth to power. I don’t see that working against me – I see it as critical to informing the perspective of an organization which aims to support and realize health equality for all.



Q. 6 Working in health care has unique challenges. Creating supportive environments within one's team and understanding the psychology behind behaviors are key elements to success. The system needs to better support women to thrive at the workplace, especially when it comes to supporting familial obligations and sharing these equally with men. How would you deal with women's workplace challenges within WHO?

WHO, like other parts of the UN system, has not been successful at retaining women at senior levels. In fact, only around 35 percent of WHO senior staff are female. This is simply unacceptable. We must take serious issues like criteria for promotion and rotation, and the systematic reasons why women are not able to progress their careers within the organization. While family obligations are part of the reason, the issue runs much deeper. As part of an overall review of HR systems and practices, we will look closely at this issue in particular as it relates to advancement of senior staff.

Q. 7 You have made 10 pledges as part of your candidacy as director general of the World Health Organization. Of these, transparency and accountability are the top priorities listed by you for immediate action. How would accountability to gender equality and empowerment of women fit into your plans?

Gender equality and empowerment of women are critical to delivering on my 10 pledges for a new WHO. Gender and rights must be integrated into WHO's every day work and cut across all programming. While we need a strong group of experts to drive this change, supporting gender equity and integrating a gender lens to programming is the responsibility of each and every staff member and should be reflected both in an individual and institutional performance metric.

Q. 8 You are an effective female leader. What drives you? What advice do you have for other women who aspire to become leaders?

Follow your passion. Believe in yourself. Find a network of people that can provide trust and counsel when times are tough. Be a leader who listens. Respects the views of others. Give a voice to the voiceless. And stay the course.

Q. 9 As someone who has successfully combined family life and career advancement, what are the key lessons you have learned?

It is never easy – there are always tradeoffs – and always the feeling that either career or family are getting the short end of the stick. I feel lucky to have a family that has supported my career – and I am thankful for that every day. It's not always been easy, in fact it's been hard, but I've never given up.

Congratulations to:

Amina J. Mohammed of Nigeria on her appointment in January 2017 as the new Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Ms. Mohammed previously served as Minister for Environment of Nigeria, where she steered the country's efforts to protect the natural environment and to conserve resources for sustainable development.

Prior to that role, she served as Special Adviser to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Post-2015 Development Planning, where she was instrumental in bringing about the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Sustainable Development Goals.



Before joining the United Nations, Ms. Mohammed worked for three successive administrations in Nigeria, serving as Special Adviser on the Millennium Development Goals, providing advice on issues including poverty, public sector reform and sustainable development, and coordinating poverty reduction interventions. She is also an Adjunct Professor in Development Practice at Columbia University, and serves on numerous international advisory boards and panels.

Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti of Brazil on her appointment in January 2017 as Chef de Cabinet of UN Secretary General António Guterres.



Ms. Viotti previously served as the Under-Secretary for Asia and the Pacific at the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where she was responsible for work on BRICS. A career diplomat since 1976, she served most recently as Ambassador to Germany, from 2013 to 2016, and as Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations, from 2007 to 2011.



Prior to those roles, Ms. Viotti was posted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Brasília, where she served as Adviser to the Minister (1990-1993), Head of the South America Division I (1996-99), Director-General for Human Rights and Social Issues (2004-06), and Director-General for International Organizations (2006-07), among other positions.

Ms. Kyung-wha Kang of the Republic of Korea on her appointment as Senior Advisor on Policy to the UN Secretary-General. Ms. Kang previously served as the Chief of the Secretary-General-designate's Transition Team. She has served as Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs since April 2013, and was Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights from January 2007 to March 2013.

Before entering the United Nations, Ms. Kang was Director General of International Organizations at the Republic of Korea's Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Trade. She served in her country's Permanent Mission to the United Nations from September 2001 to July 2005, during which time she chaired the Commission on the Status of Women.



Prior to joining the Foreign Ministry in 1998, Ms. Kang assisted the Speaker of the National Assembly in parliamentary diplomacy. Earlier in her career, she worked for the Korean Broadcasting System's news bureau and international radio bureau, and lectured in universities both in her own country and in the United States.

Fekitamoeloa Katoa 'Utoikamanu of Tonga, the Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Tourism of Tonga, on her appointment by UN Secretary General in April 2017 as the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States.



Ms. 'Utoikamanu brings with her a wealth of national, regional and international experience at various senior leadership levels, with a strategic perspective for the mandate of the OHRLLS, and on building consensus among key stakeholders. She was previously Acting Pro-Chancellor and Chair of the Council of the University of the South Pacific (2015), Permanent Representative and Ambassador of the Government of Tonga to the United Nations, United States of America, Cuba and Venezuela and High Commissioner to Canada (2005-2009), and

Secretary for Foreign Affairs and European Commission's National Authorizing Officer for Tonga (2002-2005).

Pramila Patten of Mauritius on her appointment to the position of Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. As a practising Barrister at Law, Ms. Patten has been serving since 2003 as Member of The Committee on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women.



Ms. Patten brings solid and diversified judiciary expertise in sexual and gender-based violence as well as women, peace and security, notably as Member of the High Level Advisory Group for Global Study on Security Council resolution 1325 on Women Peace & Security (since 2014), and the Advisory Panel of African Women's rights Observatory, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (since 2010). She served as Adviser, Ministry of Women's Rights, Child Development & Family Welfare (2000-2004); Member of the Advisory Committee of Due Diligence Framework Project (2012-2014); Member of International Women's Rights Action Watch (1993-2002); and as United Nations Secretary-General-appointed Commissioner of the International Commission of Inquiry into the massacre in Guinea Conakry in 2009.

Virginia Gamba of Argentina on her appointment to the position of Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. Ms. Gamba previously served as Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism, established by Security Council resolution 2235 (2015) on the use of chemicals as weapons in Syria.



Ms. Gamba brings more than 30 years of experience and professional leadership on issues relative to disarmament, peace and human security. She was previously Director and Deputy to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs in the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (2012-2015); Deputy Director, Safety and Security, Institute for Public Safety, Ministry of Justice, Government of City, Buenos Aires (2009-2012); Expert Consultant for the European Union to assist the African Union with the Development of the Implementation Strategy for the African Common Approach to Combat Illicit Small Arms Trafficking (2007-2009); Director for South-South Interactions, SaferAfrica, South Africa (2001-2007); Deputy Director,

Institute for Security Studies, South Africa (1996-2001) and Director of the Disarmament and Conflict Resolution Programme, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, Geneva (1992-1996).

Around the United Nations


In Focus: Commission on Status of Women CSW61

The issue: Women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work



The 61st session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW61), took place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 13 – 24 March 2017. Amid rising mobilization by women's movements globally, the UN's largest gathering on gender equality and women's rights took place with a focus on "Women's Economic Empowerment in the Changing World of Work". The Commission is the single largest forum for UN Member States and other international actors with a focus on women's rights and empowerment, which builds consensus and commitment to actionable policy recommendations. The session comes at a critical moment with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development gaining momentum and the world of work transforming rapidly, bringing both challenges and opportunities for women's economic empowerment and economic justice. While today's workplaces are increasingly being shaped by innovation, globalization and human mobility, it is also deeply impacted by persistent gender-based discrimination, rising informality of labour, and income inequality.

- Only 49.6 per cent of working age women compared to 76 per cent of men are represented in the labour force globally.
- Women take on 2.5 times more unpaid work than men.
- The global gender pay gap is 23 percent.

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- Women are over-represented among the 73 per cent of the world's population that has limited or no social protection.

At this pace, economic equality among men and women cannot be achieved for another 170 years, according to World Economic Forum's latest Gender Gap Report. Research also shows that if women played an identical role in labour markets to that of men, as much as **US \$28 trillion**, or 26 per cent, could be added to the global annual GDP by 2025.

The 61th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women deliberated on the key issues that significantly impact women and girls in the sphere of work, ranging from the gender pay gap to unpaid work, the challenges of the informal economy, the opportunities created by care and green economies, and new technologies.

Along with the 18 official meetings that included Ministerial Round Tables, high-level interactive events and expert panels, over 200 side events and 400 parallel events took place. The Commission symbolically marked the global gender pay gap on 14 March with a 3-minute suspension of its proceedings. Eleven countries made voluntary presentations on their progress in implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Commission at its 58th session. Many governments reported on progress made at the national level during the general discussion.

Ahead of the 61st session of the Commission, UN Women with partners convened regional meetings to help build consensus and set priorities, including in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Arab States and Asia-Pacific.

Side events at the 61st session included the launch of a high-profile Equal Pay Platform of Champions- as part of a broader ILO-UN Women Global Equal Pay Coalition- calling for equal pay for work of equal value. The final report from the High Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment, co-chaired by the President of Costa Rica and CEO of Ikea Switzerland, was also presented to the UN Secretary-General during this time.

For a Full list of UN Women sponsored side-events see below link

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/3/press-release-as-the-world-of-work-transforms-csw-to-focus-on-its-impact-on-women-and-girls#sthash.FYWs2L21.dpuf>

UN CSW provides roadmap to women's full and equal participation in the economy




Closing of the 61st session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women. Photo: UN Women/Ryan Brown

At the closing of the 61st session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, UN Member States pledged to ensure women's full and equal participation and leadership in the economy, as well as women's right to work and rights at work, as a vital step to achieving sustainable development.

The Agreed Conclusions from the UN's largest gathering on gender equality, women's empowerment and women's rights highlight the multiple barriers that women face, such as unequal working conditions, their over-representation in the informal economy, gender stereotypes and social norms that reinforce women's concentration in certain sectors, such as health and social sectors, and the uneven share of unpaid care work that women do.

Underlining that women's careers should not experience any disadvantage because of pregnancy and motherhood, the Agreed Conclusions stress the need to ensure that both women and men have access to paid parental leave and to promote men's usage of such allowances.



Measures such as increased flexibility in working arrangements; the facilitation of breastfeeding for working mothers; the development of infrastructure and technology; the provision of affordable and quality care facilities for children and other dependents; and adapting education systems to allow pregnant adolescents, as well as single mothers, to continue and complete their education; were highlighted by the Commission to advance women's economic empowerment. Legal and policy frameworks must also be enforced to end sexual harassment at the work place. The Commission also recognized the importance of women's access to sexual and reproductive health-care services to enable them to participate fully in the labour force.

This year's Commission saw the attendance of 162 Member States, including 89 representatives at the Ministerial level. Over 3,900 representatives from 580 civil society organizations came to New York from 138 countries, attesting to the growing strength and unity of women's voices around the world.

Member States further called for an end to the practice of gender-based price differentiation, also known as the "pink tax"—whereby goods and services intended for or marketed to women and girls cost more than similar goods and services intended for or marketed to men and boys.

Furthermore, with the empowerment of indigenous women being the emerging theme of this session, the Agreed Conclusions urged the full inclusion and development of indigenous women in economic life, including through the establishment of indigenous-owned businesses.

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/3/press-release-un-csw-provides-roadmap-to-womens-full-and-equal-participation-in-the-economy#sthash.ERRVH9tk.dpuf>

Highlights from some key CSW events:

“The clear objective of our time is parity' rooted in women's empowerment” – UN chief Guterres

On 20th March UN Secretary-General António Guterres met with women's rights activists attending the 61st session of the Commission on the Status of Women to discuss challenges, opportunities and the way forward to ensure the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment, including how the UN can deliver on

its own commitments on gender equality. The town-hall style discussion was moderated by Under-Secretary-General and UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka.




Secretary-General António Guterres holds a town hall meeting with civil society organizations associated with the 61st session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women. UN Women/Ryan Brown

Mr Guterres told attendees of the discussion that gender parity at all levels — political, cultural, economic and social — is a “central objective” and must be based on women's empowerment.

Parity is important in all areas of political and social life, said Mr. Guterres further, adding that: “This is a battle [...] a struggle.” Generally no one likes to lose positions they have long held, but the reality of gender parity is that many more women will be in positions that today are occupied by men. “But that's a good thing,” he said, noting that in his experience, gender parity means better decision-making and better management.

Alongside UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, as well as Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed and his senior staff, Mr. Guterres set the stage for the end of the first week of the 61st Commission on the Status of Women.



The Secretary-General sought suggestions and opinions of the civil society representatives on how the UN can move forward on its commitments on gender equality. He opened the discussion by sharing life lessons on the issue, telling the gathering that during his time as Prime Minister of Portugal, one of his most difficult battles had been putting family violence on the national agenda.

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/3/news-sg-met-with-activists-during-csw61#sthash.naYJ2Pfo.dpuf>

Global Platform on Gender Equality and Religion launched

Building on the growing recognition that the role of faith-based organizations in addressing the needs of women and girls is critical, a global Platform on “Gender Equality and Religion” was launched on 15 March at the on-going UN Commission on the Status of Women.

The Permanent Mission of Canada hosted the event, with UN Women, UNFPA, DFID and International Partnership for Religion and Sustainable Development, collaborating on this new initiative.

UN Women is currently developing its own strategy on “The Role of Religion in Advancing Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment”, which is founded on the belief that faith actors are critical in dismantling structures and practices that promote inequality. The strategy aims to provide a deeper understanding of faith-based actors and expand the engagement of faith organizations and institutions at all levels of UN Women’s work - normative, programmatic and advocacy - with the goal of achieving gender equality and empowerment.

This newly launched Platform synchronizes with UN Women’s faith-based work. Using a religious lens, this Platform aims to build a unique approach of combining gender equality and faith-based principles to boost the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, ranging from eradicating poverty, to health, environment, and peace and security. It will convene faith-based organizations and civil society groups, bringing together religious leaders and development experts to find ways to effectively pursue the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/3/news-global-platform-on-gender-equality-and-religion-launched#sthash.6cR80pzH.dpuf>

Final report of the UN High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment calls on leaving no one behind




UN Secretary-General António Guterres with members and representatives of the High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment. Photo: UN Women/Ryan Brown

Second panel report shows how economically empowered women are at the core of an inclusive and sustainable global economy

The UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel (HLP) on Women's Economic Empowerment presented its second report with final recommendations to the UN Secretary-General António Guterres at the CSW 61 session. In its report, the Panel lays out concrete actions for accelerating progress towards women's full and equal economic participation. The report also acknowledges that gender inequalities remain stubborn across the world, but they can be overcome if systematic barriers are removed.

The HLP follows up on the seven main drivers of transformation, introduced in its first report that was published in September 2016. These are: tackling adverse norms and promoting positive role models; ensuring legal protections and reforming discriminatory laws and regulations; recognizing, reducing and redistributing unpaid work and care; building digital, financial and property assets; changing corporate



culture and practice, improving public sector practices in employment and procurement; and strengthening visibility, collective voice and representation.

The second report, reflecting the work by expert groups including Panel members, identifies practical actions for taking the agenda forward. It elaborates on how economic policies, legal reforms and investments make up an enabling environment that can bring transformational change in the world of work and ensure that one billion women become economically empowered. The High-Level Panel emphasizes the powerful role of public, private and civil society partnerships and encourages new collaborations, promoting new commitments that will carry this work forward. “With the second report we are also taking another step in building momentum within governments all over the world. We are launching a group of Champions with support from more than 20 governments who take the actions and recommendations from the panel further,” explained co-Chair Luis Guillermo Solis, President of Costa Rica.

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/3/new-final-report-of-the-un-high-level-panel-on-womens-economic-empowerment#sthash.LbVTonpr.dpuf>

Gender Pay Gap

UNW Launches Equal Pay Platform of Champions

Equal pay took centre stage, putting forth a clarion call to end the global gender pay gap that stands at 23 per cent. The event launched the high-profile ***Equal Pay Platform of Champions, a diverse group of advocates to amplify and galvanize mobilization—as part of a broader ILO-UN Women Global Equal Pay Coalition—calling for equal pay for work of equal value.*** The event at the UN was hosted by UN Women in partnership with ILO, and co-sponsored by the Missions of Iceland, South Africa and Switzerland, coinciding with the opening day of the 61st Commission on the Status of Women.

The Platform of Champions builds momentum to address the issue of pay inequality, which affects women and girls in every country in the world. It brings together Oscar Award-winning American actress Patricia Arquette, two-time Olympic gold medalist and soccer superstar Abby Wambach, along with leaders from trade unions, civil society, government and private sector, film makers and gender equality advocates.

The gender pay gap reflects the unjustifiably diminished position of many women in society and helps to keep them there. It affects every country across the world and is now coming under full scrutiny," said UN Women Executive Director, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka. "I am confident the Equal Pay Champions will help to make this flagrant inequality a thing of the past through their advocacy efforts," she added. Through their advocacy work, the Equal Pay Champions will raise awareness on this critical issue, and will call on increased political support by proactively reaching out to decision and policy-makers.

Attended by high-level government ministers, civil society organizations and private sector and UN officials, the event focused on key next steps to accelerate progress to achieve equal pay for work of equal value by 2030.

Prior to the event, an innovative new UN Women campaign, #StopTheRobbery was kicked off to mobilize global citizens and raise awareness of the gender pay gap. The campaign was created *pro bono* by Grey Advertising for UN Women and spotlights how women across the world are in effect being "robbed" of 23 per cent of their salary. #StoptheRobbery plays cleverly on 23 per cent of characters of twitter messages being blacked out, and invites people to spread the word by sharing social media messages in support of income equality.



See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/3/press-release-activists-celebrities-and-governments-call-to-end-global-gender-pay-gap#sthash.aYBwUGsg.dpuf>

International Women's Day Around the World

On and around International Women's Day, 8 March, a rich diversity of initiatives celebrated women's achievements, activism and potential were held. UN Women, along with partners, organized events in more than 50 countries across the globe, under the theme of "Women in the Changing World of Work: Planet 50-50 by 2030". From film festivals, solidarity marches, seminars and press conferences to art exhibits and activities to engage girls in sport, here are some highlights from the occasion.



Anne Hathaway delivers keynote address in her first public appearance as UN Women Goodwill Ambassador. Photo: UN Women/Ryan Brown

At the UN Headquarters in New York, International Women's Day was commemorated through a special event that brought together activists, celebrities, business industry leaders, UN senior officials and Member States. In her first public appearance as UN Women Goodwill Ambassador, American award-winning actor Anne Hathaway delivered a keynote address, focusing on the issue of unpaid care work and paid parental leave. A panel discussion featuring prominent speakers from governments, the UN, activists and private sector representatives followed, moderated by ABC News anchor Sade Baderinwa.

Also on International Women’s Day, in partnership with the iconic Lincoln Centre and the City of New York, UN Women launched the HeforShe Arts Week. Now in its second year, the HeforShe Arts Week is commemorated annually for one week with the aim of raising awareness and funding for gender equality through the arts. More than 60 cultural institutions will join the New York events including the Empire State Building, the MET and Guggenheim Museums, Gotham Comedy Club, and the Tribeca Film Festival, along with events across eight cities from London to Sao Paulo.

Tanzania



Minister for Gender Ummy Mwalimau and UN Women Representative Maria Karadenizli participate in the sweet potato planting ceremony with women farmers of Singida, Tanzania. Photo credit: UN Women Tanzania/Deepika Nath

In Tanzania, The Minister for Gender, Ummy Mwalimau, inaugurated a UN Women-funded Women's Economic Empowerment Center for value addition in Singida, Tanzania. The Minister, along with the UN Women Rep, received a procession of women’s groups from the region, and government representatives reiterated commitments to renew efforts in promoting women in the formal sector through business formalization, enterprise development and entrepreneurship trainings. The pilot model of the value addition center was recommended for nationwide implementation, scaling the impact to more women in Tanzania.

Albania




Youth in Albania stand up for gender equality and women's rights. Photo: UN Women Albania

The Municipality of Tirana, the only municipality in Albania where women have the majority in the local council, singed the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life. The commemoration event also discussed key issues impacting women in Albania, such as women's right to property. Youth from different faith communities were also engaged through trainings focused on gender equality and women's rights. They came up with a unified message: "A healthy society promotes, encourages and believes in a woman's empowerment and her contribution."

India

On International Women's Day, UN Women launched a one-month campaign branding four trains of the Delhi Metro with messaging on gender equality and women's economic empowerment. Two trains each on the Blue Line and Yellow Line will showcase 'Women in the Changing World of Work: Planet 50-50 by 2030', drawing attention to the need for equal pay for work of equal value, recognizing and sharing unpaid care work, as well as making workplaces, public spaces and homes violence free.

The Bombay Stock Exchange was one of 40 stock exchanges around the world that joined UN Women, the UN Global Compact, Sustainable Stock Exchanges Initiative, the International Finance Corporation, World Federation of Exchanges and Women in ETFs in raising awareness about the importance of gender equality to both



business and sustainable development. On 8 March, UN Women joined private sector representatives in a 'Ring The Bell' event at the Bombay Stock Exchange, followed by a panel discussion on women's participation and leadership in the workforce.


See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/3/news-international-womens-day-around-the-world#sthash.xQ3aG1DM.dpuf>

UN Women announces four new HeForShe Thematic Champions to accelerate progress towards gender equality

Male global leaders representing international financial institutions, global companies and police forces join the HeForShe movement

On International Women's Day, UN Women announced four male global leaders as the newest Thematic Champions to be part of its latest initiative. These Thematic Champions, representing both the public and private sectors, have committed to implement game-changing policies and concrete actions towards gender parity in these critical key areas: senior leadership, paid parental leave and tackling domestic violence. They are as follows:

- Jim Yong Kim, President of the **World Bank Group** has committed to close the gender gap within senior management (vice presidents and above) by 2020 as the **Inaugural HeForShe Thematic Champion for International Financial Institutions;**
- Emmanuel Faber, Global CEO of **Danone** has committed to implement a comprehensive parental policy offering, among other benefits, an 18-week gender neutral paid parental leave policy for the global work force as the **Inaugural HeForShe Thematic Champion for Paid Parental Leave.** The commitment from Danone's CEO on paid parental leave aligns with the focus area of UN Women's latest Goodwill Ambassador Anne Hathaway, who will deliver a keynote during UN Women's IWD event on March 8th at the United Nations.
- Giles York QPM, Chief Constable of **Sussex Police** and Nick Ephgrave QPM, Chief Constable of **Surrey Police** as the **Inaugural HeForShe Thematic Champion for Police Forces,** have committed to close the gender gap in senior leadership positions by 2020, and to instigate robust training for the police officers that respond to domestic violence, to support its elimination.



- “These four new Thematic Champions bring us a rich opportunity to reach new audiences on issues that are critical to gender equality. They build out from the sectors our IMPACT Champions are already working on with strong, carefully crafted commitments on balanced leadership, ending different forms of violence, and corporate support for shared parenting responsibilities,” said Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women. “These are moves by key influencers to crack some of the most intractable barriers facing women today”, she added.

The four leaders join the Prime Minister of Canada, His Excellency Justin Trudeau, who became the inaugural HeForShe Thematic Champion for Youth this past September, thus bringing the total number of Thematic Champions to five. The five Champions were selected on the basis of their reputations for strong ethical practices, equitable gender policies and excellence in their field, together with their strong commitments to change.

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/3/press-release-un-women-announces-four-new-heforshe-thematic-champions#sthash.IUUdhEIh.dpuf>


UN Women Executive Board convenes first regular session 2017

The UN Women Executive Board convened for this year’s first regular session on 14 February 2017 at the United Nations headquarters in New York.

The Vice President of the Executive Board, Ambassador Ms. Ivana Pajevic from Montenegro, made remarks representing the newly elected President of the Executive Board, Ambassador Ms. Lana Zaki Nusseibeh from the Mission of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations, followed by an opening statement from UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka.

The Executive Board reviewed the findings of an evaluation of UN Women’s regional architecture and its related management response.

Taking a closer look at the work of UN Women at country level, the Executive Board was briefed on the UN Women operational response in Moldova. Further briefings focused on the implementation of the cost recovery policy, the alignment of the



Strategic Plan 2018–2021 with the United Nations Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review and UN Women’s humanitarian programming.

The UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UN Trust Fund) also held an informal briefing, highlighting its work towards developing the evidence base of successful approaches and best practices to end violence against women and girls through strategic investments in civil society initiatives.

On the margins of the first regular session 2017, UN Women convened Member States to an informal workshop on 13 February 2017, to discuss the developing draft Strategic Plan 2018–2021, its result-based management framework and matching integrated budget.

The detailed agenda, as well as all official documents of the first regular session 2017, can be accessed on the Executive Board [webpage](#) or the [PaperSmart portal](#) of the United Nations.

Related Links:

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/2/announcer-eb-first-annual-session-2017#sthash.Ug9RKVNg.dpuf>

Around the World

UN Secretary-General visits UN Women centre in Za’atari refugee camp, his first stop on his visit to Jordan



UN Secretary-General António Guterres arrives at the UN Women center in the Za'atari refugee camp and is welcomed by Ibtisam Majareesh, head of the camp women's committee and member of the camp refugee committee, Ziad Sheikh, UN Women Jordan Representative, and Heba Zayyan, Recovery Specialist at UN Women Jordan. Photo: UN Women/ Benoît Almeras

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres visited the Za'atari refugee camp in Jordan on 28 March 2017. Coming ahead of his participation at the Arab Summit (Dead Sea, 23-29 March 2017), this is the first official visit of Mr. Guterres to Jordan and the region in his capacity as UN Secretary-General.

During the visit, he interacted directly with Syrian refugee women and girls residing in Jordan. The Secretary-General first stopped by one of the women's centres run by UN Women, known as the "Oases", and learned about the importance of cash-for-work opportunities for women refugees in the camp. "We no longer feel helpless, our work makes us feel productive and empowered," explained Nahed Abdalla, the head tailor in one of the workshops at the Oasis. In his exchange with the women, Secretary-General Guterres reiterated the need to restore peace in Syria.

During his visit, the Secretary-General also had a meeting with six women representing the Women's Committee at the Oasis, who serve as interlocutors between the community, service providers and camp decision-makers. "We want more job opportunities to be made available to women in the camp so we can provide for our families," shared Najah Mohammad Al Salim, a member of the committee. Syrian women shared their personal stories and discussed with the Secretary-General about the key challenges experienced as refugees, including the

issue of family displacement and reunification, access to livelihood opportunities and protection concerns.

“Running the largest cash-for-work programme for women in the camp, UN Women seeks to address the immediate needs of Syrian refugees, while building their skills and providing support services, such as day care facilities, education programmes and protection referrals on issues of sexual and gender-based violence. The centre also provides a space for women to come together, share their experiences and collectively rebuild a daily routine in the camp.

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/3/news-un-secretary-general-visits-un-women-centre-in-zaatari-refugee-camp-jordan#sthash.VYFJmJUy.dpuf>

UN Women Executive Director at Women’s G7 Forum

UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka was in Rome, Italy, from 7 – 8 April, to participate at the Women’s G7 Forum (W7) “Starting from girls”. The Women’s Forum, organized by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, WE-Women Empower the World and the Aspen Institute, aims to foster dialogue among civil society, business, academia and the G7 institutional representatives on issues related to gender equality and women’s empowerment.



The W7 Forum in Italy was the first official convening of a formally recognized G7 women’s engagement group. The process to establish the group gained momentum in 2015 during Germany’s presidency of the G7 when Chancellor Angela Merkel hosted the G7 Forum for Dialogue with Women from 16 – 17 September, 2015 in Berlin.

The Executive Director participated in the opening plenary session along with Mario Giro, Italy’s Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation; Benedetto Della Vedova, Under-Secretary of State of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation; Emma Bonino, President of WE-Women Empower the World and President of the European Council on Foreign Relations; Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and Princess Sarah Zeid, Her Royal Highness of Jordan.

In her intervention on “The fight for gender parity: progress and obstacles”, the Executive Director drew attention to the link between women’s economic empowerment in the changing world of work—the topic of the recently concluded 61st session of the Commission of the Status of Women—and the W7 forum’s focus on ‘inequality and sustainable growth’, stressing that: “Both forums aim for transformative action to reduce gaps in workforce participation, achieve equal pay, attain sexual and reproductive health and rights, and build leadership.



See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/4/announcement-un-women-executive-director-at-womens-g7-forum#sthash.R0TLAzAb.dpuf>

UN Women and Ministry of Panchayati Raj to strengthen gender responsive governance

The Union Council of Ministers (Cabinet), Government of India, led by the Prime Minister has approved an agreement between UN Women and the Ministry of Panchayati Raj to strengthen the capacities of governance institutions to ensure that gender concerns are embedded in the design and implementation of legislation, policies and programmes.

Panchayats are local self-government systems at the level of villages or small towns in India. India was one of the first countries in Asia to adopt special measures such as reserving one-third of all seats at the local level for women – and to have done so prior to the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. The 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution resulted in the creation of more than 200,000 elected Panchayats in the country, with nearly three million elected representatives. Just under half of these representatives are women – the largest absolute number of women in grassroots politics globally.

The Ministry and UN Women have previously collaborated to promote participation of women in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), to focus on building capacities of elected women representatives to empower them and enhance their effectiveness. Given the past gains, the two parties will now work together towards participatory design of governance processes and effective implementation of laws, policies and programmes to promote gender responsive governance.

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/4/announcer-un-women-ministry-of-panchayati-raj-mou#sthash.YGRQskeT.dpuf>

UN Women and the Government of Mexico City launch the campaign #NoEsDeHombres to tackle sexual harassment in public transport

UN Women, in partnership with the Government of Mexico City launched a campaign to prevent and eliminate sexual harassment and other forms of sexual



violence against women in public transport in Mexico City as part of the Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces for women and girls programme.

Globally, studies show that 50-100 per cent of women have been victims of sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence against women in public spaces. In Mexico City, according to the national violence against women survey (ENDRIEH) carried out by the National Institute for Statistics and Geography (INEGI), the forms of violence that were most frequently reported were offensive or sexualized comments (74 per cent), unwanted touching and groping (58 per cent), fear of being assaulted or abused (14 per cent). According to the National Survey of Victimization and Perceptions of Safety (ENVIPE 2016), 87.7 per cent of women aged 18 years and over feel unsafe in public transport and 79.4 per cent feel unsafe on the streets in Mexico City.

Sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence are a global pandemic that continue to be under-recognized. Men often normalize their violence, women often do not report, and there are insufficient interventions to prevent and respond to sexual violence. Violence against women and girls violates their freedom of movement, their ability to participate in education, work and public life. This is a universal problem that occurs in both developed and developing countries and there is no city in the world that is free of this scourge.

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/4/press-release-un-women-and-government-of-mexico-city-launch-noesdehombres#sthash.vY61duKb.dpuf>

UN Women and Innovation Norway sign momentous partnership agreement to advance gender equality and women's empowerment

UN Women and Innovation Norway, the Norwegian Government's instrument for innovation and development of enterprises, are partnering to accelerate the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment through innovative technology solutions. UN Women's Deputy Executive Director, Yannick Glemarec, and Innovation Norway's CEO, Anita Krohn Traaset, signed the first Memorandum of Understanding between the two organizations today at a high-level event in Trondheim, Norway, where the guests of honour included the Crown princess Mette Marit and Norway's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Børge Brende.



By the current rate of progress, the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 will not be possible, and women and girls in humanitarian crises impacted contexts are at most risk of being left behind. For example, maternal mortality in humanitarian crises and in fragile settings is 1.9 times the world average, and the number of maternal deaths in these countries represent 61 per cent of the total number of maternal deaths worldwide¹.

Innovation and technology provide unprecedented opportunities to reach those who are the farthest and hardest to reach by breaking isolation and creating economies of scale to accelerate the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment.

By working together, UN Women and Innovation Norway will enhance innovative approaches and solutions in response to addressing gender inequality issues, particularly in humanitarian contexts. The collaboration will also help to identify future public-private partnerships and strengthen the private sector's engagement in generating innovations.

The partnership between UN Women and Innovation Norway will create platforms and projects, which will include exploring making blockchain technology work for women and girls. Blockchain technology offers users the ability to build and maintain immutable and secure personal records and to directly transfer digital assets without the need for intermediaries and associated costs. Thus, women and girls in crises will be able to have safe records of documents that are essential to rebuilding their lives and for economic activities. UN Women will participate in a hackathon at the Katapult Future Fest taking place in Norway in May to explore the potential of blockchain as a solution to some of the problems that women face in humanitarian contexts.

Broadly, the collaboration between UN Women and Innovation Norway will focus on:

- Enhancing innovative approaches and solutions to address gender inequality issues;
- Promoting women, especially marginalized groups, as both producers and consumers of innovations;
- Promoting public-private partnerships and strengthening the private sector's engagement in innovations to accelerate gender equality and women's empowerment, notably through competency building and knowledge sharing;
- Sharing best practices, methodologies, and lessons learned around innovations to promote gender equality and women's empowerment;
- Promoting the Sustainable Development Goals.

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/3/announcer-innovation-norway-partnership#sthash.oIRGCeAJ.dpuf>

UNCTAD and UN Women announces joint programme to promote gender-inclusive macroeconomics

The UN's lead agencies in development policy advice and gender equality are joining forces through a USD 790,000 programme that will place gender perspectives in the heart of effective macroeconomic policy.

Through this programme, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and UN Women will work together to incorporate gender perspectives into models of economic growth and development, particularly the effects of the unpaid "care economy".

"While macroeconomics is often perceived as 'gender-neutral', gender matters for macroeconomic structures and outcomes," said UNCTAD Deputy Secretary-General Joakim Reiter. "Different types of economic shocks or patterns of growth affect women and men differently."

For example, labour-intensive export-oriented economies raise the relative demand for female labour, and austerity measures disproportionately impact mothers and children.

UN Women Deputy Executive Director Yannick Glemarec said: "Macroeconomic policies are crucial enablers of gender equality as they shape the overall environment for advancing women's economic empowerment. Conversely, the benefits of gender-responsive economic policies, such as fairer societies and greater economic dynamism, accrue to everyone."

With a focus on the "care economy", the collaboration between UNCTAD and UN Women will produce:

- Measures of gender-inclusiveness of growth, capturing the diversity of developing country experiences, while providing internationally comparable measures.
- Research and analysis to clarify the link between macroeconomic policies and gender-inclusive growth and inform policies.
- A joint publication on gender and macroeconomics to raise awareness and understanding of the gendered impacts of different macroeconomic policies.

- A new training programme on for officials from developing countries, particularly from the finance and planning ministries, to make macroeconomic policies more economically effective and gender-inclusive.

The one-year programme will culminate with a high-level panel event to present the joint publication and its policy findings to policy-makers, academia and civil society.

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/2/announcer-unctad-and-un-women-announces-joint-programme-on-gender-inclusive-macroeconomics#sthash.qaAQLiW7.dpuf>

Malawi Parliament adopts amendment to end child marriage

The country with one of the highest rates of child marriages in the world has taken a major step to end the practice by adopting a constitutional amendment on 14 February that raises the minimum age of marriage to 18 years.

On 14 February, the Malawi Parliament took a landmark decision towards advancing gender equality by banning child marriage in the country. The Parliament unanimously adopted a constitutional amendment that raises the minimum age of marriage from 15 to 18 years, for both girls and boys. The amendment aligns the Constitution with the 2015 Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Act enacted by the Parliament.

UN Women played a pivotal role in lobbying for an end to the discriminatory practice. UN Women Malawi provided support during the constitutional review process, carried out key consultations for the reform, and mobilized other UN Agencies to collaborate with the Ministry of Justice & Constitutional Affairs (MOJACA) and Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA), to ensure an inclusive and participatory process.

The new reform aligns the Constitution with Malawi's international and regional obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and others, including the Sustainable Development Goal 5 on gender equality.

Going forward, UN Women will continue to partner with civil society networks to change discriminatory attitudes among both lawmakers and the public to ensure effective implementation of the new law. UN Women will also support the Ministry of Gender and Justice to harmonize the new Constitutional Amendment Bill and the various pieces of discriminatory legislation against women and girls.


See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/2/news-malawi-parliament-adopts-amendment-to-end-child-marriage#sthash.I6BGnF2N.dpuf>

UN Women launches initiative for reforming gender-discriminatory laws



UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka speaks at the event “The Roadmap for Substantive Equality: 2030” held at United Nations Headquarters on 14 February 2017. Photo: UN Women/Ryan Brown

A new partnership focused on reforming gender-discriminatory laws was unveiled today at an event co-hosted by UN Women, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and Equality Now, in New York. The “Roadmap for Substantive Equality: 2030” aims at repealing or amending laws that discriminate against women and girls, and ensuring that laws are grounded in gender equality and women’s human rights, and fully implemented, as part of global efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



Despite some progress in the last few years, it is estimated that 90 per cent of the countries around the world still have at least one discriminatory law in their legal frameworks. These range from laws that prevent perpetrators of rape from being prosecuted if they are married or subsequently marry the victim, to the lack of enforcement of laws banning child marriage or female genital mutilation.

Other examples include laws failing to adequately tackle violence against women — because its implementation falls short, or they do not ensure the confidentiality and protection of the survivors who seek legal action — or the lack of legal mechanisms to ensure women’s participation in politics, for instance, legislated quotas for women in parliament. Laws addressing sexual harassment in public spaces, including in the streets and public transportation; ensuring that women have access to jobs on equal footing to men and that they are paid equally for the same work; and laws enabling children to acquire their nationality not only from their fathers, but also their mothers, are urgently needed as well.

Gender-discriminatory laws are often rooted in discriminatory social norms, which remain pervasive and are difficult to change. Partnering with civil society and grassroots activists is essential to shifting perspectives among both lawmakers and the public.

“Laws that discriminate against women and girls entrench and perpetuate gender inequality. We need to create a change that lasts and breaks the cycle of discrimination for good, so that the progress we have made prevails in future generations,” said Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, UN Women Executive Director.

The UN Women Roadmap for Substantive Equality: 2030 is centred on fostering the necessary global commitment to not only achieve legislative reform, but also to ensure they are put into practice. Moving from policy to implementation requires coordination among the international and regional organizations, governments, parliaments, justice sector and civil society, which needs a robust multi-sectoral partnership such as the Roadmap unveiled today.



Equality Now Global Executive Director Yasmeeen Hassan speaks at the event “The Roadmap for Substantive Equality:2030” held at United Nations Headquarters on 14 February 2017. Photo: UN Women/Ryan Brown


Other speakers at the launch event included Yasmeeen Hassan, Global Executive Director of Equality Now, who stressed: “Equality under the law is a prerequisite for gender equality, because laws determine the choices women make in life. In the past 20 years we have seen a lot of progress. Yet we are worried about the pace of change, particularly on the rim of family laws”.

Today’s initiative aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 5 on gender equality, and target 5.1, which calls on ending all forms of discrimination against women and girls everywhere by 2030, covering all areas of discrimination in law, policies, and practices. UN Women has been tasked to develop the content and methodology of the indicator measuring progress towards this target.

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/2/press-release-un-women-launches-initiative-for-reforming-gender-discriminatory-laws#sthash.eulKXzDO.dpuf>

Spotlighting gender data at the first-ever UN World Data Forum

At the first-ever United Nations World Data Forum in Cape Town, South Africa from 15 – 18 January, data and statistics experts from around the world joined governments, private sector, civil society and academia, in exploring innovative ways to measure progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



At the World Data Forum, UN Women together with Data2X co-hosted an official event on “Gender Data for Decision-Making: Strengthening the Links”, highlighting the need for greater collaboration across all sectors towards the production and use of quality gender statistics.

With 80 per cent of the indicators for gender equality across the SDGs lacking data, statistics that adequately reflect the lived realities of women and men, girls and boys, are indispensable tools for monitoring progress and developing evidence-based policies and solutions to achieve gender equality and women’s empowerment. The effective implementation and monitoring of the SDGs requires an unprecedented level of engagement from a multitude of stakeholders. The event brought together national statisticians, public officials, civil society and data experts for a lively dialogue on what is needed to strengthen the collaboration between producers and users of gender data. The discussions touched on a number of topics, including how to produce a shared vision for gender data at the national level; how to improve the capacities of gender specialists and statisticians vis-à-vis gender-sensitive data; and how gender data production and use can lead to improved policies and programmes on the ground.

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/1/announcer-gender-data-at-the-first-ever-un-world-data-forum#sthash.Ibi85vWR.dpuf>

Pakistan’s first multi-functional ‘Violence Against Women Center’ inaugurated in Punjab

The VAWC presents a unified platform for all justice delivery measures required by victims of violence to put an end to all forms of Violence Against Women in the province.

The Punjab Chief Minister Mian Shahbaz Sharif inaugurated the newly-built Violence Against Women Center in Multan, Punjab Province in March 2017 which will converge all justice delivery services at one point, with the core aim to empower women in Pakistan besides providing protection services against acts of violence. Pakistan’s first most advanced, computerized and completely female-run Violence Against Women Center (VAWC) is established under the Punjab Protection of Women Against Violence Act 2016, spearheaded by Salman Sufi, who heads the Chief Minister’s Special Monitoring Unit (Law and Order). The Act criminalizes all forms of violence against women, including abetment of an offense, domestic violence, sexual violence, psychological abuse, economic abuse, stalking and



cybercrime. This is the first legislation in the history of Pakistan which has its own implementation mechanism, known as Violence Against Women Centers (VAWCs). First ever in South Asia-VAWCs will serve as a one-stop-shop for women victims of violence where all justice delivery departments will

be brought under one roof.

The centre will help improve the country's justice system.

The prime objective of the VAWC is streamlining speedy justice delivery process for women and all services to women including First Aid, FIR lodging, prosecution, medical examination, forensics, post-trauma rehabilitation and shelter home for female victims have been provided under one single roof. Free legal services have also been provided to victims.

By bringing all these services on a single platform, VAWCs aim to address issues such as low conviction rate for Violence Against Women (VAW) crimes, disconnected evidence collection, lack of sensitization to gender-based violence issues, passing of moral judgments and absenteeism of relevant personnel. VAWCs are also integrated with Shelter Homes and will assist in victims' placement back into the society as well.

Rights activists expect a change after the establishment of Violence Against Women Center in Multan, which will be the nucleus against women violence.

See more at:

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/195270-Pakistans-first-Violence-Against-Women-Center-inaugurated-in-Multan>

Women in peace and conflict

"It Takes a Woman" to build peace in Syria



UN Women launched an audiovisual campaign at the Brussels Conference on Supporting the future of Syria and the Region

UN Women launched a new audiovisual storytelling campaign, “It Takes a Woman”, produced by UN Women Regional Office for Arab States.

The campaign featuring Syrian women from diverse affiliations was launched on the margins of the Brussels Conference on Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region. The meeting took place from 4 – 5 April, where UN Women joined major development partners, government and ministerial representatives from 70 delegations, UN agencies, civil society, humanitarian and development organizations, and wider international community to address the situation in Syria and the impact of the crisis in the region.

It Takes a Woman campaign, being launched and amplified through social media, aims to raise the public profile of Syrian women activists who are involved in formal and informal peace processes, and to influence public debate on Syrian women’s right to participate and their value addition in the ongoing peace talks. It seeks to encourage international stakeholders to recognize women’s role in building peace, and to engage Syrian women in peacebuilding.

While entire communities are suffering the consequences of armed violence, Syrian women and girls continue to bear the brunt of the crisis. Pre-existing gender inequalities and increasing poverty places them at elevated risk of violence, exploitation, trafficking and early and forced marriage. Six years of conflict continues to change family structures, with female-headed households on the rise. The women of Syria are on the front line of the conflict, yet, their voices, priorities and activism remains less known and heard, and they have fewer resources to protect and care for themselves and their communities.

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/4/news-it-takes-a-woman-to-build-peace-in-syria#sthash.KFH3NuT5.dpuf>

Women’s Representation

Spotlight on Gender Parity in the UN

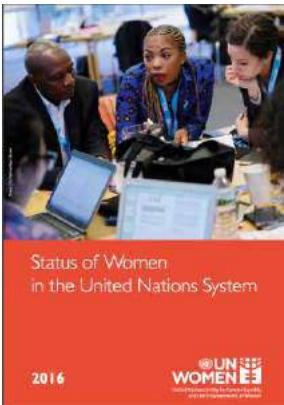
The transition in SG leadership has brought the issue of gender parity to the

forefront. Secretary-General António Guterres has emerged as a strong champion for the cause, and has repeatedly expressed his commitment to achieve gender balance at all levels within the UN. In his remarks at his inauguration he pledged to achieve gender parity at the senior-most levels by the end of his first-term in 2021.

The Secretary-General has repeatedly emphasized the need for the UN System to accelerate efforts to reach system-wide gender parity, as this is integral to the UN's effectiveness and credibility.

To operationalize this commitment, the SG has convened a Task Force on Gender Parity, involving all CEB entities and Secretariat Departments, to create a road map for the system to achieve gender parity. The Task Force has targeted the key areas of Senior Appointments, Special Measures, Enabling Environment, Data/ Targets/ Monitoring, Accountability and Field Missions.

In light of the increased interest in the UN's progress towards meeting its goal of gender parity, UN Women's UN system Coordination Division launched a publication on the status of women in the UN system in December 2016. The publication was designed to convey information in a highly visual format with wide appeal and better readability for the general public. It hopes to highlight the key demographics and policies related to the representation of women in the UN system and capitalize on



the current focus brought by the SDGs and transition in SG leadership. Additionally, a complementary video has also been made that provides a snapshot of the current representation of women.


The full publication and video can be found at the following links:

Publication: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2016/12/status-of-women-in-the-united-nations-system>

Video: <https://youtu.be/cFsXqOoxJNA>

Secretary-General's Report on the Improvement in the Status of Women in the United Nations System

The aforementioned publication is just one of the ways in which UN Women's Coordination Division fulfills its mandate to "lead and coordinate the UN system's work on gender equality" which entails regularly monitoring, reporting on, and facilitating system-wide progress towards gender parity. The most comprehensive



reporting done on this issue is through the “**Secretary-General’s Report on the Improvement in the Status of Women in the United Nations System**”. [<http://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/un-system-coordination/women-in-the-united-nations/reports-and-monitoring>]

The report constitutes the only reference for sex-disaggregated analysis of issues related to the status of women outside of mere representation, and provides detailed data analysis of the representation of women at all levels and locations, across all agencies of the UN system, and at the various career stages of appointment, career advancement and separation. Additionally, the report compiles good policies and practices and analyses key impediments to progress. These policies and practices are compiled through UN-SWAP reporting and a biennial qualitative survey sent out to all 35 reporting entities. The forthcoming report will be published later this year prior to the General Assembly.

New IPU and UN Women map shows women’s representation in politics stagnating

The number of women in executive government and in parliament worldwide has stagnated, with only marginal improvements since 2015, according to the data presented in the *Women in Politics 2017 Map* launched recently by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and UN Women. The Map, which depicts global rankings for women in the executive and parliamentary branches of government as of 1 January 2017,

This map is a unique visual tool that captures women’s participation in executive government and in parliament on a given date – 1st January 2017. The map of Women in Politics not only provides a country ranking for both ministerial and parliamentary representation, but also includes statistics on women in political leadership positions – Heads of State or government, women Speakers of Parliament, as well as ministerial portfolios held by women throughout the world. Borders are depicted and used on the map in order to present data. They are not the expression of any opinion concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area, or concerning the delimitation of frontiers or boundaries.

The 2017 edition of the Map shows a slight drop in the number of countries with a woman **Head of State and/or Head of Government** from 2015 figures (from 19 to 17). However, the data reveals a significant increase in the number of countries

with a woman Head of State and/or Head of Government since the IPU-UN Women Map's first edition in 2005 (from 8 to 17).

Progress in the number of women **Members of Parliament** worldwide continues to be slow. IPU data shows that the global average of women in national parliaments increased just slightly from 22.6 per cent in 2015 to 23.3 per cent in 2016. Women **Speakers of Parliament** have however significantly increased in number, now at an all-time high of 19.1 per cent, but obviously still far from gender balance. For more information on women in parliament, see IPU statistics on women in parliament and the report Women in parliament: the year in progress.

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/3/press-release-new-ipu-and-un-women-map-shows-womens-representation-in-politics-stagnating#sthash.iqCxeCFN.dpuf>

In your Interest

UN Women and UN Kosovo Team-supported movie "Home" wins BAFTA award



From left, Producer Shpat Deda, Producer Afolabi Kuti, Producer Arta Dobroshti, Director Daniel Mulloy and Producer Scott O'Donnell at the BAFTA Award Ceremony. Photo: Official BAFTA Ceremony Photography

In February, the UN Women Kosovo-supported short film "Home" received the award for British Short Film at the British Academy of Film and Television Arts Film Awards (BAFTA) 2017. This makes the movie Kosovo's first production to win this prestigious award.

"Home" is a Kosovo-British co-production. The short film follows a British family's journey as refugees as they flee from violence. The film sends a message of compassion and understanding for refugees and the difficult choices they must make in the wake of fear, destruction, and chaos. The film portrays many forms of the human rights violations that often occur during conflicts, including sexual violence. "Home" was inspired by the stories of Kosovo refugees and made in response to the hate and discrimination that many refugees face today. It was shot and produced in Kosovo.

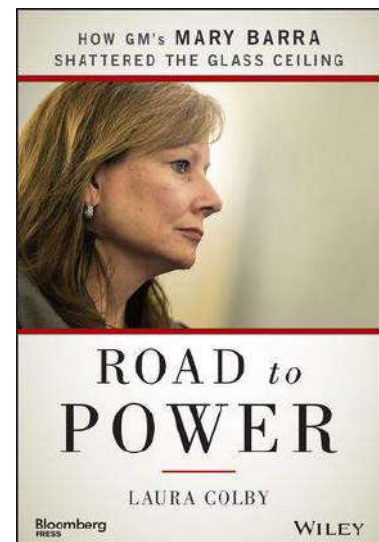
UN Kosovo Team provided financial and logistical support for the film, and UN Women Kosovo provided in-depth technical support to ensure that the movie included an accurate, explicit and sensitive portrayal of conflict-related sexual violence.

See more at:

<http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/3/news-home-wins-bafta#sthash.gk273rbi.dpuf>

Recommended reading

Road to Power: How GM's Mary Barra Shattered the Glass Ceiling by Laura Colby - a reporter at large for Bloomberg News in New York, covering women in the global economy and education.



Road to Power is the story of how Mary Barra drove herself to the pinnacle of a company that steers the United States' wealth. Beginning as a rare female electrical engineer and daughter of a General Motors die maker, Barra spent more than thirty years building her career before becoming the first woman to ever lead a global automaker. With \$155 billion in sales and 200,000 employees, GM is widely

considered to be a proxy for the U.S. economy, making Barra's position arguably the most important corporate role a woman has ever held. This book describes the personal character, choices, and leadership style that enabled her to break through the glass ceiling.

When 52-year-old Mary Barra was named CEO of General Motors in 2013, only people outside of the company were surprised. She had done everything from working on the factory floor to overseeing manufacturing, from improving union relations to paring down bureaucracy, and from running human resources to helping drag the company back from its 2009 bankruptcy. This book details each step of her career, and the lessons she learned along the way.

Strengthening organizational structure for delivering gender equality results: Corporate evaluation of the regional architecture of UN Women



UN Women was designed with a regional architecture that aims to maximize the organization's ability to deliver on its mandate. The overall goal of the regional architecture was to delegate authority to maximize the organization's ability to deliver on its mandate in a more effective and efficient way and to bring capacity closer to the field in order to increase contribution to the achievement of results.



UN Women's Independent Evaluation Office undertook this corporate evaluation to assess the implementation of the regional architecture from its launch in 2012 to the first quarter of 2016, with the aim of informing future plans for strengthening the institutional set-up, especially in the framework of designing the new Strategic Plan 2018-2021. The evaluation covers the relevance, organizational effectiveness and administrative efficiency of UN Women's regional architecture, including its organizational capacity to deliver on all aspects of the UN Women mandate — normative, operational and United Nations (UN) coordination at the global, regional and country levels.

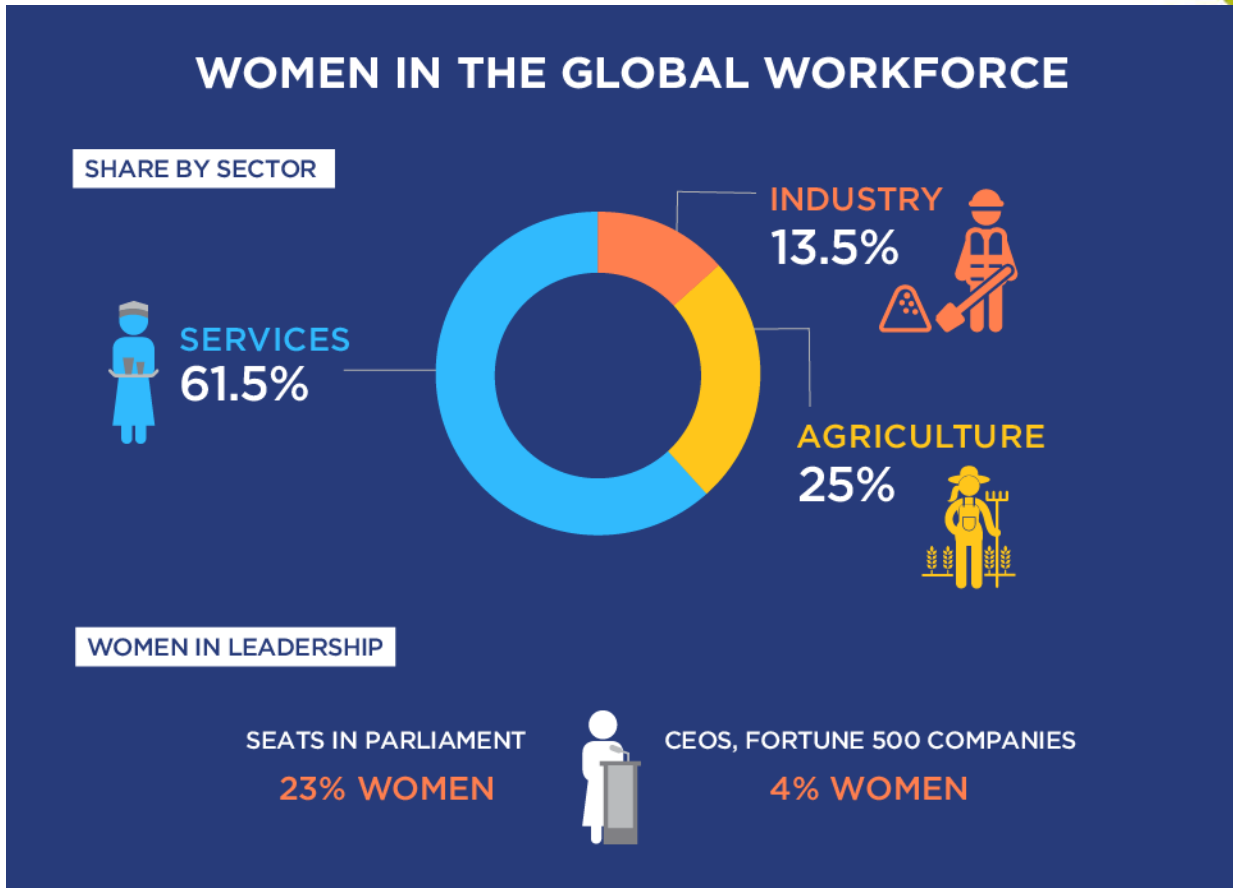
The scope of the evaluation included field presence and divisions in Headquarters. The evaluation was based on gender and human rights principles, and adhered to the UN Evaluation Group's norms and standards for evaluation. A specific evaluation objective on human rights and gender equality was included, and specific questions on gender responsiveness were mainstreamed across the evaluation criteria.

This evaluation brings to light important findings, conclusions and recommendations on the implementation of the regional architecture that can enhance UN Women's contribution to gender equality.

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2017/1/corporate-evaluation-of-the-regional-architecture-of-un-women#sthash.bNGtkHJI.dpuf>

Women in the changing world of work - Facts you should know

Globalization, digital innovation and climate change, among other factors, continue to change the world in which we work — posing both challenges as well as opportunities in realizing women's economic potential for a better tomorrow.



See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/multimedia/2017/2/infographic-changing-world-of-work#sthash.v9qwn4y7.dpuf>

Buy from Women Enterprise Platform brochure

A brief overview of UN Women's Buy from Women Enterprise Platform, a data-driven, enterprise platform that combines an open source end-to-end cloud-based, and mobile enabled supply chain system to connect women farmers to information, finance and markets. This product innovation enables women farmers to have a 360 degree view of the entire business lifecycle.



The information captured through the Platform has the potential to unlock traditional and innovative sources of finance for farmers and cooperatives that can be used to invest in processing and post-harvesting labour and time-saving equipment. Such equipment will enable farmers to avoid distress selling, receive higher prices, and reduce post-harvest losses. The Platform also offers cooperatives a powerful tool to improve their management. The brochure includes information on the major system features, product design, added value and vision for UN Women's work in this area.

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2017/3/buy-from-women-platform-brochure#sthash.honl56W7.dpuf>

Shaping the international agenda: Raising women's voices in intergovernmental forums



This publication aims to build knowledge on women’s participation in national delegations to meetings of international organizations’ governing bodies and their leadership roles in these meetings. It is based on responses to a questionnaire addressed to members of the United Nations Governing Bodies Secretariat and of the International Gender Champions–Geneva. Although the results of the survey may not be representative of all United Nations organizations, they have yielded important information on the current policies and practices in the 23 entities that took part.

Based on the responses, six types of actions to improve women’s participation in governing body meetings have been identified: (a) explicit policies and mandated targets; (b) tracking and reporting; (c) training and capacity-building; (d) financial support; (e) advocacy and networking; and (f) communications strategies. The survey results are complemented by an overview of intergovernmental and inter-agency frameworks and trends in women’s participation in national Governments and intergovernmental forums. Best practices in promoting women’s participation at different levels – national and multilateral – are also presented with the aim of informing concrete recommendations on the way forward to realize gender balance in international organizations’ governing bodies. As the first publication of its kind, it is intended to be a handy source of information and advocacy tool that can empower a wide range of gender-equality advocates to champion gender equality, women’s empowerment and gender balance in their work and across their networks.

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2017/3/raising-womens-voices-in-intergovernmental-forums#sthash.4x8lGbrb.dpuf>

For access to the UN Women publications please visit www.unwomen.org/en/publications

Websites

Empower Women

Referred to as the Knowledge Gateway on Women's Economic Empowerment, *Empower Women* (EW) was initially launched during the High-Level session of the United Nations General Assembly by Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Under-Secretary-General of the UN and Executive Director of UN Women, and Lynne Yelich, Minister of State, Foreign Affairs and Consular, Government of Canada in 2013.

Since then, Empower Women has grown into a global movement with more than half a million viewers and over 18,500+ passionate and ambitious women and men from the private sector, civil society, academia, governments and international organizations more than 198 countries. Empower Women has also cultivated a global network of 410+ dynamic, influential Champions for women's economic empowerment from over 70 countries. Together, Empower Women is taking actions and driving change for women's economic empowerment both online and offline.

EW is dedicated to empowering women to achieve their full economic potential by inspiring both women and men to become advocates, change makers and leaders in their community. EW equips them with resources, opportunities and a global platform that facilitates networking, learning and sharing of experiences.

Access at: <https://www.empowerwomen.org/en/who-we-are/about-us>

UN Women Info

Employment opportunities

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

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

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