

# Network

UN Women's Newsletter: **Volume No. 18, Issue 3** Sep - Dec 2017

## *Interview* with

*Lakshmi Puri*, Assistant Secretary General and Deputy Executive Director, Division for Inter-Governmental Relations and Strategic Partnerships, UN Women



Lakshmi Puri has become synonymous with the cause of gender equality and women's empowerment through her work with UN Women, a dynamic, young entity in the United Nations. She has decades of leadership experience at the United Nations and has served as a senior Indian diplomat and Ambassador. She is the Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and Deputy Executive Director of UN Women, leading the Bureau for Intergovernmental Support, UN System Coordination and Strategic Partnerships, which she joined soon after its inception in 2011.

As a member of the senior leadership team, Ms. Puri has been a force in elevating UN Women's global prominence in its first few years. She has actively contributed to its consolidation and institutional strengthening. Ms. Puri was instrumental in helping UN Women ink its first Strategic Plan (2011-2013) and subsequent Plans, including its latest SDG aligned 2018- 2021 one.

During the last seven years, Ms. Puri has led UN Women's engagement in all major benchmarking intergovernmental processes and engendered their outcomes. According to her this has ensured that "gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) standards and norms are visibly prioritized and systematically mainstreamed in all major missions of the United Nations - sustainable development, human rights, peace and security, humanitarian response and resilience building and is in the DNA of all new sunrise missions."

Ms. Puri has enabled UN Women to give a boost to the 70-year-old Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) - the premier global intergovernmental and civil society forum for GEWE specific norm setting, policy making, monitoring and accountability building. She imparted it renewed significance, unprecedented dynamism and political and strategic importance.

She also spearheaded efforts to build UN Women's strategic partnerships, particularly with civil society and women's organizations, and pioneered institutional arrangements through the first ever CSAGs. Further, she worked with CSOs in development, human rights, peace and security, environment and humanitarian response to get them to embrace the GEWE agenda.

With her strong background and intellectual leadership in policy analysis and 'ahead of the curve thinking' in institutions like UNCTAD, she has emphasized and fostered UN Women's evolving role as a centre for policy excellence and a knowledge hub on GEWE in all aspects and sectors. She has wielded much influence in and on behalf of this entity. Ms. Puri is a passionate and authoritative voice, an expert and global leader on women's empowerment who has accomplished really progressive feats during her time with the United Nations. Strongly promoting gender-responsive implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals—a major focus of the United Nations, Ms. Puri proves that women can and have extraordinary influence in the political, governmental and leadership spheres.

Ms. Puri joined the United Nations in 2002 after a distinguished 28-year career with the Indian Foreign Service. She served as Permanent Secretary of the Government of India and held various posts in political and economic policy-making and bilateral and multilateral diplomacy. Prior to joining UN Women, she served as Deputy Secretary-General a.i and Director at the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and as Director in the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Islands Developing States (UNOHRLLS). Ms. Puri has also had the unique distinction of engaging with every aspect of the United Nations Agenda and its multiple entities since 1981.

The NETWORK team sat down with Ms. Puri to talk with her as she gets ready to leave the entity she served with strength and dedication for seven years and moves on to relocate to her homeland, India in January. We are sad to see her go but wish her all the success in her life ahead. Twenty years since the UN announced a major effort to reduce global gender inequality, women and girls today are far from getting equal treatment and participation in society, economy and politics while violence against



females is a global pandemic. We talk with Ms. Puri on these issues and what has been her role in addressing these challenges to gender equality and women's empowerment.

*Q. We speak today as you will be parting ways with UN Women, after completing almost seven years at the helm of the Bureau for Intergovernmental Support, UN System Coordination and Strategic Partnerships. Can you highlight how you steered the nascent UN entity to adding value and delivering on gender equality and empowerment of women? Could you describe the related processes that have been established and delivered on? Has UN Women chartered any new breakthroughs against sticky floors and glass ceilings? What has been the key transformation towards GEWE during your tenure at UN Women?*

I have been privileged to be for almost 7 years at the leadership of UN Women, the only 21st century UN entity with the universal mandate to promote and realize the most transformative and the highest potential, project for humanity.

As UN Women, we have made 'herstory.' in so many ways in building up this young, dynamic and agile institution ground up. In particular for it to be a force in intergovernmental standard-setting and political commitment and that too in the face of politically challenged and culturally contested environment.

In building up UN Women, I made sure that we used and reinvented ways to advocate and mobilize in relation to existing intergovernmental and interagency fora on Gender Equality - CSW and the CEB, as well as the ECOSOC, UNGA and the UNSC. This ensured maximum effect to deepen and strengthen GEWE norms, policies and commitments. We witnessed the remarkable role that CSW-57 played in agreeing on a veritable Global Plan of Implementation on EAW; CSW-58 on creating the basis for the emerging post 2015 Agenda - to comprehensively address and prioritize GEWE; CSW-59 to commit to the full, effective and accelerated implementation of Beijing Platform for Action; CSW-60 on a roadmap for the gender responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and CSW-61 on a global plan of action for Women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work.

Overall, from CSW-57 to CSW-61, the CSW outcomes and the commission itself have been historic in so many ways. These have contributed to consolidate the extraordinary gains, including the adoption of the SDGs and their far-reaching aspiration for gender equality and prosperity for all people on this planet. Consistently it has provided concrete guidance on how to translate the commitments into concrete steps and measures towards realizing 'Planet 50-50' by 2030.

What has been a groundbreaking achievement for UN Women is how we managed to ensure that GEWE standards and norms are visibly prioritized and systematically mainstreamed and their implementation monitored and held to account in all epic intergovernmental undertakings of the international community during this period. This resulted in the adoption by Member States and the international community of what is effectively a transformative and multifaceted Gender Equality Compact among and

between Member States and stakeholders. This includes the gender-responsive outcomes of Rio+20 Conference, the Third United Nations Conference on Financing for Development, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the New Urban Agenda, Climate Change and Environment related Conferences, UNGAS on HIV and Aids, UNGASS on Drugs, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous people, the LDC and SIDS related conferences and programs of Action and Reviews, Humanitarian Action and Disaster Risk Reduction, preventing and countering violent extremism and terrorism, Women Peace and Security Agenda in the United Nations Security Council, Disarmament, WSIS plus 10 and Conferences on Internet Governance and the Digital future, evolving Global Compacts on Migration and Refugees.

I am particularly proud of the way UN Women played a vital role in conceptualizing, advocating and partnership building for securing a dedicated, transformative, comprehensive SDG-5 on achieving --not just promoting-- gender equality and empowering all women and girls with meaningful targets. And not only that GEWE is reflected in 11 other SDGs and is to be systematically mainstreamed in the implementation of Agenda 2030 but there is a commitment to significantly increase investment to close the gender gap.

Can you imagine that we have taken the GEWE project out of its social impact only pigeon hole and its now seen as a Sustainable Development Goal and as an essential precondition and beneficiary of Sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental dimensions?

Equally what we secured institutionally and politically in the UNSC and through the UN's three Peace and Security Reviews for the Women, Peace and Security Agenda has been remarkable and you just have to take a before and after picture to see the change we brought about normatively and in the United Nations. Of course, all these big normative wins could remain ink on paper and may be easily forgotten, challenged or reversed and vulnerable to geopolitical changes and pushback. That is why we can't be complacent and as I leave I urge all to continue to reinforce, recommit and effectively implement the 'many splendored Gender Equality Compact we have so painstakingly secured.

***Q. How would you explain UN Women's convening power and its successful advocating from the bottom to the highest political level?***

An important win has been the way we made UN Women a convening force par excellence! We were able to not only get women's affairs ministers and GEWE civil society to be better positioned in the global and regional UN System universes of discourse and decision making but also engaged foreign, finance, urban affairs, development cooperation and economic affairs and other key ministers in GEWE policy making platforms. We made '*herstory*' when UN Women co-convened the first ever global Summit on Gender Equality in the history of the world with over 65 Heads of State and government attending and making commitments. This was done along with private sector and civil society summits raising the ownership and accountability on GEWE to the highest decision-making levels.

This convening power needs to be continued by the United Nations as we head towards convening a Global Implementation Conference on the Gender Equality Compact in 2020!

Another achievement of UN Women to which I was able to contribute in good measure has been evidence based and transformative and convincing advocacy. Our signature campaigns, including Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step it Up for Gender Equality, the *HeForShe* solidarity movement for gender equality, UN Secretary-General's UNiTE to End Violence against Women and our Equal Pay campaign, to name a few, have proven to be impactful in provoking outrage against gender injustice, change gender stereotypes and mindsets and challenge harmful and negative social and cultural norms as well as in ensuring the adoption of a dedicated SDG-5.

Our strategic partnerships with private sector, CSOs, Youth, faith, men and boys as game changers have been fruitful. We have also used celebrity influence to great effect. We have popularized the cause of GEWE, taken it to the people and brought people - men and women, boys and girls - into the solidarity movement for gender equality, women's empowerment and human rights. Of course, the task is enormous and patriarchy in society, economy and politics so deeply entrenched that we need to scale up and invest more in this most critical aspect of changing and winning hearts and minds for women's rights.

I believe that UN Women is stronger when we get the UN system coherently thinking, planning and delivering as one for GEWE at all levels - global, regional, national and local "and in role modeling on gender parity and the equal status of women. I have convened and engaged in myriad interagency processes - formal and informal to advance this objective - from IANWGE, HLCP, CEB and now with UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and his determination to have the United Nations be in the forefront of the global movement for GEWE - in the Deputies and Executive Committees he has set up for strategic planning and crisis response. I have also overseen the early adoption and implementation of the first UN system-wide action plan (UN-SWAP) aimed at forging accountability for gender equality and women's empowerment within the UN system bringing together 65 entities of the United Nations system. I have also pushed forward the second-generation SDG aligned SWAP and its implementation including in the field. Our capacity to help strengthen gender mainstreaming by governments, public and private sector institutions and enterprises is a significant area of work I have encouraged.

***Q. Despite advancement in gender parity at some levels across the United Nations, women's representation at higher echelons remains much below the desired 50/50 level. In your opinion, why are women still under-represented in decision-making positions within the UN system and elsewhere? What***

*changes would you like to see to support the transition of more women in leadership roles?*


While women are still far from having equal participation in decision-making and challenges remain to the achievement of a 50/50 culture, there is some encouraging progress towards gender parity throughout the UN System, though it is not uniform, and insufficiently rapid. I believe that the change we need will not happen without a cultural shift — in the world and our United Nations. It is essential that women everywhere should be recognized as equal and promoted on that basis. Equality is not a statistic, it is a mindset.

Progress to achieve the equal representation of women across levels and everywhere in the UN system requires a multi-pronged approach based on evidence and analysis. The equal representation of women at all levels is first attained through the selection, appointment and advancement of women. It is then facilitated by an organizational culture that is conducive to and supportive of their success. And, finally, it is sustained by ensuring systematic and meaningful accountability. We have faced gaps in meeting these goals and this has slowed the level of progress to attain parity by target dates in the past.

Moving forward I believe in order to measure and advance gender equality and the empowerment of women, it is not just about hitting the numbers. It is about modernizing the organization and shifting its institutional culture so that the United Nations can access and capitalize on its full potential. Efforts to accelerate progress must also be reexamined through the lens of leadership and organizational culture, prerequisites to sustained equality in all its aspects, including the representation of women. Regardless of how many systems and policies are put into place, enacting an organizational cultural shift that enables the meaningful representation of women is predicated on effective leadership. Along with this comes recognition of the need for proactive strategies to develop leaders with the skills, capacity and awareness to meet the strategic objectives of gender mainstreaming. We need to focus on bolder leadership and heads of entities to prioritize action in this regard; more rigorous implementation of existing policies by senior managers; special measures; enhanced monitoring and accountability; career and capacity development; and harmonization of gender-related policies. An enabling environment is vital to attracting, advancing and retaining qualified women in the United Nations and requires gender-sensitive policies and practices on staff selection, work-life balance and career development.

In order to make these goals a reality, the Secretary-General developed the System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity and convened in January 2017 the Task Force on Gender Parity and Equality in the United Nations System, comprising almost 40 United





Nations entities to achieve parity across the system, which developed a road map structured around targets and accountability, special measures, field and mission settings, senior appointments and an enabling environment. The strategy aims to strengthen the organization's working environment by proposing programmes on eliminating unconscious bias, flexible work arrangements, revised parental leave policies, and improved workplace and accommodation standards in non-family duty stations.


Institutional practices that strengthen leadership capacity for and through an inclusive and enabling organizational culture may contribute to a more effective strategy to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women across the UN system. The landmark United Nations Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP), preparing for its second phase of development under the leadership of UN Women, provides a unified accountability framework through which these practices can be promulgated.

Overall, I want to stress that achieving gender parity is a priority to which we should all commit not only for the sake of gender justice being demonstrated by the UN in its own house but also to reflect and change the world to reap the Power of Parity! The Power of Parity study of McKinsey with which we were associated says how much the world economy will gain -28 trillion in GDP but equally the UN must contribute to this and be in the forefront of exercising the power of Parity. UN Women must creatively support the achievement of the gender parity goal of the United Nations so that it can be a true role model for the world.

***Q. As you just described UN Women has come a long way in its first seven years. How do you see it growing forward? Especially in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals? Can we achieve global gender equality by 2030?***

UN Women has shown that it can play a vital role in realizing the gender equality vision which is central to a world order of democracy, peace, justice and equality. The UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has given this highest priority in his vision of reinventing the UN - from peace diplomacy which can "prevent war and sustain peace" to sustainable development as the only possible answer to the mighty discontents of inequality and globalization, from human rights upfront to UN system reform and becoming a "modern organization that is fit for the future", from gaining credibility and authority to striking defining strategic partnerships with all stakeholders. In this context, UN Women must play our mandated central role as the engine for the UN to be "at the forefront of the global movement towards gender equality".

The SDGs implementation mission of the UN along with the projected reform provides UN Women an opportunity to drive a gender-responsive implementation of Agenda 2030. Drawing upon the CSW Agreed Conclusions I have identified the ten ***Is*** of such



implementation, including: the / for Inspiration from SDGs including SDG 5; / for integration of GEWE perspectives in an all of government and all of society approach; / for indivisibility of GEWE from Agenda 2030; / for implementation through gender-responsive laws, policies and special measures; the / of institutions strengthened and being made gender responsive; the / for Investment - both targeted and mainstreamed-in GEWE Project , the / for Inclusion of all stakeholders and especially the women's movement in the gender-responsive SDGs implementation and addressing the special needs of those most left behind; the / for Information - to drive a value chain of a gender data and statistics revolution, evidence based policy making and implementation, monitoring and accountability; the / for Innovation - making innovation, ICT and technology work for gender-responsive transformation; and last but not least the / for Impact - making sure that this translates into actual impact and change in the daily realities of the 3.5 billion women and girls.

***Q. Despite the landmark Beijing Declaration over twenty years ago many barriers continue to exist today for achieving gender equality. What makes you think you can make the progress that is necessary?***

UN Women is a global institutional advocate, gender equality champion and convener of all stakeholders and as the first ever integrated entity with a comprehensive and powerful triple mandate to promote gender equality and to transform this situation. We cannot claim seven years later that we have made all this history - alas not - nor have we achieved the transformation towards substantive gender equality that we seek and is necessary. We have not yet been able to defeat all the forces of misogyny and overcome the myriad structural barriers to gender equality. However, we have been instrumental in making a considerable difference in achieving unprecedented progress on these fronts.

Our achievements over the last years is what makes me believe that UN Women is ready to be the conscience keeper vis-à-vis governments on the gender equality and women's empowerment related international standards and norms. This is significant as we are at a time when the whole human rights and women's rights agenda is both coming into focus while also being under stress. We need to continue to deepen and widen the impact, but also by being agile innovators. We must continue to drive achievements in every area of our functioning together as one UN Women but also as one UN, so we can reach the destination of Planet 50/50 in telescoped time and no later than 2030.

Meanwhile our next milestone is 2020 when we seek to convene a 5th World Conference on Women at Summit level to assure ourselves and the 3.5 billion women and girls that the world is indeed on the right track and that every law, every policy, every measure, every action taken, every social norm and cultural wave and every investment made by



all governments and stakeholders is rapidly bringing us closer to our achievement of SDG 5 - Gender Equality and the Empowerment of all Women and Girls everywhere.

*Q. Could you explain why women need developmental financing and how it can help the International community achieve the 2030 deadline for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). What is the role of the developed and developing world in promoting GEEW by 2030?*

There is an unconscionable underinvestment in the GEWE project -in some countries the funding gaps are as high as 90 per cent. I have called for and UN Women has launched a Call to Action on transformative financing for GEWE programs and projects. What does this mean? It means that everything that is done to achieve SDG-5 is funded fully and sustained away but the gender equality and women's empowerment components of other SDGs must be funded adequately as well. This means significantly increased funding in scale scope and quality from all sources - public, private, national / domestic / local and international ODA. Unless you invest significantly in addressing women's poverty, or girls and women's education or health or their access to WASH and Sustainable Energy, to sustainable infrastructure and cities, to food security and nutrition and to their rights in and contribution to just and peaceful societies we cannot get anywhere towards achieving any and all of the SDGs. Remember that of everyone dollar invested in a woman, 90 cents goes into family welfare so returns on investment are exponential.

We have a commitment from all countries developed and developing to close the chronic and huge gender resource gap and we need now to see that in action. As the preeminent global institution for GEWE, we need a major leap in member states investment in UN Women. Just as I am leaving I have been able to see the fruits of our advocacy to have an increased allocation from the assessed contribution of the UN realized. We need to secure more of what I call such platinum resources. Moreover, our champions - developed and developing countries need to prioritize and front load their contribution of core or unearmarked resources - "the golden resources" while they must continue to support and increase the non-core or high quality earmarked program resources. We also need to fund women's organizations and young women's organizations, cooperatives, labour unions, entrepreneurial associations and self-help groups specially from the South.

### *Role of developed and developing countries*

More than ever before there is recognition by all that GEWE is a universal agenda - that it is not about the North proselytizing the South. Moreover, as the Beijing plus 20 Review showed no country has achieved perfection in GEWE and that the progress - whether on ERAW and harmful practices, economic and social empowerment, gender parity in political and public life and private sector, universal access to SRHR,

disproportionate burden of unpaid care and domestic work and discriminatory laws and practices - there is much every country needs to do more, urgently and with the full deployment of necessary resources.

Since GEWE is a multi-sectoral project, the gender-responsive implementation of SDGs should provide an ideal platform for developed and developing countries in special situations LDCs and SIDS for example to move faster towards GEWE achievement.

Coming from India and having a developing country perspective enabled me to get the G77 and developing countries to embrace and own the core of the GEWE Agenda as a universal value rather than viewing it as a Western socio - cultural - political ideal imposed on the rest! For example, we worked to support the G77 Summit Declaration in Bolivia highlight this prioritization for the first time in its 50-year history and it was the LDCs and the G77 that advocated for the SDG-5 in Agenda 2030 negotiations.

***Q. What have been your life lessons on working with the United Nations.***

Life lessons I have learnt working with the UN are:

- Believe in the power of ideas to change the world for some day they will take seed and sprout into life - patience and tenacity, don't give way to cynicism, despair and inaction.
- The world - every family, community, society and country needs the values that the UN stands for and its role as a multilateral hub and clearing house of solutions to the most intractable of problems of humankind, and as an advocate and arbiter of global public goods and their governance is indispensable. You would need to invent the UN even now if it did not exist.
- The causes of human rights, equality, development, peace and justice that the UN promotes and the humanitarian support it provides are worth dedicating your life to and though they may seem like missions impossible and missions eternally eluding us in time and scope, they are missions achievable and we must keep faith.

It's important for the UN to fulfill its universal role - reach people on the ground - those proximate and evolved and those farthest and in greatest need and bring them to the UN fold. So that everyone becomes an Ambassador for the UN and a practitioner of its values.

***Q. You have been a success story despite a world that is still to accept gender equality as a norm. What would you say is a key element to your success? How have you managed to stay so strong?***

I have had my struggles as other women have had to succeed both in the Indian diplomatic Service and in the UN. I have faced some glass ceilings and walls myself and broken some along the way. The secret is not to ever be put down with what did not

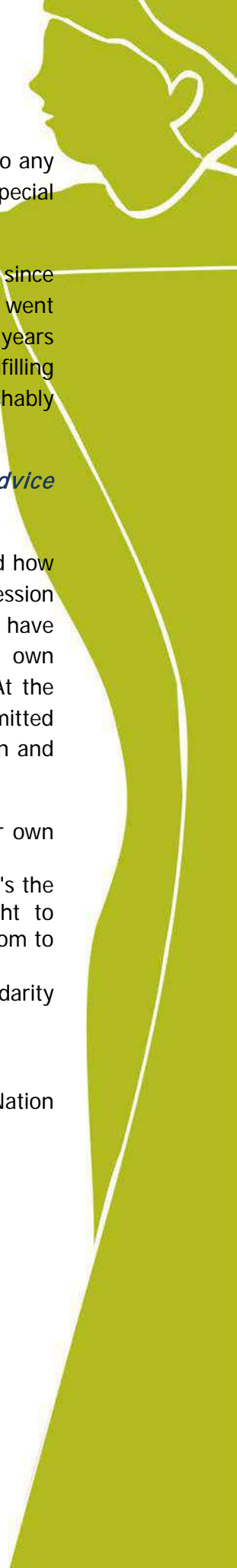
work out but make the best of what did work out and show how you are an asset to any organization irrespective of your gender and even because you possess the special talents and empathy that comes from being a woman.

I was fortunate to join the UN at a senior level 15 years ago and in my journey since then there were times when I felt that my gender either did not help or even went against me. I was fortunate to end my career at the UN with these seven glorious years of dedicated service to my favorite cause and purpose. It has been the most fulfilling and soul satisfying part of my career but one that seemed to merge indistinguishably into my life's purpose

***Q. You have been and are a role model to many women and girls. What advice might you have for them?***

Every woman and girl by virtue of who they are, what circumstances they face and how they claim their rights and stand up to injustice, discrimination, violence and oppression is a potential role model. My greatest inspirations have been women and girls I have met who stand up for themselves and their rights, who are feminists in their own contexts and successfully conquer these tough patriarchal spaces for feminism. At the same time, I am appalled at how so many women become fierce and committed transmitters of patriarchal values or are forced to succumb to it. So, I ask women and girls everywhere to:

- arise, awake and stop not till the Gender Equality Goal is achieved in your own families and communities, societies and countries;
- claim your equal rights to humanity - true essence of feminism - whether it's the right to life, education, health, food and nutrition, decent work, - right to freedom from fear and violence, from want, from discrimination and - freedom to freely decide on their sexual and reproductive lives and choices;
- support, join and lead GEWE organizations and movements and show solidarity for the cause;
- enlist men and boys in your lives to the values of feminism;
- fight gender stereotypes, negative social and cultural norms;
- get into positions of power and decision making and be the architects of a Nation 50/50; and
- support UN Women and its Planet 50/50 by 2030 mission.



## Letter from the Director, UN System Coordination Division

Dear Friends,

Warm greetings to our readers worldwide! We are here again with our third (autumn-winter) issue of the NETWORK newsletter 2017 to keep you posted on gender-focused news and highlights across the globe.



As you have just read above, this edition of our newsletter carries the interview of UN Women's Deputy Executive Director, who will be sadly leaving us in January 2018 as she makes her way forward to be in India, her homeland. But we are certain that her championship of gender equality will continue in all of life's expressions.

We begin with an update on the UN System-wide Action Plan for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN SWAP)-an accountability framework for GEEW launched in 2012 by UN Women, which shows that five years of implementation have produced remarkable progress in meeting or exceeding the UN-SWAP requirements, with compliance increasing by 35 percentage points, from 34% to nearly 70%.

Next we bring to you highlights from around the United Nations focusing on UN Women at the General Assembly Session in September 2017 wherein, through numerous events, UN Women drew attention to the importance of gender perspectives as critical to ensuring that women's unique needs and priorities are being addressed. This further included a spotlight on efforts to eliminate child marriage and the launch of a joint UN Women, ILO, OECD *Equal Pay International Coalition (EPIC)* to implement SDG 8.5 equal pay for men and women for work of equal value.

Our 'Around the World' segment carries stories on UN Women's Timeline for 2017 showcasing noteworthy moments for women's rights and gender equality including the launch of World Economic Forum's flagship *Global Gender Gap report 2017* which reports a widening gender gap, a first since it was launched in 2006, indicating a time lag of 100 years to close the overall gender gap and 170 years for gender parity in pay.

Other innovative trends include UN Women's partnership with Mattel inc, through television Serial *Thomas and Friends* aimed to bring gender equality to preeschoolers by incorporating 5 of the 17 SDGs in the storylines; a well as the first ever gender action plan to support gender responsive climate action adopted at the COP 23 meeting in Bonn, Germany in November 2017.

Key capitals worldwide saw events and calls for Eliminating Violence Against Women and Girls -VAWG: *Orange the World-Leave No One Behind* 16 Days of Activism (Nov 25-Dec 10) as part of the UN Secretary General's campaign *Unite to End VAWG*. These included high-level events in New York at the UN Headquarters, launched by an official commemoration with the attendance of UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka amongst other leaders. French President Emmanuel Macron also adorned an orange scarf in solidarity with the UNITE campaign during the 16 Days of Activism campaign.

This issue also puts the spotlight on technology and gender with the launch of the *Global Innovation Coalition for Change*, a 22-partner alliance and an industry-wide effort to make innovation and technology work better for women and girls.

This newsletter also shares Catalyst's brief on how to build better workplaces by taking ten listed actions and on how cyber security and cyber violence against women and girls is fast becoming a demanding issue to address with urgency.

Finally, as always, the newsletter in its last few pages includes information on publications including how long-term care of older people is the new global gender priority. We also have information on an interesting website to browse your interest on gender equality and empowerment of women.

We hope the range of news and updates we bring through this newsletter impassions you as practitioners and activists of gender equality and empowerment of women to continue to achieve innovative breakthroughs to make 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!

In solidarity,

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



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## Congratulations to

***Natalia Kanem*** of Panama on her appointment by the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres in October 2017 as Executive Director of United Nations Population Fund. Dr. Kanem was serving as Acting Executive Director of UNFPA, prior to which she was Deputy Executive Director (Programme), and earlier UNFPA Representative in the United Republic of Tanzania from 2014 to 2016. She brings to the position more than three decades of strategic leadership and management in the fields of medicine, public health, international peace and development, human rights and social justice.



Before joining the United Nations, Dr. Kanem was Senior Associate at the Lloyd Best Institute of the West Indies in Trinidad and Tobago from 2012 to 2013. From 2005 to 2011, she was the founding President of ELMA Philanthropies Services, a private institution focusing primarily on children and youth in Africa.

***Priscillah Mabelane*** on her appointment by British Petroleum (BP) as its first ever black female CEO. She is the first black woman in the history of the country's oil industry to

head an international company - marking a significant milestone in the organization and industry's transformation journey.

She officially took the helm of BP's South African (BPSA) division on September 1, 2017, exactly six years after joining the organization in 2011 as Chief Financial Officer (CFO).



## **UN SWAP: System-wide accountability framework for GEEW** *An Update*

### *Overall*

Since its inception in 2012, the UN-SWAP has guided the UN system in mainstreaming gender equality considerations in all institutional functions. Five years of implementation have produced remarkable progress in meeting or exceeding the UN-SWAP requirements, with compliance increasing by 35 percentage points, from 34% to nearly 70%. In 2016, UNAIDS was the first UN entity to meet or exceed all UN-SWAP indicators. While, overall, the UN system has not yet achieved all the UN-SWAP targets, several UN entities are close to full compliance. As of 2016, 11 entities - out of 65 - are lagging by 1 or 2 indicators to position themselves within reach of the UN-SWAP target.

Since indicators separating these 11 entities from full compliance belong to different UN-SWAP areas, their performance patterns are diverse. This suggests that a blanket approach to support performance targeting one specific indicator or UN-SWAP area is unlikely to generate collective progress by the group. Conversely, entity-specific, tailored interventions are needed. These, however, require additional efforts and resources from UN Women.

Further, UN-SWAP reporting shows that entities which approached the UN-SWAP framework comprehensively, understanding that indicators are interdependent, have shown better performance. The systematization of key drivers and lessons learnt is expected to guide UN entities not only in the last stretch of UN-SWAP implementation, but also, and most importantly, in planning their strategic approach to UN-SWAP 2.0. Key Drivers of progress were identified as gender equality policies, senior accountability mechanisms, gender focal points system, leadership and buy-in, gender training, systematic communication, partnerships, member states and donors.

The observations and conclusions on key drivers of progress and lessons learnt are the product of an extensive qualitative and quantitative analysis of the data generated by five years of reporting under the UN-SWAP.

## *UN-SWAP Performance Indicator 8: Resource tracking*

Under this Performance Indicator, UN entities are required to have a financial tracking system in place to quantify funds disbursed for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. Gender markers help UN entities to promote transparency, gender-responsive planning and budgeting, and to showcase results.

The number of entities complying with this indicator has more than doubled since 2012, evidencing UN entities' increasing efforts to implement gender marker systems. In 2016, 26 UN entities reported tracking resources for gender equality and women's empowerment, up from 10 in 2012. The active involvement of the Gender Marker Working Group of the Chief Executives Board's Finance and Budget Network (FBN) has been instrumental in achieving this success, fostering collaboration between gender focal points and budget officers to bridge technical gaps and providing guidance to design entity-specific solutions. Despite these advances, many UN entities have not developed online, centralized systems which enable them to track resources allocated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. Significantly, Umoja, the system used by the UN Secretariat, does not include a gender marker, which has resulted in the UN Secretariat performance trailing that of the rest of the system.

For the complete report on drivers of UN SWAP Progress and detailed info on UN SWAP framework and implementation please see: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/un-system-coordination/promoting-un-accountability>



# Around the United Nations

## UN Women at the UN General Assembly 2017

### *72nd session of the General Assembly*



Photo: UN Women/Ryan Brown

As global leaders came together for the **72nd session of the UN General Assembly** in New York, from 12 – 25 September, to debate on this year's theme "Focusing on people: striving for peace and a decent life for all on a sustainable planet", UN Women brought women's voices and priorities to the forefront calling for tangible actions to achieve gender equality. It stressed on why a gender perspective is critical to ensuring that women's unique needs and priorities are being addressed, and that their voices and experiences shape the solutions. It has now been two years since the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals, which place gender equality and women's empowerment at the heart of the 2030 Agenda.

Through a range of high-level events on women's economic empowerment, equal pay for work of equal value, ending violence against women and girls, engaging men and boys as gender equality champions, gender and climate change, and stepping up financing for gender equality, UN Women continued to highlight women's empowerment as a key driver of sustainable development to achieve the SDGs.

Events hosted or co-organized by UN Women include:

*Innovation, Technology and Entrepreneurship Industry Forum 2017: Partnerships to make innovation and technology work for women and girls*

*High-level Side Event on Accelerating Efforts to Eliminate Child Marriage in Africa by 2030*

*High-level Launch of the Equal Pay International Coalition (EPIC)*

*Leave No One Behind: Actions and Commitments for Women's Economic Empowerment*

*Launch event of the EU-UN joint initiative aimed at ending violence against women and girls (VAWG)*

*Global Business and Philanthropy Leaders' Forum for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment*

*Parental Leave, a key to prosperity – and other true stories*

See more at:

<http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/9/media-advisory-un-women-at-unga-72>

<http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/general-assembly>

## **Around the World**

### **Timeline: Gender Equality 2017: Year in Review**

From the rise of the #Metoo movement to the numerous new laws on violence against women this timeline produced by UN Women is a selection of selected noteworthy moments for women's rights and gender equality from around the world this year.



Launch in Cannes Lions Festival by UN Women in partnership with industry giants Unilever, Procter & Gamble, AT&T amongst others, of the UNSTEREOTYPE ALLIANCE, which seeks to counter sexism related portrayal and remarks. The alliance aims to globally eliminate harmful gender stereotypes from advertisements.

Access complete timeline at:

<http://interactive.unwomen.org/multimedia/timeline/yearinreview/2017/en/index.html>

## **Economic Empowerment Summit in Sharjah**

*UN Women Kicks off the joint programme to advance business opportunities for women, with UAE and Procter & Gamble*

UN Women Executive Director, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, was in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates, from 4 to 5 December, for the 2017 Women's Economic Empowerment Global Summit. The Summit, hosted by the NAMA Women Advancement Establishment, in partnership with UN Women, is themed "Women Excelling in the Economy." At the Summit, global and regional experts highlighted how companies, governments, international organizations and civil society can work together to increase the participation of women-owned enterprises in value chains and create decent jobs for women.

Executive Director celebrated the co-organizing of the Summit as the first joint activity under the partnership with NAMA. Following the Summit, UN Women is continuing to work with NAMA towards a transformative, results-driven international programme, "Stimulating Equal Opportunities for Women Entrepreneurs", with support from Procter & Gamble. The programme aims to create business opportunities for women and in collaboration with companies, governments and entrepreneurs, make value chains work for women, in UAE, South Africa and other countries.

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/12/announcer-ed-phumzile-at-the-economic-empowerment-summit-in-sharjah>

## **The Global Gender Gap Report 2017 World Economic Forum**

This year's edition of the World Economic Forum's annual flagship publication on global gender gaps dives into the dynamics of gender gaps across industry talent pools and occupations. The Global Gender Gap Report benchmarks 144 countries on their progress towards gender parity across four thematic dimensions: Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival, and Political Empowerment.

Moving Backwards: Ten Years of Progress on Global Gender Parity Stalls in 2017

*A bad year in a good decade:* The World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Report 2017 finds the parity gap across health, education, politics and the workplace widening for the first time since records began in 2006.

A decade of slow but steady progress on improving parity between the sexes came to a halt in 2017, with the global gender gap widening for the first time since the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report was first published in 2006.

At the current rate of progress, the global gender gap will take 100 years to close, compared to 83 last year. The workplace gender gap will now not be closed for 217 years, the report estimates. But with various studies linking gender parity to better economic performance, a number of countries are bucking the dismal global trend: over one-half of all 144 countries measured this year have seen their score improve in the past 12 months.

The most challenging gender gaps remain in the economic and health spheres. At the current rate of change, it will take another 217 years to close the economic gender gap. This represents a reversal of progress and is the lowest-value measured by the Index since 2008.



The Forum's Closing the Gender Gap project aims to accelerate the pace of change on gender parity through global dialogue and a national public-private collaboration model currently active in three countries with further expansion planned for 2018.

Women may have to wait as long as 170 years to establish parity with men when it comes to pay and employment opportunities. "The availability of deeper talent pools are disrupted by existing gender biases," the report states, "and the fields most affected, such as the care economy and the emerging technology sector, are losing out on the benefits of diversity. "This is a severe setback from last year when the WEF predicted parity will be achieved by 2133.

Progress towards parity in the economic opportunity index – the pillar that measures income and employment opportunities - has slowed dramatically around the world. The gap now stands at 59 per cent – about the level seen during the financial crisis in 2008.

Scandinavian countries remain the most gender-equal countries, with Iceland, Finland, Norway and Sweden taking the top four positions. Rwanda moved in front of Ireland to take the 5th position.

Access at: <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2017/>

## *EU, ILO and UN Women join forces to realize women migrant workers' rights and opportunities in the ASEAN region*

On 17 November, EU, ILO and UN Women launched a new programme "Safe and Fair: Realizing women migrant workers' rights and opportunities in the ASEAN region", as part of the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls. The programme's main objective is to achieve safe and fair labour migration for all women in the ASEAN region by addressing women migrant workers' vulnerabilities, enhancing their access to essential services and strengthening rights-based and gender-responsive approaches to violence against women and migration governance.

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/11/press-release--eu-ilo-and-un-women-to-realize-women-migrant-workers-rights-and-opportunities>

## **UN, Mattel announce venture to promote SDGs to children**

In October, the United Nations and Mattel, Inc. announced a collaboration to incorporate five of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into the storylines of the animated children's television series *Thomas & Friends*, to be aired in over 110 countries in 33 languages. In addition, the new series of Thomas & Friends™ will include the launch of a new African female character called Nia (pronounced "Nee-Yah") who will take a lead role in the new series.

The new Thomas & Friends™ content will first be seen in the new movie, "Thomas & Friends: Big World! Big Adventures! The Movie™", premiering in Summer 2018, while the new television series premieres in Fall 2018. In addition to movie and episodic content, Thomas & Friends™ will bring the SDGs to life through a variety of additional content, including bespoke short-form episodes highlighting SDG lessons, parent-targeted social media campaigns, children's activity sheets, and tips for parents on the lessons kids can learn from the SDGs.

Through these series young children will be informed about issues of discrimination, so that they learn to reject discrimination based on race, gender, sex, ethnicity or any other factor, because stereotypes that fuel these discriminations form early on. A series like Thomas & Friends, and characters like Nia, can open children to the ideas that others may look different or speak differently than them, but each individual must be equally valued.

By ending stereotypes early on, this initiative presents children with a clean slate and establishes new norms of equality. Attitudes and behavior change that drive inequality between genders across the world can only be addressed by ending discrimination and stereotypes. This inequality stands in the way of fulfilling the vision of the Sustainable Development Goals, and must be eliminated with urgency.

See more at: <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2017/10/united-nations-and-thomas-friends-announce-new-collaboration-to-promote-the-sustainable-development-goals-to-children/>

## Gender Pay Gap

Equal Pay International Coalition (EPIC) launched during GA session in September 2017



Led by ILO, UN Women and the OECD, the Equal Pay International Coalition (EPIC) is a multi-stakeholder coalition to contribute to the achievement of SDG target 8.5 focusing on equal pay between women and men for work of equal value.

One of the most persistent barriers to women's success at work and to economic growth, unequal pay, will be actively challenged by a new global partnership, the Equal Pay International Coalition (EPIC). With the launch of EPIC, the International Labour Organization (ILO), UN Women and the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) bring together a diverse set of actors at the global, regional and national levels to support governments, employers and workers and their organizations, and other stakeholders, to make equal pay between women and men for work of equal value a reality. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN Women, said "there is no justification for unequal pay for a woman when her job is of equal value to a man"

The innovative work of the newly created EPIC will contribute significantly to challenging some of the main assumptions reinforcing unequal pay, which were also highlighted by the High-Level Panel and the ILO-Gallup report which shows that one of the main challenges for women at work is unequal pay. Across all regions, countries and sectors, women are paid less than men. Across G20 and OECD countries median monthly earnings for women are on average 17 per cent below those of men and, elsewhere, the situation is not any better.

See more at: <http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/equality-and-discrimination/epic/lang-en/index.htm>

## First-ever Gender Action Plan to support gender-responsive climate action adopted

Member States at the annual Conference of the Parties (COP23), convened from 6 – 17 November 2017 in Bonn, Germany, adopted a new roadmap to incorporate gender equality and women's empowerment in climate change discourse and actions.

The creation of a "Gender Action Plan" was agreed upon by the Parties at last year's

conference (COP22), to bolster the role of women in climate action. Women commonly face higher risks in responding to natural hazards and greater burden from the impacts of climate change. Although they have intimate local knowledge and are managers of common natural resources, they are often left out of the picture when decisions on climate action are made.

The aim of the Gender Action Plan is to ensure that women can influence climate change decisions, and that women and men are represented equally in all aspects of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), as a way to increase its effectiveness.

The Gender Action Plan sets out, in five priority areas, the activities to help achieve this objective. These range from increasing knowledge and capacities of women and men through workshops and information exchanges, so that they can systematically integrate gender considerations in all areas of their work, to pursuing the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in national delegations, including women from grassroots organizations, local and indigenous peoples and women from Small Island Developing States.

Other priority areas refer to the need to increase integration of the gender considerations—such as addressing women’s specific vulnerability to natural disasters as well as understanding women’s role in agriculture and food production, and supporting women entrepreneurs in the energy sector—into the areas of work of all Parties to the Convention; and to increase climate-related financial resources that integrate gender priorities and reflect the needs of women and girls. Lastly, the Gender Action Plan seeks to improve tracking of the implementation of the gender-related decisions. UN Women provided technical support to the Parties throughout the process of developing the Gender Action Plan. The first report to evaluate the progress on the implementation of the Gender Action Plan will be presented in November 2019.

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/11/announcement-first-ever-gender-action-plan-on-climate-action-adopted>

## **UN Women and the World Bank unveil new data on gender gap in poverty analysis**

For the first time, UN Women and the World Bank have analyzed household survey data for 89 countries by sex, age, household composition and other relevant variables to better understand the profile of the poor. The findings aim to improve policy interventions to eradicate global poverty and meet the Sustainable Development Goals.

This collaborative effort by UN Women and the World Bank aims to address the gender gap in poverty analysis. In October, during a special event of the Economic and Financial Committee of the UN General Assembly, the organizations jointly unveiled the initial results of a global study on gender differences in poverty. The joint effort uses the



Global Micro Database (GMD), which is a collection of globally harmonized household survey data developed by the World Bank's Poverty and Equity Global Practice, covering 89 countries and representing an estimated 84 percent of the population in the developing world.

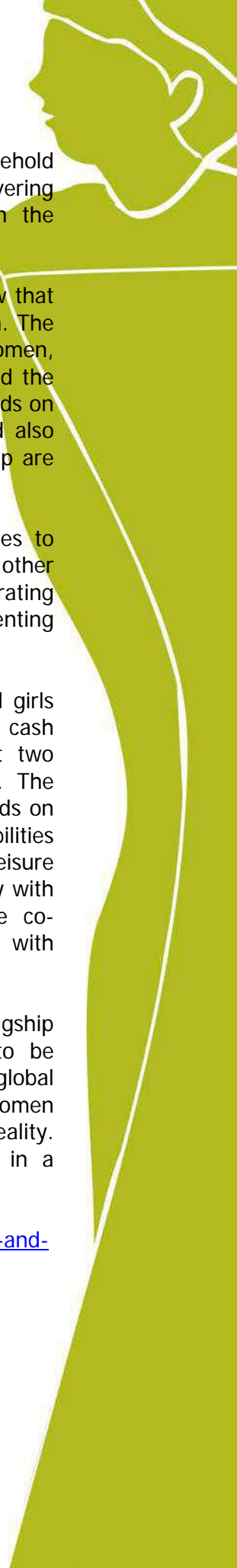
The results, presented by Senior Economist of the World Bank, Kinnon Scott, show that between the age of 20 and 34 years, women are more likely to be poor than men. The difference coincides with the peak productive and reproductive ages of men and women, and can be related to factors such as having young children in the household and the higher likelihood for women to leave the labour market in response to rising demands on the time they allocate to unpaid care work. Divorce, separation and widowhood also affect women more negatively than men. Divorced women in the 18-49 age group are more than twice as likely to be poor than divorced men in that same age group.

There is a pressing need for accessible, affordable and quality childcare services to enable both single parent families (predominantly single mothers), as well as other families with children, to combine their care responsibilities with income-generating work. It is simultaneously important that social protection transfers complementing women's earnings are designed and operated from a gender perspective.

This requires accounting for multiple forms of discrimination against women and girls when designing and implementing such programmes. For example, conditional cash transfer programmes which have proliferated in Latin America over the past two decades have decreased overall poverty but also increased feminized poverty. The conditionality attached to these programmes have in fact placed additional demands on women's time, hindered their access to formal labour markets, limited their possibilities to participate in education and training, and further deprived them of scarce leisure time. Moving forwards, governments need to reconsider the using of conditionality with a view to eliminate their negative impacts on gender equality, promote the co-responsibility of men in childcare, and ensure links of protection programs with complimentary public services including child care services.

The findings of the research will feed into the first issue of UN Women's new flagship report, Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to be launched in February 2018. The report will examine the progress achieved by the global community in turning the new development agenda into tangible progress for women and girls, and what is needed to bridge the remaining gaps between rhetoric and reality. The results of the UN Women- World Bank research will also be published in a forthcoming brief.

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/11/news-un-women-and-the-world-bank-unveil-new-data-analysis-on-women-and-poverty>





# Technology and Gender

## UN Women and technology leaders launch Global Innovation Coalition for Change -GICC

In September, UN Women launched the Global Innovation Coalition for Change (GICC) in New York City. This unique alliance with 22 partners from private sector, non-profit organizations and academic institutions will work over a two-year period to drive industry-wide action to make innovation and technology work better for young women and girls.

The Coalition has the support of a diverse set of global industry leaders, such as BHP Billiton, CISCO, Citi, Dell, Ericsson, Facebook, General Electric, HP Inc., Johnson & Johnson, JPMorgan Chase, LinkedIn, Pax World Management, PwC, SAP, Sony, South32 and Statoil, all working together to advance the gender equality agenda. The Coalition also includes academic institutions like MIT Solve and New York Academy of Sciences, as well as organizations like Amy Poehler's Smart Girls, Branson Centre for Entrepreneurship (South Africa) and Ellevest Network.

The global partnership will build market awareness of the potential for innovations that meet the needs of women through research and advocacy. The Coalition will also identify the key industry-specific barriers to women's and girls' advancement in innovation, technology and entrepreneurship; and work collaboratively to identify key actions to address these barriers and needs.

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/9/press-release-global-innovation-coalition-for-change-launch>

## Violence Against Women

### International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

#### *Orange the World, Leave No One Behind*

This year, UN Women and partners around the world marked the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence (25 November – 10 December) under the theme of "Leave No One Behind: End Violence against Women and Girls". A host of public events—from marches, exhibits and concerts to sporting events—were organized under the banner of the UN Secretary-General's campaign UNiTE to End Violence against Women by 2030, using the signature colour orange. As in previous years, iconic buildings and monuments were 'orange'd' to call for a violence-free future, including the parliaments in Bangladesh, Liberia, and Morocco, Rio's iconic Corcovado, the Palace of Fine Arts in Mexico City, Mexico, La Scala theatre in Milan, the City Hall in Bogota, the

National Theatre of Algiers, and Table Mountain in Cape Town, South Africa.

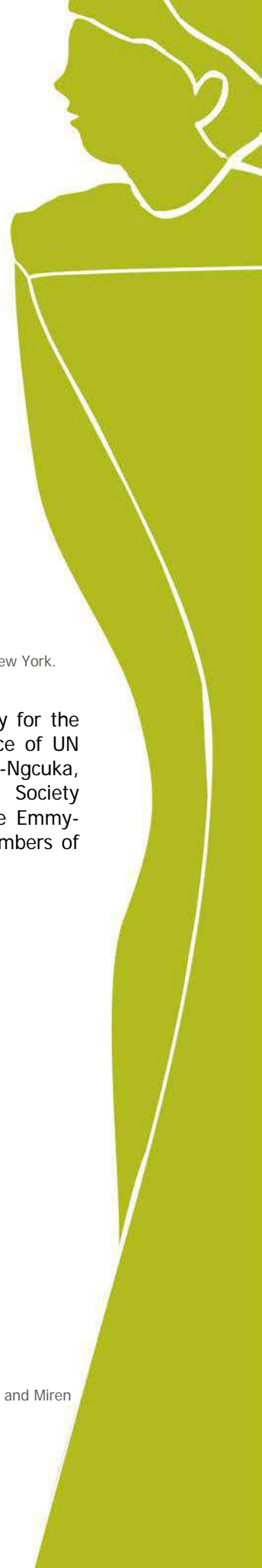


Participants in the official commemoration of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women in New York. Photo: UN Women/Ryan Brown

At UN Headquarters in New York, the official commemoration of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (25 November) took place with the attendance of UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, and Oscar-nominated actor and UK Global Dementia Friends and Alzheimer's Society Ambassador, Carey Mulligan, among others. The event also featured segments of the Emmy-award winning series, "The Handmaid's Tale", followed by a panel discussion with members of the cast and crew.



President of France, Emmanuel Macron; Marlene Schiappa, Secretary of State for Equality Between Women and Men; and Miren Bengoa, UN Women French National Committee President. Photo: UN Women



President of France, Emmanuel Macron wore an orange scarf in solidarity with the UNITE campaign during the 16 Days of Activism. President Macron met with UN Women French National Committee President, Miren Bengoa at the Elysée Palace, who presented the orange scarf to him. The President wore it on 25 November, as he announced his plans to improve public awareness and response to violence against women and girls in France.

See more at: <http://www.un.org/en/events/endviolenceday/index.shtml>  
<http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/11/news-orange-the-world--2017>

### *EU releases Gender Equality Index 2017: Measurement framework of violence against women*

For the first time as part of the Gender Equality Index 2017, The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) has developed a way to measure the extent of violence against women in the European Union. The research made by EIGE measures the prevalence as well as the severity and disclosure of violence against women. The EIGE has incorporated violence against women in its Gender Equality Index as a satellite domain. The index is a monitoring tool that provides a measure of the attainment of gender equality and assists in monitoring progress of gender equality across the EU over time. It means that the score for violence does not impact the final score of the Gender Equality Index. However, the violence dimension needs to be considered alongside other domains, as violence against women reflects persisting inequalities in the fields of work, health, money, power, education and time use.



To provide a more nuanced picture of violence against women, EIGE has developed a way to measure the phenomenon, as part of its Gender Equality Index. The new measurement framework sheds light on the spectrum of violence against women that ranges from harassment to death (femicide). It also helps to measure forms of violence, such as human trafficking, intimate partner violence, sexual assault and rape. This tool can help Member States who have ratified the Istanbul Convention, with their monitoring and reporting obligations.

From a statistical perspective, the domain of violence cannot be treated in the same way as the core domains of the Gender Equality Index because it does not measure gaps between women and men. Rather, it measures and analyses women's experiences of

violence. Unlike other domains, the overall objective is not to reduce the gaps of violence between women and men, but to eradicate violence altogether. This fundamental difference between the domains of the Gender Equality Index and the violence against women domain justifies the fact that this domain is treated as a satellite.

The research reveals that one in three women in Lithuania have experienced violence since the age of 15 and in most of the cases by more than one perpetrator. Evidence shows that violence is widespread not only in intimate relationship, but also in public spaces such as schools or workplaces. In more than half of the cases, violence caused long lasting physical and psychological harm to the victim.

The domain of violence provides of a set of indicators that can assist Member States in assessing the extent and nature of violence against women and enable the monitoring and evaluation of the institutional response to this phenomenon.

For the first time, there is a comparable score for violence against women in the EU and each Member State. The EU's score is 27.5 out of 100 (the higher the score, the worse the situation), showing that the phenomenon is prevalent, severe and underreported. The national scores range from 22.1 in Poland to 44.2 in Bulgaria. The high score in Bulgaria is mainly because of the rate of non-disclosure of violence, which is more than three times the EU average (48.6 and 14.3 respectively).

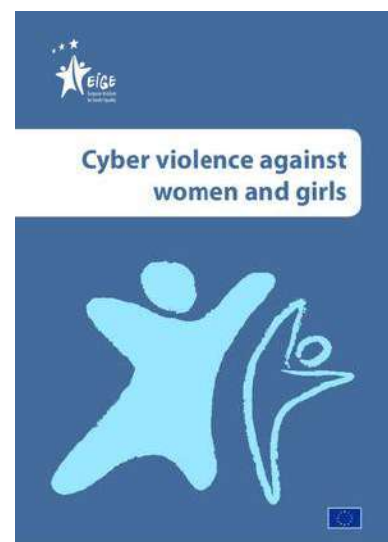
See more at: <http://eige.europa.eu/news-and-events/news/gender-equality-index-2017-we-cannot-be-silent-about-violence>

## EU REPORT: Cyber violence against women and girls

In order to better understand the nature and prevalence of cyber VAWG, the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) has recently conducted desk research that aimed to identify and analyse the existing research on different forms of cyber VAWG and assess the availability of survey and administrative data on the phenomenon. The findings of this research and the resulting recommendations form the basis of this paper.

Since more and more people can easily access the internet and social media, cyber violence against women and girls is an increasing concern. Despite the lack of data, EU estimates show that one in ten women have experienced some form of cyber violence since the age of 15.

The increasing reach of the internet, the rapid spread of mobile information, and the widespread use of social media, coupled with the existing pandemic of violence against women and girls (VAWG), has led to the emergence of cyber VAWG as a growing global problem with potentially significant economic and societal consequences.



The recommendations outlined in EIGE's paper highlight the need for better policy responses, more prevention measures and awareness raising. For example, educating women and girls, as well as gender sensitive training on cyber violence for the police.

Research shows that one in three women will have experienced a form of violence in her lifetime, and despite the relatively new and growing phenomenon of internet connectivity, it is estimated that one in ten women have already experienced a form of cyber violence since the age of 15. Access to the internet is fast becoming a necessity for economic well-being, and is increasingly viewed as a fundamental human right; therefore it is crucial to ensure that this digital public space is a safe and empowering place for everyone, including women and girls.


See more at: <http://eige.europa.eu/rdc/eige-publications/cyber-violence-against-women-and-girls>

## Women and Children First: An Inter-Agency Cyber Security Event

UNICEF and UN Women partnered with International Computing Center - ICC to host an Inter-Agency Cyber Security event on 25 October 2017, in New York called *'Women and Children First'*. The event was organized to highlight attention on the use of the cyber domain as an alarming security fear for women and girls with cyber violence against women and girls (VAWG) becoming a societal concern and challenge. Panelists at the event included Aparna Mehrotra, Director UN-system Coordination, UN Women, Jorge Torres, CISO at UNICEF, Gurdeep Kaur, Director, Information Security at NJ Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield and Tima Soni, Head, Information Security Services, ICC. Speakers noted that the recent Report by the UN Broadband Commission, from UN Women, UNDP, ITU and UNESCO, was a worldwide wake-up call to take this issue seriously and enhance efforts around cyber violence against women and girls.

Ms. Mehrotra said that the growing reach of the Internet and the wide diffusion of social media have ramifications for cyber VAWG as they are also being used as tools to inflict harm on women and girls. Responses, however, have yet to fully address the many degrees and impact of violence and trauma that women and girls are exposed to and that go unreported, she said. The sheer volume of cyber VAWG has severe social and economic implications for women and girls. The threats of rape, death, and stalking put a premium on the emotional bandwidth and put a stress on financial resources (in terms of legal fees, online protection services, and missed wages, among others). The direct and indirect costs to societies and economies are also significant, as needs for health care, judicial and social services rise and productivity goes down with the sense of peace and security required for business to thrive.

Ms. Mehrotra shared the features central to tackle cyber VAWG include Sensitization, Safety, and Sanctions. Any call for action to be effective needs to include both men and



women in the conversation on cyber violence. Sensitization to cyber VAWG must focus on reducing the stigma associated with VAWG. Referenced discussions around sex must be normalized as this will provide protection against stigma which contributes chillingly to culture of silence which in least case can be an irritant and worse case may take a life. Parents have a critical role to play in identifying early warnings of their children – both boys and girls-being subjected to cyber violence. Same vigilance that is exercised on women/girls in the families should be equally done for the men/boys in the family. One has to ask the same questions of the boys as one ask the girls. Another imperative is educating the next generation of ICT users, both boys and girls, through their parents, teachers and wider communities, as well as police authorities and the justice systems.

The timing to take action is now, as the landscape of gender-based violence has been transformed and widened with the increasing spread of the internet and related technologies, rather than there being a dramatic reduction in violence against women, the challenges have become more complex, the resistance to change deeper, the backlash against the empowerment of women more blatant and the methods used to uphold the status quo more sophisticated and insidious.

## In your Interest

### 10 Actions to Build Workplaces That Work for Women

Catalyst is a global nonprofit working with some of the world's most powerful CEOs and leading companies to build workplaces that work for women. Catalyst has listed 10 actions an organization can take to make real change happen.

Change takes persistence, courage, and tenacity. And it doesn't happen overnight. It happens every day, in every meeting, in every organization. Promotion by promotion, decision after decision. It requires leadership at every level. And it will take all of us to build workplaces that work for women.



# 10 ACTIONS TO BUILD WORKPLACES THAT WORK FOR *Women*

1

## **BUILD AN INCLUSIVE CORPORATE CULTURE.**

If advancing women is the "what," inclusion is the "how" you get that done.

2

## **INCENTIVIZE INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP.**

Reward inclusive behaviors and have a zero-tolerance policy for exclusionary ones.

3

## **SHINE A LIGHT ON WOMEN OF COLOR.**

Develop specific goals for advancing women of color and make leaders accountable for achieving them.

4

## **ENGAGE MEN AS CHAMPIONS.**

Since men run about 95% of the most powerful companies, things will only change if we engage powerful male sponsors.

5

## **UNLOCK "HOT JOBS" TO HELP ACCELERATE WOMEN'S CAREERS.**

Make sure women have access to P&L positions and the high visibility, mission-critical roles and international experiences that are critical to advance.

6

## **SHAKE UP YOUR BOARD.**

Review recruiting policies and go outside your regular network of contacts to find diverse candidates so your board truly reflects the consumers and communities it serves.

7

## **UNMASK UNCONSCIOUS BIAS.**

It exists everywhere. Tackle it head-on and organization-wide with mandatory training.

8

## **GET REAL ABOUT GENDER, RACE AND ETHNICITY.**

Communicating openly and authentically across differences is critical to creating a powerful culture of inclusion.

9

## **CLOSE THE WAGE GAP. IMMEDIATELY.**

Women work 100%. On average, they make about 82% of what men earn. Do an audit to see if you have a wage gap. Then implement policies and processes to close it and keep it closed.

10

## **PRIORITIZE PRODUCTIVITY OVER PHYSICAL PRESENCE.**

Flexible work environments are good for people and organizations, plus they can help attract top talent and reduce turnover.

CATALYST CEO  
CHAMPIONS  
FOR CHANGE



Let's build a future where we use  
100% of the talent, 100% of the time.  
It's good for business and it's the right thing to do.

**LET'S GET TO 100%**





## Labor Party in Australia pledges to introduce 10 days of paid domestic violence leave

*Workplace entitlement would be available to all employees and doubles Labor's previous commitment of five days*

In Australia, the Labor Party has joined calls for all employees to get 10 days paid domestic violence leave, in line with a campaign from the Australian Council of Trade Unions. It will support 10 days paid domestic and family violence leave in the national employment standards. Paid leave gives employees time off to meet legal, medical, counselling, relocation and other administrative commitments to deal with or exit abusive or violent relationships. The workplace entitlement would be available to all employees if they or an immediate family member experience family or domestic violence.

See more at: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/dec/05/labor-pledges-to-introduce-10-days-of-paid-domestic-violence-leave>

## *Soon UK companies will have to publish information about their gender pay gap by law – and it won't help women*

*Gender pay gap rules risk hitting family-friendly policies*

A government push to get British companies to report their gender pay gap has had unintended consequences by discouraging some family-friendly policies, even as further questions emerge about its methodology. The UK is leading the way in attempting to reduce gender inequalities in the labour market by shining a light on the worst offenders, with growing concerns in other countries such as the US, where the big tech groups are attempting to encourage gender-friendly policies.

Policymakers want to help close the yawning gap between male and female pay. By April next year, all UK companies and public sector organisations employing 250 people or more must report the difference between men and women's mean and median salaries and bonuses, as well as the number of women and men in their company divided by quartile.

If women use salary sacrifice arrangements, such as childcare vouchers or extra holiday days, more than their male colleagues, a company's gender pay gap looks worse than it should. Meanwhile, the data fail to reflect the fact that part-time workers, where women tend to dominate the numbers, earn proportionally lower bonuses because of their choice of working hours. Executives also complain that companies' pay gaps are likely to suffer from policies designed to help boost the number of women in senior positions — such as flexible working or recruiting more junior women.



Because many of the benefits that can be included, such as childcare vouchers, appeal particularly to women, those who take advantage of them see a disproportionate impact on their cash salaries and thus on a company's gender pay gap calculations.

"This is not because we are paying women less," one employer said. "It's because they are using what they regard as a worthwhile benefit more."

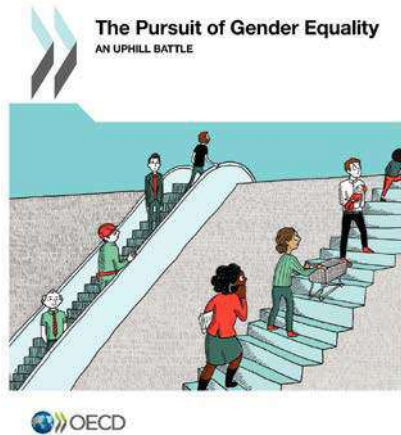
Deloitte offers staff the option of buying extra holiday days, a benefit which tends to be taken advantage of by more women than men. That choice then means the company's gender pay gap looks worse, as women's cash salaries are proportionately lower than men's as a result. Employers have also discovered that schemes they have put in place precisely to support female employees and improve workforce diversity can actually make the gap worse over the short term. "If you bring in more junior or part-time women you actually make your gender pay gap worse," says Sheila Flavell, chief operating officer of FDM, a computer support and services company.

See more at: [m/content/7b5254b4-db78-11e7-a039-c64b1c09b482](https://www.deloitte.com/uk/en/content/dam/uk/en/articles/2017/07/20170720_gender_pay_gap_benefits.pdf)



# Recommended Reading

## The Pursuit of Gender Equality An Uphill Battle



Countries need to do much more to close gender gaps worldwide, according to a new OECD report published in October, 2017. This report examines recent developments in gender equality in education, employment, entrepreneurship and public life. It contains one overview chapter and 24 short chapters, each with key findings and policy recommendations.

The Pursuit of Gender Equality: An Uphill Battle presents a stark call to action, highlighting that very little progress has been made since the 2012 OECD report Closing the Gender Gap Now. Gender inequalities persist in all areas of social and economic life and across countries. Young women in OECD countries generally obtain more years of schooling than young men, but women are less likely than men to engage in paid work. Gaps widen with age, as motherhood typically has marked negative effects on gender pay gaps and career advancement. Women are also less likely to be entrepreneurs, and are underrepresented in private and public leadership positions.

Governments must do more to close gender gaps in social and economic life. This new book presents a range of statistical indicators illustrating gender gaps, with content on education, employment, entrepreneurship, migration, public life, unpaid work and violence against women. The report also highlights recent “best practice” policy initiatives, such as pay transparency measures to reduce gender wage gaps and incentives to get fathers to take parental leave.

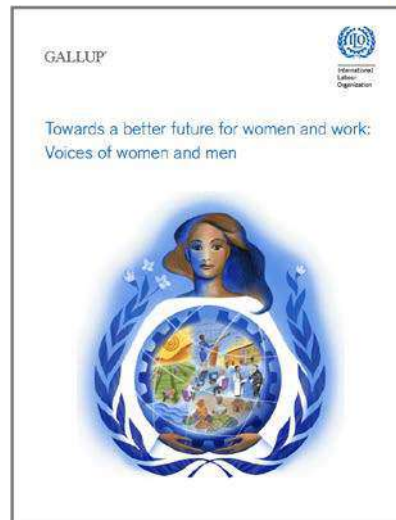
Access at: <http://www.oecd.org/publications/the-pursuit-of-gender-equality-9789264281318-en.htm>

## ILO: Towards a better future for women and work: Voices of women and men

This ILO study provides a first-ever account of global attitudes and perceptions of women and regarding women and work based on the 2016 Gallup World Poll. The poll, which was conducted in 142 countries and territories, is representative of 98 per cent of the global population.

New landmark report clearly shows that concerns regarding gender equality and achieving a better work-family balance resonate around the world.

The findings are revealing: A total of 70 per cent of women and a similar 66 per cent of men would prefer that women work at paid jobs.

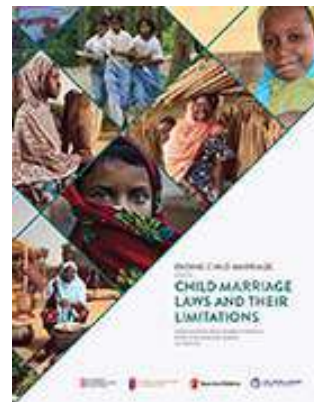


Access at: [http://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS\\_546256/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS_546256/lang--en/index.htm)

## ENDING CHILD MARRIAGE: CHILD MARRIAGE LAWS AND THEIR LIMITATIONS

### A World Bank report

More than 20,000 underage girls are illegally married every year, and close to 100 million girls are not legally protected from child marriage. These stark numbers are just the tip of the iceberg, says the recently released ENDING CHILD MARRIAGE: CHILD MARRIAGE LAWS AND THEIR LIMITATIONS report, a collaboration between the World Bank, represented by the Women, Business and the Law team and the Education Global Practice, and Save the Children.



Access at:

[http://wbl.worldbank.org/~media/WBG/WBL/Documents/Reports/2017/WBL2017\\_Child\\_Marriage\\_Laws.pdf](http://wbl.worldbank.org/~media/WBG/WBL/Documents/Reports/2017/WBL2017_Child_Marriage_Laws.pdf)

## **UN WOMEN BRIEF: Long-term care for older people: A new global gender priority**

This UN Women brief released in December 2017 synthesizes research findings, analysis and policy recommendations on the gender dimensions of long-term care for older people, and was produced for the UN Women policy brief series.

Population ageing is a global reality, and as people age, they tend to require greater care and assistance in activities related to daily living. Nevertheless, current debates about long-term care for older persons are remarkably narrow. First, long-term care is yet to be recognized as a burning policy issue in low- and middle-income countries, which is where the majority of older persons live. Second, even in developed countries where long-term care has been on the public agenda for some time, it is rarely discussed in gendered terms. Instead, debates are dominated by concerns over its fiscal implications.

As this brief shows, however, long-term care always has costs, even if it is provided by family members on an unpaid basis. Currently, the societal costs of policy inaction in both developed and developing countries are borne disproportionately by women: the elderly women who do not receive the care that they deserve, and the women of all ages who are overrepresented among those who provide care under inadequate and exploitative conditions. Finding ways to share these costs more equitably across society is paramount.

This brief underlines the need to build long-term care systems that are financially and socially sustainable and discusses a set of measures that can be taken to improve the situation of care-dependent older persons as well as their caregivers.

Access at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2017/12/long-term-care-for-older-people>

For access to the full range of UN Women publications please visit:  
<http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications>

## Websites



Wikigender is your online platform to share research, data and solutions to advance gender equality. Wikigender is a global online collaborative platform linking policymakers and experts from both developed and developing countries to find solutions to advance gender equality. It provides a centralised space for knowledge exchange on key emerging issues, with a strong focus on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and in particular on SDG 5. Both English and French speakers worldwide can discuss current issues, relevant research and emerging trends on gender equality.

Wikigender places the spotlight on gender data and statistics as a complement to the Gender, Institutions and Development Database (GID-DB) and the Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI), both developed by the OECD Development Centre.

Access at: <https://www.wikigender.org/>

## 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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