



Network

The UN Women's Newsletter
Volume No.19, Issue 2 May-June-July-August 2018

Letter from the Director, UN System Coordination Division



Dear Friends,

Greetings to all Network enthusiasts worldwide! Delighted to bring to you the second quarter summer edition of NETWORK Newsletter for 2018.

We are delighted to welcome and congratulate former UN Women Executive Director Michelle Bachelet of Chile on her appointment as United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Ms. Bachelet ended her second four-year term as President of Chile in March this year, having already held the position between 2006 and 2010.

We then move on to keep you posted with progress on the UN System-wide Action Plan for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN SWAP)-which is now moving ahead with UN SWAP 2.0 which is building upon advances made under SWAP 1.0 and further refine existing indicators and anchor the framework within the 2030 Agenda. The updated framework and methodology was launched on 21st June 2018.

Next we bring to you summer happenings around the United Nations including the UN Women Annual Session as well as the High Level Political Forum in July in New York which saw a record number of country leaders, private sector and civil society actors review progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. This year's forum, under the theme

“Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies,” concluded with the adoption of a Ministerial Declaration.

Our ‘Around the World’ segment carries stories ranging from launch of new OECD toolkit to help governments advance on gender equality goals and to design gender-sensitive public policies and services and accelerate their efforts to enable equal access for women in public decision making; to alerting on how Canada is announcing a new partnership to fund gender equality and empower women and girls in developing countries.

The section on violence against women includes UN Women’s expert group meeting on tackling sexual harassment at the workplace to the Palestine Ministry of Women’s Affairs and Government of Canada partnering with a Flagship Programme to Eliminate Violence Against Women in the West Bank and Gaza.

Other innovative research on women’s representation to looking at how Age International is creating awareness on older women in the workplace and Forbes research drawing attention despite increase in more women appointed to corporate boards there are only just 24 female CEOs lead the companies on the 2018 Fortune 500—fewer than last year.

Finally, as always, the newsletter in its last few pages includes information on publications such as Equality and Human Rights Commission, UK’s *Pressing for progress: women’s rights and gender equality in UK in 2018* which presents the biggest ever assessment of the state of women’s rights in Great Britain in 2018; and the ILO *World Employment Social Outlook Trends for Women 2018 - A Global Snapshot* showing gender gaps in labour force participation remain wide.

We hope the collection of news and stories we share as part of this newsletter to helps to connect you to making gender equality a lived reality by 2030. *Let’s Step It UP for Gender Equality!*

We look towards your continued support as we move on towards the last quarter of 2018!

In solidarity,



Aparna Mehrotra
Director, UN system Coordination Division,
UN Women



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Congratulations!

Former Executive Director UN Women - Michelle Bachelet of Chile – on her appointment as United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Ms. Bachelet ended her second four-year term as President of Chile in March this year, having already held the position between 2006 and 2010. She was the first woman to be elected to Chile's highest office. After her first term, she joined the United Nations as the first Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women).




A long-time human rights champion and ground-breaking leader, Ms. Bachelet is a pediatrician who began her government career as an adviser in the Health Ministry, rising quickly to become the first woman to lead Chile's Health Ministry in 2000 and Defense Ministry in 2002. She became involved in Chilean human rights activism in the early 1970s.

UN System-wide Action Plan for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: UN-SWAP --- An Update

The System-wide Action Plan – UN SWAP 2.0 is now underway, after the successful completion of the UN SWAP phase one 2012-2018. Sustained commitment and a sharper focus are needed during the second phase of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (System-wide Action Plan 2.0), under which reporting will take place from 2019 onward. The updated System-wide Action Plan offers the United Nations a platform to fulfil its commitments on gender equality and the empowerment of women, build on the considerable advances made and address areas of persistent weakness.

In follow-up to the Report on Mainstreaming a gender perspective, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), at its 2018 session, passed a resolution which calls upon the UN system to fully implement the UN-SWAP 2.0 and increasing investments to address issues in critical areas of the Action Plan, including policy development, resource tracking and allocation, the equal representation and participation of women, including organizational culture, and capacity development and assessment.

UN Women has led the development of UN-SWAP 2.0. Similar to the first UN-SWAP framework, UN-SWAP 2.0 has been consulted on extensively across the system. System-wide consultations, led by UN Women, included the administration of a system-wide survey, six inter-agency workshops, 21 individual agency consultations, and a virtual



consultation with 63 participants. An 11-member inter-agency Working Group on Results, chaired by UN Women, supported finalization of the three new performance indicators on results and the development of the methodology to implement these performance indicators. Additionally, UN-SWAP 2.0 underwent two rounds of piloting with representative sets of entities, by eight entities between May and September 2016, and 10 entities between January and March 2018. The updated framework and methodology was launched on 21st June 2018 in an event in New York in the margins of UN Women Executive Board meeting. During this event, UN Women, in collaboration with UNDP and the presence of UNFPA and UNICEF, also launched the UNCT-SWAP Scorecard, the equivalent accountability framework on gender equality and the empowerment of women at UN country team level

UN-SWAP 2.0 further refines existing indicators and anchors the framework within the 2030 Agenda. It introduces three new indicators focused on results and one on Leadership, and expands the accountability framework to encompass system-wide reporting on results linked to gender-related targets of the Sustainable Development Goals, including Sustainable Development Goal 5. First reporting on UN-SWAP 2.0 will take place in January 2019.

Around the United Nations

UN Women Executive Board convenes Annual Session 2018

The UN Women Executive Board which governs the operational activities of UN-Women and provides operational policy guidance to the Entity convened for this year's Annual Session on 19-20 June at United Nations headquarters in New York.

The President of the Executive Board, Ambassador Ivana Pajević from the Mission of Montenegro to the United Nations, gave introductory remarks and UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka presented the organization's report on the implementation on the strategic plan, 2014-2017 and progress made on the strategic plan 2018-2021.

The Executive Board was presented with the findings of the 2017 evaluation function and an evaluation of UN Women's contribution to women's political participation and leadership. Furthermore, the reports on internal audit and investigation activities 2017, the report of the Audit Advisory Committee 2017 as well as UN Women's management response to the Joint Inspection Unit reports and management letters 2017 were addressed.

Among several side events and briefings on the margins of the Executive Board session a timely briefing was held titled "UN-Women's actions to strengthening the protection of populations from sexual exploitation and abuse by its personnel; and of sexual harassment at the work place". The detailed agenda as well as all official documents of the Annual Session 2018 can be accessed on the Executive Board webpage or the PaperSmart-portal of the United Nations.

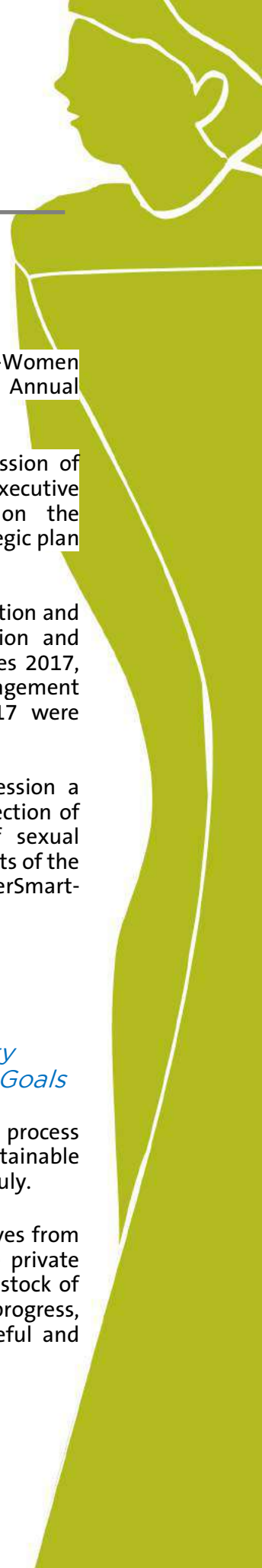
Read more [here](#).

UN High Level Political Forum 2018

Record number of country leaders, private sector and civil society actors reviewed progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals

The [High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development \(HLPF\)](#), the main UN process for the review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), met at the UN Headquarters in New York from 9 – 18 July.

More than 125 senior government officials, and over two thousand representatives from governments, UN system and other organizations, civil society, NGOs and the private sector participated in the annual 2018 High-level Political Forum (HLPF) to take stock of progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They discussed progress, successes, challenges and lessons learned on the road to a fairer, more peaceful and prosperous world and a healthy planet by 2030.



This year's forum, under the theme "Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies," concluded with the adoption of a [Ministerial Declaration](#). Forty-six countries presented their [Voluntary National Reviews](#) on their efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda. The Forum also reviewed in depth six out of the 17 SDGs: Water and sanitation for all (SDG 6); sustainable and modern energy for all (SDG 7); cities and human settlements (SDG 11); sustainable consumption and production patterns (SDG 12); sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss (SDG 15); and global partnership for sustainable development (SDG 17).

Achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls is a stand-alone goal within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, but also a requisite for the success of other goals. For example, we cannot achieve sustainable management of water without women's input, as in 80 per cent of households with water shortages, women and girls are responsible for water collection. We cannot make cities safe and inclusive without understanding the risks that women face in public transport or other public spaces.

As the global community works towards the SDGs, UN Women works to make sure no woman or girl is left behind in these efforts. In this editorial compilation, we bring you stories from women, on how the six SDGs being reviewed this year impact their lives.

Read more [here](#).

Around the World

The Women's Peace & Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) Launches funding cycle in Iraq

The Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund set up in February 2016 to address the financing gaps, create greater synergies between different sources of finance, and break the silos between humanitarian, peace and security, and development assistance – launched funding cycle in Iraq in May 2018. As an instrument mainly aimed at funding local women's organizations, including in humanitarian settings, the WPHF is also a concrete response to the commitments of the World Humanitarian Summit (2016) in terms of establishing pooled funding mechanisms, localizing the humanitarian response, ensuring national ownership, as well as increasing investment in civil society organizations and in gender equality.

The UN in partnership with the Government of Iraq and with the generous support from the UK and the Canadian launched the Fund in Iraq. With its 1st funding cycle, the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund will fund qualifying projects in Iraq that contribute to one of the following Outcomes

- Outcome 1: Enabling environment for the implementation of WPS commitments:
- Outcome 2: Conflict prevention

Read more [here](#).

OECD launches Toolkit to help governments advance on gender equality goals

The OECD launched an initiative for International Women's Day to help governments, parliaments and judiciaries to design gender-sensitive public policies and services and accelerate their efforts to enable equal access for women in public decision making.

Building on the 2015 OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life and aimed at speeding up progress on gender equality goals, the OECD Toolkit for Mainstreaming & Implementing Gender Equality identifies proven measures to increase women's participation across the board and outlines pitfalls to avoid in institutionalising gender equality. It will help create systemic change across state institutions and decision processes, which is necessary to lead culture change across society to finally address the entrenched gender roles and behaviours that prevent true gender equality. The toolkit includes many country examples of good practices to illustrate the most effective policies and practices.

The Toolkit launch is part of the OECD's March on Gender, a series of events the Organisation is hosting around International Women's Day to address ways to close the gender gap. (See agenda: www.oecd.org/gender/March-on-Gender-OECD-2018.pdf)

The OECD has also updated its Gender Portal with new data and analysis on gender inequality, including around 75 indicators on gender gaps in education, employment, entrepreneurship, public governance, health and development. (See www.oecd.org/gender.)

Access the [Toolkit](#).

Canada announces new partnership to fund gender equality and empower women and girls in developing countries

Launches call to action to the private sector, investors and philanthropists to contribute

Canada has become a global champion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, both at home and abroad. In launching the Feminist International Assistance Policy in 2017, Canada committed to expand innovative partnerships that have the greatest potential to close gender gaps and eliminate barriers to gender equality in order to effectively reduce poverty and support women's rights movements and organizations in developing countries.

Canada in May 2018 announced launch of consultations on the creation of a unique partnership to catalyze new investments in support of gender equality and women's rights in developing countries.

This initiative will draw on the strengths of the Government of Canada, the philanthropic community, the private sector and civil society to mobilize unprecedented levels of resources in support of this goal. Canada is willing to contribute up to \$300 million to such a partnership.

This summer, the government will consult with civil society, the philanthropic community and the private sector to build a platform that will help to grow investments that advance the empowerment of women and girls in the developing world.

Read more [here](#).

Violence Against Women

UN Women convenes experts on sexual harassment at the workplace

What does zero-tolerance to sexual harassment look like? Feminists, gender experts and UN officials came together to discuss promising practices to curb sexual harassment and assault in a UN Women-organized “Feminist Think Space” from 30 to 31 July in New York.

The two-day event gathered inputs from feminist thought leaders and gender experts to inform UN Women’s ongoing work on sexual harassment as a form and expression of gender inequality. This included UN Women’s engagement with the work of the UN Chief Executives Board High Level Task Force on sexual harassment, which include the establishment of the Workplace Relations Advisor in 2017, regular town hall meetings led by the Executive Director, a revamped handbook of policies and procedures to address sexual misconduct promoted across the organization, and UN Women’s active participation in the UN Chief Executive Board Task Force on sexual harassment.

In addition to informing UN Women’s own practices and its engagement with the UN Chief Executive Board Task Force’s ongoing work in creating a joint UN policy to address sexual harassment, the recommendations stemming from the Feminist Think Space will contribute towards a UN Women publication on sexual harassment and assault, to be released in the fall of 2018.

Read more [here](#).



Ministry of Women’s Affairs and Government of Canada Launch a Flagship Programme to Eliminate Violence Against Women in the West Bank and Gaza

Palestinian Ministry of Women’s Affairs, and the Government of Canada launched a new flagship programme, “HAYA: Eliminating Violence Against Women in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (2018 – 2022)” along with four partner UN agencies, UN Women, UNFPA, UN Habitat, and UNODC. The ceremony took place at the Mahmoud Darwish Museum in Ramallah.

The launch of “Haya” programme is one of the achievements of the collective work of the Palestinian women’s movement which has been working on setting the strategic priorities and necessary mechanisms to eliminate violence against women. This initiative is a great example of international and local organizations working together to have a lasting impact on the lives of those affected by violence.”

The HAYA programme will be led by a consortium of four UN agencies. Through novel and innovative approach, HAYA aims to tackle the root causes of violence through changing harmful practices deeply rooted in the society, while assisting the Palestinian Authority to reform existing prevention, protection and response systems jointly with affected women”.

The HAYA programme is a five-year, CAD 17 million programme which focuses on changing harmful practices and attitudes that contribute to violence against women and girls within targeted households and communities. Specific target groups include women from rural communities, Area C, East Jerusalem, as well as women from low income households, while men and boys will also benefit from the programme by engaging in various outreach and awareness raising activities.

Read more [here](#).



Women's Representation

Who cares about older women's work?

Age International, UK in its 2018 briefing paper seeks to raise awareness of the critical but invisible work that older women do - paid and unpaid - in developing country contexts. Because #OlderWomenMatter

Key recommendations include to raise awareness and help create policy to serve the specific health needs of older women who work in developing countries; ensure that the UK Government's implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Target 5.4 on unpaid care carefully recognises older women's unpaid care and domestic work and provides older women with necessary support; and acknowledge and include data on older women and men as part of UK Government's reporting to Parliament and the UN on its implementation of the SDGs.

Read more [here](#).

Historic leap in Tunisia: Women make up 47 per cent of local government

Following the May 2018 elections, and seven years after the 2011 Revolution and four years after the adoption of the Constitution, women now make up 47 per cent of the local council positions in Tunisia. This dramatic increase in women members is the result of a 2016 electoral law that includes the principles of parity and alternation between men and women on candidate lists for all elections.

This increasing number of women representation is the result of UN Women capacity developments efforts prior to the 2018 elections. UN Women and its civil society partners conducted capacity building sessions and supported the updating of the gender-sensitive election observation manual. UN Women also provided capacity building to 75 election observers who were trained on the importance of women's participation in elections and how to observe gender-related issues during the voting stages. This support invigorated a participatory democracy and political culture within women and youth and offers an opportunity to impact territorial policies in Tunisia.

UN Women will continue supporting the councils to integrate gender concerns into their communal development plans that foster good governance and women's leadership.

Tunisia is one of the few countries in the world to establish the principle and practice of equal representation of men and women across candidate lists (horizontal parity – where women should head 50 per cent of candidate lists), as well as down the candidate lists (vertical parity – alternating men and women through the list), in its electoral law. While gender parity has been achieved regarding the municipal lists, according to the High Authority for Independent Elections, more work is needed to support horizontal parity, since women only made up 29.6 per cent of positions at the head of party lists.

Tunisia will hold its parliamentary and presidential elections in 2019. Read more [here](#).



Just 24 female CEOs lead the companies on the 2018 Fortune 500—fewer than last year

Of the CEOs who lead the companies that make up the 2018 Fortune 500 list, rolled out in May 2018, just 24 are women. That number is down 25 percent from last year's record-breaking 32 female CEOs, the highest share of women since the Fortune's first 500 list in 1955. While women were at the helm of 6.4 percent of the companies on 2017's list, that number is now down to 4.8 percent.

The biggest reason for this drop, according to Fortune, is that more than a third of Fortune 500 female CEOs resigned in the past year. Although the Fortune 500 list has been released annually for the last 63 years, it wasn't until 1998 that Fortune began noting executives' gender. Since then, the magazine noted that the percentage of female CEOs has generally increased, with several dips after 2011. Below, you can see the percentage of women who made up each year's Fortune 500 list since 1995 through today.

And as The Wall Street Journal recently found, women CEOs still get paid a fraction of what their male counterparts earn. Former Mattel CEO Georgiadis was the highest-paid female CEO of 2017, with compensation totaling \$31.3 million. Still, that's one-third of what the highest-paid male CEO, Broadcom's Hock Tan, made in 2017 (\$103.2 million.)

Read more [here](#).

Fortune 500 companies appointed a record percentage of women to their boards last year

It wasn't exactly gender parity, but women accounted for 38.3% of all newly named directors at Fortune 500 companies in 2017, according to executive-search firm Heidrick & Struggles.

Despite the sharp increase in women's appointments in 2017, Fortune 500 boards remain a long way from gender parity. Heidrick & Struggles predicts we won't see an even split in appointments for men and women until 2025, based on an extrapolation of the data using a three-year trailing average method. And that's just for new directors. The portion of all Fortune 500 company board seats held by women in 2017 was just 22.2%, an increase of only 1.2 percentage points from the previous year.

The slow progress in the gender composition of boards overall suggests that most of the newly appointed female directors were replacing other women who had vacated their board seats. It also suggests that equal representation of women on boards of the world's biggest companies remains many more years away.

Read more [here](#).

Catalyst reveals that the Percentage of Women in Senior Roles Is Declining Globally

Catalyst Women in Management highlights global findings on women's representation. It shows that women hold under a quarter (24%) of senior roles across the world in 2018, a decrease from 25% in 2017.²

- However in 2018, 75% of businesses have at least one woman in senior management, compared to 66% in 2017.³
- On the other hand, one quarter (25%) of global businesses have *no* women in senior management roles.⁴

The industries most lacking women among hires for leadership roles in 2017 include manufacturing, energy and mining, software and IT services, finance, real estate, corporate services, and legal.⁵

The "Glass Ceiling" Is Still an Invisible Barrier Preventing Women from Reaching the Top ⁶ Men may still be viewed as default business leaders, affirming the "think manager, think male" mindset.⁷

- Senior managers often apply gender stereotypes to leadership—women "take care," men "take charge."⁸

In some instances, women face the "glass cliff," in which they are appointed to leadership positions in times of economic crisis, limiting their chances of success.⁹

In Australia, Men Dominate Senior Levels of Management¹⁰

In 2016–2017, women represented just over a third (38.4%) of all managers in Australia.¹¹

Nearly Half of Indian Women Leave the Workforce Between Junior and Middle Management Levels¹⁵ In 2018, women hold only 20% of all senior roles in India.¹⁶

Read more [here](#).

Spain's new socialist government is mostly made up of women

Spain's new cabinet announced in June 2018 - a minority government maybe, but one which will be run mostly by women. Eleven out of the seventeen ministers are women, making it the only female dominated cabinet in Europe - and possibly the world.

New socialist President Pedro Sánchez said the ministers were chosen to "reflect Spanish society." "We know that women today in the Spanish government have portfolios of weight, a lot of weight, and it seems very important to us that society be reflected in its Government," said government spokeswoman Isabel Celaá.

Read more [here](#).

In your Interest

Still looking for room at the top: Ten years of research on women in the workplace

According to an article in McKinsey Quarterly, March 2018, there remains an uncomfortable truth- while progress has occurred in the intervening years for increasing women's role in the workplace, it remains too slow. In 2017, on average, women accounted for 17 percent of corporate-board members and 12 percent of executive-committee members in the top 50 listed G-20 companies). Even more worrying, perhaps, is that many people are content with the status quo. According to the Women in the Workplace 2017 study, conducted with LeanIn.Org and one of the largest of its kind, almost 50 percent of men think that it is sufficient when just one in ten senior leaders in their company is a woman. One-third of women agree.

Despite this slow progress, the understanding of the challenge has forged ahead. Of the lessons learned, at the top of the list must surely be how hard the problem is to crack. To help concentrate efforts and encourage the many companies striving to make progress on diversity, this article summarizes what our decade of research has taught us about the case for change, the barriers that prevent it, and the solutions required for achieving it.

McKinsey 2018 Delivering through diversity study of more than 1,000 companies in 12 countries found a correlation between diversity at the executive level and not just profitability but also value creation. Those companies in the top quartile for gender diversity were 27 percent more likely to outperform their national industry average in terms of economic profit—a measure of a company's ability to create value exceeding its capital cost—than were bottom-quartile companies (Exhibit 2). There was also a penalty for lack of diversity more broadly. Companies in the bottom quartile on both gender and ethnic diversity were least likely to record higher profits than the national industry average.

If women equally participated in the global economy, they could generate additional GDP worth \$28 trillion by 2025. That amount is roughly equivalent to the size of the Chinese and US economies combined.

Not just a glass ceiling. Female representation, we have found, is not just a problem at the top. It remains an issue at each stage of the corporate pipeline, with the odds stacked particularly highly against Asian, black, and Latina women, as well as other women of color.

Read more [here](#).

Recommended Reading

Pressing for progress: women's rights and gender equality in 2018

This report published in July 2018 by Equality and Human Rights Commission, UK is the biggest ever assessment of the state of women's rights in Great Britain in 2018. It assesses the progress on women's rights since 2013 and makes recommendations to the UK and Welsh governments, in areas including:

- enhancing the status of international human rights in domestic law
- gender-based violence, harassment and abuse
- participation in political and civic life
- access to civil justice
- human trafficking and modern slavery
- detention and asylum
- health, living standards and social security
- work and education

The report published in July 2018 has been submitted to the United Nations as part of the work on monitoring the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the international human rights treaty that focuses specifically on equality between women and men in all areas of life.

Read more [here](#).

Women's Rights and Trade – Time for a radical shift



In this publication, CONCORD and WIDE+ call for and explain why a fundamental shift is needed towards a EU trade policy which should give as much importance to human rights and environmental standards as to economic indicators.

Concord is the European NGO Confederation CONCORD, the European Confederation for for Relief and Development that represents 2.600 NGOs in Europe, with WIDE+ reflect on the recent policy developments to promote women's rights in EU's trade policies. WIDE is a European feminist network of women activists, gender experts, and women rights organisations.

It is a step forwards that the European Commission has committed to a chapter or provisions on gender in the upcoming (modernization of the) trade agreement with Chile that is being negotiated and when finalized would serve as a model for other negotiations. This position paper concludes that it is not a sufficient measure to include gender articles that are most likely non-binding: much more needs to happen to make trade agreements respect women's human rights.

Read more [here](#).

World Employment Social Outlook Trends for Women 2018

An ILO Global Snapshot

Gender gaps in labour force participation remain wide reports ILO's latest study. This "global snapshot" released by ILO looks at the progress (or lack thereof) made during the past decade and assesses women's labour market prospects by examining the gaps between men and women according to a selection of ILO statistical indicators, namely labour force participation, unemployment, informal employment and working poverty. It shows that not only are women less likely than men to participate in the labour force, but when they do participate, they are also more likely to be unemployed and more likely to be in jobs that fall outside the scope of labour legislation, social security regulations and relevant collective agreements.

These findings complement ILO's work on women's labour market conditions and wages 1 by providing an up-to-date quantitative assessment of the extent and depth of women's disadvantages and how these are likely to evolve globally in the near future. Gender disparities in the selected labour market indicators presented here capture only partially the complexity of both the labour market challenges faced by women and the improvements that women have achieved thanks to conducive conditions in the specific economic and institutional context. In its wider approach to understanding the issues surrounding women and work, the ILO routinely identifies many structural and cultural factors, ranging from occupational and sectoral sex segregation to workplace discrimination and gender stereotyping. Such a wide-ranging approach is essential for providing a more comprehensive picture of gender inequalities in the labour market, including variation in gender disadvantage by region, socio-economic class, ethnicity and age, among other factors. The brief appraisal offered in this global snapshot is designed to focus on key patterns of progress and repression. Where challenges and obstacles to women's equal participation persist, societies will be less able to develop pathways for economic growth combined with social development. Closing gender gaps in the world of work thus remain some of the most pressing labour market and social challenges facing the global community today.

Read more [here](#).



Is the Last Mile the Longest? Economic Gains from Gender Equality in Nordic Countries

Is the Last Mile the Longest? Economic Gains from Gender Equality in Nordic Countries analyses the impact of policies introduced by Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden to ensure both women and men can participate fully in the labour market.

These Nordic countries, have been leaders in the development of modern family and gender policy,

and the explicit promotion of gender equality at home, at work, and in public life. Today, on many measures, they boast some of the most gender-equal labour markets in the OECD.

This report shows that improvements in gender equality have contributed considerably to economic growth in the Nordic countries. Increases in female employment alone are estimated to account for anywhere between roughly 0.05 and 0.40 percentage points to average annual GDP per capita growth – equivalent to 3 to 20% of total GDP per capita growth over the past 50 years or so, depending on the country.

It finds that current GDP per capita in the region would be lower by between USD 1,500 in Finland and USD 9,000 in Norway if female employment rates had remained at levels of the mid-1960s. Gains in Finland were smallest as many women were already in paid work at that time.

Over the past decades, the Nordic countries have increasingly invested in subsidised childcare, care for the elderly and paid parental leave for both mothers and fathers. Employers and unions have also made it possible for workers to opt for more flexible and family-friendly working hours.

This package of measures has helped reduce gender gaps in employment so they are now the smallest in the OECD, at about 4 percentage points compared to the OECD average of 12 percentage points. Mothers are more likely to be in full-time jobs than elsewhere, and couples tend to share paid and unpaid work more equally than in most other OECD countries. But the last mile may well prove to be the longest one. To make further progress, a continued assessment of the effectiveness of existing public policies and workplace practices is needed.

Read more [here](#).



Is the Last Mile the Longest?
Economic Gains from Gender
Equality in Nordic Countries



❖ **OECD Updated Gender Portal Website**

The OECD Gender Data Portal includes selected indicators shedding light on gender inequalities in education, employment, entrepreneurship, governance, health and development, showing how far we are from achieving gender equality and where actions are most needed.

Browse the [Gender Data Portal](#).

❖ **Employment opportunities in UN Women**

You can find a monthly list of vacancy announcements on this [link](#).

Network – The UN Women Newsletter

Read Network online [here](#).

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Design and layout: UN System Coordination Division, UN Women, New York

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