



International Federation of  
University Women (IFUW)

## IFUW Oral Statement - CSW58

*Oral Statement submitted by the International Federation of University Women (IFUW), a non-governmental organization in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council.*

Access to quality secondary and tertiary education, one of the most effective ways to achieve equality for women and girls, must be a basic human right.

At the 31<sup>st</sup> Triennial Conference of the International Federation of University Women (IFUW), Istanbul Turkey, August 2013, delegates reaffirmed support for the 'Right to safe access to education for all women and girls' especially in areas of the world where enrolment in education is lowest. A further resolution urged governments to collaborate with indigenous leaders to fund quality education for indigenous peoples.

The 2012 Education For All Global Monitoring Report confirms that at least 250 million primary school-age children lack good reading and numeracy skills, even after four years in school. Despite commitments and progress in improving access to education, learning goals have not been achieved worldwide. Barriers to learning may include cultural and traditional biases, unsuitable and unsafe school buildings, unsanitary conditions, lack of educational resources such as textbooks and qualified female teachers. Payment and training of teachers are other issues. Migrant and refugee children are at special risk.

In many developing countries, large numbers of girls cannot access post-primary education, and in some countries the rates of those who can are dropping. It is essential to take

appropriate action to keep women and girls in school and enable them to enter tertiary education.

Girls with good literacy and numeracy skills become women who are less vulnerable to poverty, hunger, violence, abuse, exploitation and trafficking, HIV/AIDS and maternal mortality.

The persistent gender imbalance in the basic sciences, technology and Information Technologies (IT) worldwide is demonstrated by the decrease in the numbers of women who progress from secondary school to university, to professional occupations and into senior management and higher levels of decision-making.

It is essential to fund and gather quality disaggregated data about women and girls in the work force to measure progress accurately in the post-2015 world and to assist policy makers in making intelligent decisions about how to allocate educational resources.

As a leading global organization that promotes the human rights of women and girls, equality and empowerment through access to quality education and training up to the highest levels, IFUW recommends:

- Governments of member states honour their international treaty obligations with respect to the education of women and girls and that they make this an integral part of their post-2015 goals
- Educational policies encourage the enrolment of women in science, technology and innovation programmes
- Women gain increased involvement in government and politics
- Women have increased access to economic and technological resources

- Governments of member states collect accurate and relevant data related to the education of women and girls and that this data is provided in a sex disaggregated form and used as a basis for policy development.

This statement is endorsed by:

*Canadian Federation of University Women*

*International Council of Women*

*Soroptimist International*

*Soroptimist International of Great Britain and Ireland (SIGBI) Ltd*

*World YWCA*

*YWCA Canada*

*Zonta International*