

**GWI United Nation Representative
Advocacy Report
2020**

GWI advocacy goals

1. 100% of United Nations Member States commit to policy, legislation, budget and infrastructure to facilitate transition of girls from primary to secondary school and ensure gender parity and gender equality throughout secondary education by 2030.
2. By 2030 100% of United Nations low income Member States have increased access to tertiary education for girls and women by 50%.
3. 100% of United Nations Member States commit to and implement policies for continuing education to empower women throughout the life course, within the formal and informal economies.
4. Influence the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.
5. All 17 SDGs will include girls' education targets.

Please bear in mind these five overarching, long-term goals during any United Nations intervention that you make on behalf of GWI. Any intervention should push these five goals further.

NB: *Although these goals represent GWI's mission, our United Nations Representatives are should always promote all GWI key messages and represent GWI professionally.*

Name: Sophie Turner Zaretsky

City of UN Representation: New York

Session/meeting attended: (place, date, time, name of meeting)
Beijing+25 Civil Society Town Hall. A virtual intergenerational discussion.
October 19,2020.

Subject of session/meeting:

Generation Equality: The new normal we want to build post COVID-19.

Although the Generation Equality Forum, convened by UN Women, co-hosted by Mexico and France, and in partnership with civil society (CS)and youth organisations, has been postponed to 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it remains a critical platform through which UN Women and its partners are mobilizing support for all women and girls, and particularly youth-led organizations, grassroots organizations, and solidarity networks that are leading national efforts to build resilience, build-back better and build-back. Inclusion, diversity, intergenerational dialogue, and active participation of young people are at the heart of the Forum. Participatory dialogues, design workshops, curated discussions, consultations, and public engagement, with a diverse representation of voices, are ensuring that the broadest range of voices and expertise possible, continues to inform the Forum's planning, decision-making and implementation processes. The Forum is fostering a multi-stakeholder movement for gender equality and launching a set of Action Coalitions for the acceleration of progress on gender equality across the world. It has emphasized the importance of intergenerational solidarity and intersectional and intergenerational feminist movement building. The Forum is driving for bold action towards the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the UN Decade of Action.

Sustainable Development Goals addressed: All

Relevant treaties/conventions/resolutions referenced/addressed:

2020 marks the 25th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA), the 20th anniversary of Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, and the 5th anniversary of the Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the 10th anniversary of UN Women, and the seventy fifth anniversary of the UN.

Summary of session/meeting:

Among some gains enumerated by the panel pre COVID have been:

- Regulations to remove gender discrimination and to combat Gender Based Violence (GBV), although implementation lags in many countries,
- Increased girls' enrollment in school,
- Decreased maternal and infant mortality rate,
- Increased incidence of maternity and paternity leave,
- Increase in number of Women Heads of State, Ministers and Ambassadors.

However, as stated by Phumzile-Mlambo Ngcuka, the head of UN Women there has not been enough progress, the gap between governments and civil society needs to close, and women must be present everywhere decisions are made.

Some of the challenges due to COVID brought up by speakers from around the world were:

- Increase in GBV especially seen in societies with right wing movements and when there are lockdowns trapping women and girls in unsafe environments.
- Economic effect of the pandemic has led to decreased funding of social protection, including shelters for abused women, access to health care. There is less attention to the feminist agenda as people have to deal with loss of jobs, food insecurity, and loss of family members.
- Technology provides opportunities for learning and entrepreneurship but there are challenges such as sexual harassment.

How this serves GWI members:

- a. Explain trends in development in this particular subject.
- b. Explain why these trends and developments are relevant to GWI and NFAs.
- c. Outline what needs to be done at international and national levels.

NFAs are in a position to engage with grass roots organizations to make sure they are part of the process and are aware of UN and CSO activities and that their voices are heard. By working within GWI they have global access to state their needs and challenges as well as their accomplishments and good practices, and to work collaboratively with other NGOs.

Next steps: (What needs to be done)

- Form coalitions and break down silos to work together and speak with a united voice.
- Intergenerational participation and dialogue is essential.
- Need to advocate for redistribution of wealth and against racism and discrimination.
- Demand that governments implement all the SDGs but particularly those dealing with poverty, gender equality and climate change.
- Demand accountability.
- Demand funding.

- Demand access to leadership positions.
- Demand implementation of the Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- Advocate for GWI agenda-especially lifelong learning.

Submitted by Sophie Turner Zaretsky.

GWI Representative to the UN