



IFUW Update – 30 July 2014

International News Round-Up: July 2014



“ITU, UN Women to reward technology for gender equality initiatives” (Technology Times, 24 July 2014)

The International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and UN Women are set to launch a global technology award to recognise the efforts of women and men who use Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) to promote gender equality. This comes in light of figures showing that women account for less than 20% of the technology sector. Highlighting the importance of ICT in combatting gender inequality, ITU’s Secretary-General Dr. Hamadoun I. Touré explained that “ICTs are the most powerful tool we have ever had to make a difference to the lives of today’s and tomorrow’s women, and to build a more equitable world for all”. [Read more](#)

“Elections training for women candidates in Tonga” (The Jet, 23 July 2014)

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) ran a week-long training workshop, “Women’s Campaign and Leadership” in Nuku’alofa, Tonga, to help prepare women to run for parliament and other elected positions. The training workshop was run in partnership with UNDP and UN Women, as part of the Tonga Governance Strengthening Programme (TGSP), a four-year development programme administered by UNDP, funded through the Australian funding aid programme. Former Tongan Member of Parliament Lepolo Taunisila explained the significance of the workshop for Tongan women: “We women need to exhibit our own recognition of women’s equality by valuing the contribution of all women...The changes that we want to see in our community must begin with us women.” [Read more](#)

“FGM summit: Cameron calls for end ‘in this generation’ ” (BBC World News, 22 July 2014)

The Girl Summit, hosted by the British government in partnership with UNICEF, saw world leaders, human rights activists and campaigners convene to call for the end of child marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM). 130 million girls have undergone FGM, with a further 30 million at risk in the coming years. Meanwhile, 250 million girls have been married before the age of 15 (source: UNICEF). [Read more](#). IFUW sees both [child marriage](#) and [FGM](#) as significant barriers to accessing education for girls and women, and calls on all states to commit to implementing legislation to combat and end the practices.

“Universities need to help women to beat the gender pay gap” (The Guardian, 14 July 2014)

Low confidence levels, over-eagerness and poor negotiation skills are amongst the main causes for employees receiving low salaries, more frequently encountered by women than men. This confidence shortfall can be tackled at university level, where mentoring schemes between female students and strong female role models from the business world can help teach girls and women of their self-worth and ability. To help tackle the gender gap in equality of pay, “[l]ecturers and university careers advisors need to convince young women that they are good and skilled enough to achieve their career goals.” [Read more](#)

“On World Population Day, a startling picture for women and girls” (Devex, 11 July 2014)

11 July 2014 marked World Population Day, an annual event launched by the United Nation’s Development Programme (UNDP) to draw attention to issues relevant to the global population. This year’s theme, “Investing in Young People” yielded calls for increased support and investment in girls and young women, especially with regard to sexual and reproductive rights. Childbirth is the leading cause of death amongst women aged 15-19, while HIV and AIDS are the leading causes of death and disease for women of reproductive age. As explained by UN Population Fund Executive Director Dr. Babtunde Osotimehin:

“Adolescent pregnancy ... is deeply rooted in poverty, gender inequality, violence, child and forced marriage, power imbalances between adolescent girls and their male partners, lack of education, and the failure of systems and institutions to protect their rights.” [Read more](#)

“Gender Equality: Coming Soon to Emerging Markets near you” (Forbes India, 09 July 2014)

According to business analysts, women are set to become the market leader in terms of income growth, accounting for a global group that is set outdo India and China combined. “Men currently generate income of about US\$25 trillion worldwide, which is more than twice the total for women. But income growth over the near term is expected to be dominated by women, who already control more than 65 per cent of the worldwide total [growth], according to Boston Consulting Group”. [Read more](#)

“One small step for Google, one giant leap for empowering girls to code” (Fast Company, 07 July 2014)

Less than 1% of women major in computer science, according to the [American Association of University Women](#). Google has launched a \$1 million dollar initiative to help improve these bleak statistics by encouraging female students to take online coding classes. “With \$1 million in funding from Google’s Made With Code initiative, nonprofitDonorsChoose.org is rewarding teachers with money when they get four or more female students to complete a coding class online. The money is given toward school projects or supplies--everything from new laptops to class field trips--depending on a teacher’s need.” [Read more](#)

“63 abducted women, girls escape from Boko Haram” (CNN, 07 July 2014)

Sixty-three girls and women have managed to escape from the Islamist militant group Boko Haram after being kidnapped from their village in Kummabza, Nigeria on 18June 2014. The female hostages managed to flee the camp where they had been imprisoned while the group fought off government troops in a nearby village. Of the 276 girls kidnapped from a boarding school in Chibok, northeastern Nigeria in April 2014, 200 are still missing though dozens have managed to escape. The abduction caused an international outcry, prompting the global campaign [#BringBackOurGirls](#) to put pressure on the Nigerian government to do everything possible to secure the safe return of the girls. [Read more](#) IFUW released a [press release](#) calling for the immediate return of the schoolgirls to their homes, highlighting that safe access to secondary school is indispensable for the development of communities and countries.



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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