



IFUW Update – 4 March 2015



[Mobile Learning Week](#) hosted at UNESCO, Paris, on 23-27 February 2015. Image by UNESCO and [UN Women](#).

International Federation of University Women news

IFUW panellist at UNESCO

IFUW Advocacy and Communications Officer Aoife Hegarty participated on 27 February in a research seminar, hosted by UNESCO and UN Women, as part of [Mobile Learning Week](#). The five-day event (23-27 February), provided a platform to examine the intersection of technology, education and gender with experts from across the globe. During [the panel](#) on, “The post-2015 development agenda: Leveraging technology for the next generation of women leaders”, Aoife presented IFUW’s position on the necessity to promote and support women leaders in information and communications technologies (ICT) sectors. The statistics on women graduates and professionals within ICT expose a distinct and concerning gender gap that is getting worse in many countries and regions. To take the European Union (EU) as an example, only 29 out of every 1000 female graduate have a computing or related degree, and only 4 go on to work in ICT-related activities. At the top professional level, the statistics are equally discouraging: only 19% of the 7 million people employed in ICT in the EU are women, while globally there are only 6% female Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) at the top 100 global technology companies. Girls must be encouraged to study science and technology-related subjects in school and university, which requires concerted efforts to combat the gender-stereotyping that has traditionally seen an over-representation of boys in these fields. The [sustainable development goals](#) (SDGs), which will make up a significant element of the post-2015 development agenda, include standalone goals for lifelong education and gender equality (goals four and five respectively), including provisions for leveraging the use of ICTs. The post-2015 development agenda will be finalised at the [United Nations Summit](#) in September 2015.

National Federation and Association (NFA) news

Uganda

Barriers to Leadership and Challenges Faced by Female Heads in Educational Institutions in Uganda

IFUW and Uganda Association of University Women member, Alice Merab Kagoda, shared her research on women’s participation in educational leadership in Uganda, forming part of a global thematic consultation on the post-2015 development agenda. Alice’s research identifies the barriers women face in taking up leadership in education, and the challenges that persist when women become leaders in this sector. The research considers the outcomes of the affirmative action introduced by the Ugandan government, the implications of cultural and gender norms, women’s access to education and skills, and institutional and societal impediments to women’s leadership. Alice observes that “women are still tied down by culture” and face inequality throughout society and education. This results in few women obtaining the qualifications and experience required for leadership in education and a lack of networks for mentoring and support. The research identifies that mentoring programmes are needed to support women to move into educational leadership roles, gender studies should be introduced to education from primary through to tertiary levels to reduce gender discrimination and childcare centres should be established to support working women. Read the research [in full here](#).

Advocacy

Geneva Summit for Human Rights and Democracy

On 24 February, IFUW attended the [Geneva Summit for Human Rights and Democracy](#) in Geneva, Switzerland. The annual event brought together numerous human rights activists to share their remarkable stories of courage and suffering, when faced with human rights abuses in their efforts to resist political oppression. This year saw the inaugural Women's Rights Award, which was presented to Masih Alinejad, an Iranian female freelance journalist for her work in advocating for women's right to autonomy from religious headwear in Iran. Several other strong and inspiring women were represented at the event to share their story of bravery in the face of persecution. One of the Nigerian schoolgirls kidnapped by the terrorist organisation Boko Haram recounted how she and a friend fled from the militants by jumping from the moving truck and taking refuge in the forest. 21 year old Yeon-Mi Park described her journey to escape from oppression in North Korea, and the husband of [Asia Bibi](#) presented the story of his wife who is on death row for blasphemy in Pakistan for refusing to convert from Christianity to Islam. For a full list of speakers, [click here](#).

Grants and Proposals

Edinburgh Global Online Distance Learning Master's Scholarships

The University of Edinburgh will offer six Master's scholarships for distance learning Master's programmes offered by the University. Scholarships will be available for students pursuing any distance learning Master's programme offered by the University. Each scholarship will have a total value of £5,000 which will be deducted from the tuition fee for the entire part-time programme of study. The scholarships are available for nationals of certain countries. Eligible applicants should complete an online scholarship application, with a deadline of **29 May 2015**. [Click here for eligibility criteria and to apply](#).

Donations in favour of IFUW

Think of IFUW each month: set up a regular monthly donation to support our projects to increase access to lifelong education for girls and women globally. A small sum every month counts less for you and adds up to more for IFUW.

Other information and events

March 2 – 15	Trek Mt. Kilimanjaro for International Women's Day , Kilimanjaro, Tanzania
March 8	International Women's Day , global
March 9 – 20	Commission on the Status of Women , UN Headquarters, New York, USA
April 23	International Girls in Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) Day , global
May 14 – 16	2015 Global Summit of Women , Sao Paulo, Brazil
August 21 – 23 (2016)	IFUW general Assembly, Cape Town, South Africa
August 24 – 26 (2016)	IFUW Triennial Conference, Cape Town, South Africa

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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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