



IFUW Update – 26 November 2014

International News Round-Up: November 2014



One woman elected in Solomons (Radio New Zealand, 24 November 2014)

The third woman ever has been elected to parliament in the Solomon Islands. Freda Tuki Soria Comua, from the People's Alliance Party, won the Temotu Vatud seat, and appears to be the only woman to have won, out of the 26 women candidates. A member of the Commonwealth Observer Group, Jessica Nkuuhe, says there are still big challenges for women and attitudes she encountered show equality is a long way off. Read [more](#).

Afghanistan women excluded from peace talks with Taliban, Oxfam says (CBC News, 23 November 2014)

In 23 rounds of peace talks tracked by Oxfam since 2005, not one Afghan woman participated in discussions between the Taliban and international negotiators. In talks between the Taliban and the government, only one Afghan woman was present on two occasions. "Negotiations and peace talks to date have taken place predominantly behind closed doors and without Afghan women's knowledge, input or involvement," the Oxfam report said. While Afghans and foreign donors alike are optimistic that new president Ashraf Ghani will do more to protect women's rights, there has been little obvious improvement so far. Read [more](#).

Bringing Education to African Girls (New York Times, 23 November 2014)

On 4 November 2014, Ann Cotton, a British educator and philanthropist was awarded the World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE) prize for her role as founder and director of [Camfed](#), an organisation that has helped millions of young girls in sub-Saharan Africa remain in school. WISE, which was established by the [Qatar](#) Foundation in 2009 in Doha, Qatar, has become one of the leading forums for open discussion on the state of global education. Ms. Cotton's early experience in Zimbabwe led her to the conclusion that direct sponsorship would help ensure that more girls attended school. She began by getting financial aid for a few dozen students. The organisation has grown substantially since then and has supported more than 1.2 million students in Ghana, Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Read [more](#).

United Nations members resolve to end child marriage (Reuters, 21 November 2014)

The United Nations agreed on Friday [21 November] that all members should pass and enforce laws banning child marriages, resolving to end a practice that affects about 15 million girls every year. Christine Kalamwina, the deputy permanent representative of Zambia, which initiated the resolution with Canada, said child marriage impeded poverty reduction, education, gender equality and women's empowerment,

child mortality, maternal health, and combating HIV/AIDS and other diseases. The 118 countries that sponsored the resolution included Mali, Ethiopia and the Central African Republic, which are among the 10 countries with the highest rates of child marriage. While supporting the document, the Islamic Republic of [Iran](#) and Sudan both expressed concern over a paragraph urging governments to protect the right of girls to have control over their sexuality and implement laws that protect reproductive rights. General Assembly resolutions are not legally binding, but can increase political pressure on countries. Read [more](#).

Egypt's first female genital mutilation trial ends in not guilty verdict (The Guardian, 20 November 2014)

The first case in Egypt to see a doctor on trial for charges of female genital mutilation (FGM) ended in an acquittal. Though the victim, 12-year-old Sohair al-Bata'a, subsequently died from the procedure, both the doctor and the girl's father were acquitted of manslaughter, with no explanation being given for the verdict. Rights groups deemed the result as a huge blow to combatting and deterring the harmful practice, which was officially criminalised in Egypt in 2008. According to [surveys by Unicef](#), an estimated 91% of married Egyptian women aged between 15 and 49 have been subjected to FGM, 72% of them by doctors. Read [more](#).

IGNITE: Technology Is a Women's Rights Issue (Huffington Post, 20 November 2014)

Dr. Musibo Kanyoro, President and CEO of Global Fund for Women, explains how mobile technology can transform the lives of girls and women, but they must be included in creating the solutions. "From the Internet to mobile phones, technology enables us to connect with each other and the world around us in new and innovative ways. Yet there is a serious gender gap when it comes to technological access, literacy, and influence." A global technology revolution is taking place, and if women and girls aren't part of it, the future for women's human rights is bleak. Read more [here](#). Learn about Global Fund for Women's new campaign [IGNITE: Women Fueling Science and Technology](#).

Petition to put women on Canadian banknotes draws nearly 50K signatures (CBC News Canada, 17 November 2014)

A petition by historian Merna Forster to get Canadian women depicted on banknotes is just short of its goal of 50,000 signatures. Forster started her campaign when the Bank of Canada introduced its new polymer bank notes, which replaced the only images of Canadian women — the Famous Five, who fought for women's rights in Canada and Therese Casgrain, a Quebec feminist — with an image of an icebreaker. Inuk artist Kenojuak Ashevak is also one of several aboriginal women suggested. Read [more](#).

Indigenous women in Latin America remain invisible in society, warns UN (The Guardian, 1 November 2014)

Indigenous women in Latin America continue to face great gaps in access to higher education, health services and employment, although there have been significant educational advances, [according to a report](#) by the UN's Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (Eclac). Access to education has improved dramatically for indigenous girls, adolescents and young women in Latin America. However, higher education remains out of reach for many, with only Costa Rica making significant advances. Despite advances in maternal healthcare in Latin America, data suggests that indigenous women are much more likely to die in childbirth or pregnancy complications. 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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