



IFUW Update – 01 October 2014

International News Round-Up: September 2014



“Women are better off today, but still far from being equal with men” (29 September 2014)

In 2011, women for the first time made up more than 50% of the workforce in the United States. Female employees now also account for 40% of the global formal work force – the highest percentage at any point in history - while between 8 and ten million now own small and medium sized businesses. However, as highlighted by Facebook’s Chief Operating Officer (COO) Sheryl Sandberg, “Women are not making it to the top of any profession in the world.” This is reflected most obviously in the private sector, where women only account for 4.6% of Chief Executive Officers in the 500 largest corporations in the US. Similarly disconcerting is the severe gender gap in top levels of political office, where only seven of the 150 current heads of states in the world are women. [Read more.](#)

“Nigeria: Freed Chibok Girl in military Custody in Abuja” (All Africa, 29 September 2014)

One of the 219 girls abducted by Boko Haram in Chibok, Nigeria has been freed after being held captive for almost six months by the extremist Islamist group. Susan Ishaya’s captivity is reported to have left her psychologically and physically traumatised. She has since been brought into the custody of the Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) in Nigeria’s capital city of Abuja. [Read more.](#)

“Prosecutor targets crimes against women in Juarez” (WFAA, 29 September 2014)

The city of Juarez, Mexico, is notorious for its high level violence, especially dangerous for women, where frequent incidents of disappearance and murder threaten the female population. For this reason, the office of the special prosecutor for crimes against women was created in 2009 in light of a ruling by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, which found that Mexico had failed to properly investigate the murder of 8 women. Despite the work of the special prosecutor - who claims to have solved 65 of the 150 cases of missing women - both the families of the disappeared as well as rights groups remain cynical about the efforts. "For every ten cases we bring them, one gets resolved." [Read more](#)

“Ashraf Ghani inaugurated: Is Afghanistan ready for a high-profile first lady?” (29 September 2014)

During his inauguration speech as new President of Afghanistan, Dr. Ashraf Ghani praised his wife highly and publically, giving “rise to hopes that Afghanistan could finally have a woman playing a leading part in

the country's social and political fabric.” The recognition from the President and renowned intellectual was praised by many commentators, who highlighted the rarity of the event in light of Afghanistan’s long tradition of a male-dominated public arena. The first lady is believed to have plans to work with women and children going forward. [Read more](#)

“Kidnapped by ISIS, One Woman Tells How She Saved Her Sisters” (National Public Radio, 27 September 2014)

A young woman remarkably succeeded in escaping Islamic State (ISIS) captors in the Northern Iraqi city of Mosul, while also saving her sisters. The Kurdish speaking siblings had been kidnapped by ISIS leaders, when the extremist group raided a city, murdering men and older women during the ordeal. The young woman, collaborated by activists groups, explained how girls as young as 12 were kidnapped and sold as child brides to marry other militants in Iraq and neighbouring Syria. She and her sisters managed to escape the city with the help of a Muslim family, who provided the girls with falsified identification to cross the armed border, controlled by the ISIS militants. [Read more.](#)

“Woman saves three relatives from Ebola” (CNN, 26 September 2014)

A 22 year old Liberian woman Fatu Kekula single-handedly cared for her father, mother, sister and young cousin when they all became infected with the deadly virus Ebola. Miraculously however, Fatu managed not to contract the illness herself, after having devised a home-made protective suit from plastic garbage bags, a raincoat, rubber wellington boots, gloves and a mask. The nursing student succeeded in helping all but one of her family members pull through the illness, where her 14 year old cousin sadly died. Her innovative and resourceful protective suit has been praised by international aid organisations, who are looking to share the method with other West African communities. [Read more.](#)

“Hillary Clinton Gets A+ For New Program To Get 14 Million Girls In School”

(Huffington Post, 24 September 2014)

Hilary Clinton announced a \$600 million USD global initiative to get girls into secondary school, which aims to improve the quality, safety and security at schools around the world. "We know when girls have equal access to quality education in both primary and secondary schools, cycles of poverty are broken, economies grow, glass ceilings crack and potential is unleashed," Clinton said. One of the initiatives of the Clinton Foundation - [“No Ceilings”](#) aims to advance and to promote the participation of girls and women in all aspects of life. [Read more.](#)

“Women are the face of India’s Mars mission, but they are still the exception”

(Public Radio International, 26 September 2014)

Female scientists at the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) had serious cause for celebration on 24 September 2014, on account of their instrumental role in the successful launch and orbit of a spacecraft bound for Mars. “Women have worked and led projects at ISRO for years. In 2011, for example, three women were in charge of the launch of an Indian communications satellite.” Despite the significant contribution made by female scientists at the organisation, women only account for 20% of ISRO employees and only 10% are engineers. [Read more.](#)



Empowering women and girls through lifelong education for leadership, decision-making and peace. IFUW is in special consultative status with ECOSOC and is an NGO maintaining official relations with UNESCO.

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