



# CSW 66 SUMMARY REPORT

*“Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes”.*

**Louise McLeod, VP Advocacy and Education**



**Commission on the Status of Women 66<sup>th</sup> Session (CSW 66) 2022**  
**14-25 March 2022<sup>1</sup>**  
**Virtual Participation**

***Priority Theme***

*“Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes”.*

***Review Theme***

The session also reviewed the agreed conclusions of the [agreed conclusions](#) of the sixty-first session), “Women’s economic empowerment in the changing world of work”.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw66-2022>

## The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. A functional commission of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), it was established by Council resolution 11(II) of 21 June 1946.

The CSW is instrumental in promoting women's rights, documenting the reality of women's lives throughout the world, and shaping global standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

NGOs that are accredited to and in good standing with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) were permitted to designate representatives to attend the annual sessions of the CSW. GWI members in good standing were invited to register CSW66.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the sixty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women took place in a hybrid environment: in person at the UN Headquarters in New York City and virtually/online (including the general discussion, ministerial round tables and interactive events and negotiations of Agreed Conclusions). This format took into account the constraints and opportunities as they might present themselves in the changing and evolving environment of the COVID-19 pandemic and the related safety and health guidelines implemented at the United Nations Headquarters. All side events took place fully virtually.

### *The Bureau for the 66th session (2022) of the Commission on the Status of Women*

The Bureau for the 66th session (2022) of the Commission on the Status of Women comprises the following members:

- H.E. Ms. Mathu Joyini (South Africa), Chair (African States Group)
- Ms. Pilar Eugenio (Argentina), Vice-Chair (Latin American and Caribbean States Group)
- H.E. Ms. Antje Leendertse (Germany), Vice-Chair designate (Western European and Other States Group)
- Mr. Māris Burbergs (Latvia), Vice-Chair designate (Eastern European States Group)
- Ms. Hye Ryoung Song (Republic of Korea), Vice-Chair designate (Asia and Pacific States Group)

### *Organization of the Session*

The Commission's two-weeks session included the following activities: [Organization of Work](#)

### *Side Events*

All side events took place virtually. Click here for [Information about side events and activities organized outside of the formal programme of the session](#)

### *Official UN Documents*



Click here for [CSW 66 Official Documents](#) and NGO written statements.

## CSW 66 Session Outcomes

### A. Agreed Conclusions

The outcome of the Commission's consideration of the priority theme during its 66th session takes the form of agreed conclusions, to be negotiated by all Member States. The Commission on the Status of Women adopted agreed conclusions on "Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes" on 25 March 2022.



Click here for [CSW66 Agreed Conclusions - Advance Unedited Version](#)

### B. Resolutions



The Commission on the Status of Women adopted:

- [E/CN.6/2022/L.3](#)  
a resolution on "Women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS", without a vote
- [E/CN.6/2022/L.4](#)  
a resolution on "Release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts", without a vote
- [E/CN.6/2022/L.5](#)  
**a resolution on "Future organization and methods of work of the Commission on the Status of Women", for action by the Economic and Social Council (see further details / explanation page 7 this document)**
- [E/CN.6/2022/L.6](#)  
a resolution on the "Thirtieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women", for action by the Economic and Social Council

### C. Initiatives to Address Climate Change<sup>2</sup>

The Executive Director of UN Women, Sima Bahous, said: *"The agreements reached by the Commission come at a point when the world urgently needs new and coherent solutions to the interlocking crises that impact us all. We now have a pathway with practical, specific measures for global resilience and recovery, and a shared understanding that solutions depend on bringing women and girls to the centre. Let's capitalize on the work done here, put these agreements into immediate practice and move these decisions forward through all the major forums ahead, including COP27."*

Initiatives to address climate change, environmental and disaster and risk reduction must consider the following:

1. **Promoting women's and girls' full and equal participation and leadership to make natural resource management and climate, environment and disaster risk action more**

---

<sup>2</sup> Press release: [UN Commission on the Status of Women reaffirms women's and girls' leadership as key to address climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction for all](#)

**effective.** Women and girls are taking climate and environment action at all levels, but their voice, agency and participation needs to be further supported, resourced, valued and recognized.

2. **Expanding gender-responsive finance at scale for climate and environment action and to reach women's organizations, enterprises and cooperatives.** Following the commitments undertaken under the Paris Agreement and the Glasgow Climate Pact on mitigation, adaptation and the provision and mobilization of finance, technology transfer and capacity-building, developed countries need to mobilize and meet their obligation to developing countries and small island developing States. In addition, climate finance must be increasingly gender-responsive to strengthen the capacities of women, youth and local and marginalized communities and their organizations.
3. **Building women's resilience in the context of agricultural and food systems, forest and fisheries management and the sustainable energy transition.** Soils, forests, fisheries and oceans are principal sources of income, livelihood, social protection and employment, particularly for women and girls living in poverty. Equal access and rights to important resources and productive assets such as land, water, technology, technical advice and information can result in greater food security, renewable energy, and more just, resilient and sustainable systems for all.
4. **Enhancing gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data in the gender-environment nexus; and fostering gender-responsive just transitions.** Disaggregated data and gender statistics on climate change, environmental degradation and disaster risk reduction, especially with regard to gender differences in vulnerability and adaptive approaches, will enhance the capacity of policymakers to develop and adopt effective, evidence-based policies and programmes at all levels and boost women's and girls' specific contributions to environmental conservation and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

## Speeches and Statements



- Speech: Agreement on action for a just, safe and sustainable planet  
Closing remarks by United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women, Sima Bahous to the 66th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, 25 March 2022
- Speech: To combat climate shocks, protect women's rights and strengthen their resilience and leadership  
Remarks by United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women, Sima Bahous, at the UN Women side event, 'Climate Shocks Exacerbating Humanitarian Crisis, Insecurity and Gender Inequality – Voices from the Sahel and Afghanistan', at the 66th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, 21 March 2022
- Speech: Calling for a major shift in action, policies and investments  
Remarks by Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of UN Women, Sima Bahous, at the UN Women side event, 'Beyond COVID-19: Advancing Gender Responsive Policies on Climate, Care and Jobs for a Sustainable and Equal Future', at the 66th session of the Commission on the Status of Women
- Speech: Bringing transformative change with accountability and accelerated pace  
Opening remarks by Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of UN Women, Sima Bahous, at the corporate side event, Generation Equality: The Journey Ahead – High-level Multistakeholder Intergenerational Dialogue, at the 66th session of the Commission on the Status of Women



As evidence began to accumulate in the 1960s that women were disproportionately affected by poverty, the work of the Commission centred on women's needs in community and rural development, agricultural work, family planning, and scientific and technological advances. The Commission encouraged the UN system to expand its technical assistance to further the advancement of women, especially in developing countries.

### 1972

In 1972, to mark its 25th anniversary, the Commission recommended that 1975 be designated International Women's Year—an idea endorsed by the General Assembly to draw attention to women's equality with men and to their contributions to development and peace. The year was marked by holding the First World Conference on Women in Mexico City, followed by the 1976–1985 UN Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace. Additional world conferences took place in Copenhagen in 1980 and Nairobi in 1985. New UN offices dedicated to women were established, in particular the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW).

### 1987 – 1994

In 1987, as part of follow-up to the Third World Conference on Women in Nairobi, the Commission took the lead in coordinating and promoting the UN system's work on economic and social issues for women's empowerment. Its efforts shifted to promoting women's issues as cross-cutting and part of the mainstream, rather than as separate concerns. In the same period, the Commission helped bring violence against women to the forefront of international debates for the first time. These efforts resulted in the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women adopted by the General Assembly on 20 December 1993. In 1994, a UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences to be appointed by the Commission on Human Rights, with a mandate to investigate and report on all aspects of violence against women.

### 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women → Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

The Commission served as the preparatory body for the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, which adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. After the conference, the Commission was mandated by the General Assembly **to play a central role in monitoring implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and advising ECOSOC accordingly**. As called for in the Platform for Action, an additional UN office for the promotion of gender equality was established: the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI).

### 2011 UN Women Established

In 2011, the four parts of the UN system mentioned on this page—**DAW, INSTRAW, OSAGI and UNIFEM**—merged to become **UN Women, now the Secretariat of the Commission on the Status of Women**.

### 2015-2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs)

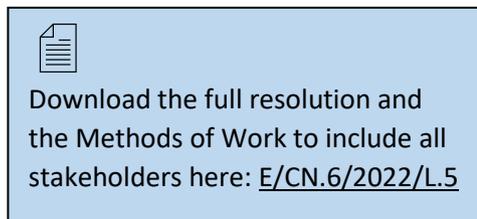
The progress made by the Commission in the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995) in putting key gender equality issues onto the global agenda, and in encouraging action and implementation at the national level is described by the **Commission's work with civil society and other stakeholders, and how the Commission now also contributes to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**.

## A resolution on "Future organization and methods of work of the Commission on the Status of Women"

*For action by the Economic and Social Council*

**“Reaffirming the primary responsibility of the Commission for the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995) and outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly...”**

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) put forth a resolution 8 June 2015 to review, as appropriate, its methods of work to take into account the process of aligning the agendas of the General Assembly and the Council and its subsidiary bodies to further enhance the impact of the work of the Commission and **reaffirming the primary responsibility of the Commission for the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995) and outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century.”**<sup>4</sup>



This work includes (amongst other things):

- the commitment to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls contained in the 2030 Agenda, and acknowledging that the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls is crucial to making progress across all Sustainable Development Goals and targets and that the achievement of full human potential and of sustainable development is not possible if women and girls are denied opportunities and the full realization of their human rights
- Recognizing the key role of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) in supporting the work of the Commission
- Reaffirming the primary responsibility of Member States in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and recognizing the efforts of Member States towards achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls
- **<sup>5</sup>Recognizing the importance of non-governmental organizations, as well as other civil society actors, in advancing the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and, in this respect, the work of the Commission**
  - continue to strengthen existing opportunities for non-governmental organizations, in accordance with Council resolutions 1996/6 and 1996/31, to contribute to the work of the Commission, including by allocating time for them to deliver statements on themes relevant to the session, during panels and interactive dialogues and at the end of the general discussion, taking into account geographical distribution
  - continue to ensure the participation of relevant stakeholders from all regions, including non-governmental organizations, civil society and youth, in accordance with the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Council, so as to

---

<sup>4</sup> General Assembly resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

<sup>5</sup> Of importance to NGOs due to a growing and noticeable gap in the ability of civil society to engage in meaningful dialog and decision-making.

leave no one behind, including through increased attention to accessibility, and to consider ways to strengthen their contribution, in consultation with Member States and mindful of the intergovernmental nature of the Commission

- Recognizing multi-stakeholder efforts on the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, and the realization of their human rights, and taking note of all international, regional and national initiatives in this regard

## 2 Ways GWI Members Attended CSW 66

### 1. Via the United Nations and UN Women

Open to UN Member States and ECOSOC Status NGOs (including GWI INDICO Registered Representatives)

- a. Official UN CSW 66 Events
  - ❖ Opening and Closing Ceremonies
  - ❖ Panel Discussions and Round Tables
  - ❖ Side Events
  - ❖ Official Meetings
  - ❖ Gender Equality Forum
- b. CSW Outcomes: Member State Agreed Conclusions

**Virtual: [webtv.un.org](http://webtv.un.org)**

#### *GWI Participation*

- ❖ Written Statement and co-sponsored written statements (see attached below)
- ❖ Agreed Conclusions Zero Draft Submissions (see attached below)
- ❖ GWI Representatives

### 2. Via the NGO CSW CSW 66 Forum

Open to everyone (Civil Society).

- Parallel Events
- Consultation Day
- Exhibit Hall
- Conversation Circles
- Regional Caucuses
- Artisan Fair
- Interactive Forum

**Virtual: [www.ngocsw.org](http://www.ngocsw.org)**

#### *GWI Participation*

- 3 Parallel Events

## *GWI CSW66 Written Statement*

*Graduate Women International and its statement cosponsors call on Member States to fund and prioritize women's and girls' education so that they are empowered to speak climate truth and justice to power.*

As the world experiences rising temperatures and unprecedented disaster-related crises, climate change has never been so alarming and addressing the consequences more critical. Climate change has already resulted in environmental degradation and apocalyptic disasters that have taken the lives of tens of thousands of people. Furthermore, multiple, evidence based sources indicate that climate change adversely affects the world population's most vulnerable and marginalised groups, and impacts differently women and girls in particular<sup>6</sup>. Women and girls are at 14 times greater risk of death from climate-related disasters,

Climate change, degraded environments and ensuing disasters, combined with economic factors, social structures persistent discrimination and harmful gender norms, continually put women and girls at a much higher risk for diminished health, poverty, food and water insecurity, violence, trafficking, loss of rights particularly to education.

Time is critical and action is required to protect their essential rights. Their right to education which is both a basic human right and a right necessary to achieve other human rights<sup>7</sup>, is under severe threat as societies move further into the climate crisis and as decision-makers fail to recognise that widespread inclusive, equal and quality women's education is one of the most effective weapons to combat it.

Members of the civil society have been sounding the alarm for decades about the need to take concrete action to protect against the consequences of climate change. They have repeatedly emphasized the need to include women's perspectives in policy and decision making at the local, national and international levels but these perspectives have largely been ignored.

Graduate Women International (GWI), committed to United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, education for all, and to the empowerment of all women and girls through safe access to quality education, emphatically posits that women's perspectives must be included and that there is an intrinsic link between women's education and political participation: Studies have shown that the

---

<sup>6</sup> UNDP Linkages Gender and CC Policy Brief, 2016 <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/gender-and-climatechange-overview-linkages-between-gender-and-climate-change>

UNFCCC Report, Differentiated impacts of climate change on women and men; the integration of gender considerations in climate policies, plans and actions; and progress in enhancing gender balance in national climate delegations, June 2019 - [https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/sbi2019\\_inf8.pdf](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/sbi2019_inf8.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights at the Twenty-first Session, E/C.12/1999/10, (article 13), 8 December 1999

[https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Education/Training/Compilation/Pages/d\)GeneralCommentNo13Therighttoeducation\(article13\)\(1999\).aspx](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Education/Training/Compilation/Pages/d)GeneralCommentNo13Therighttoeducation(article13)(1999).aspx)

higher the level of women's formal education, the more their tendency to participate in policy development in general.

It is equally important to include poor women engaged in subsistence farming as it is to involve women who may not be as economically challenged. When women farmers, who are arguably the first victims of climate change and natural disasters and the forerunners of climate adaptation are engaged, climate change mitigation programs and policies can be built on their experiences in crop resilience planning, innovation in scarce resource management and environmental conservation.

However, GWI cannot emphasize enough that the key to building these capacities is education for poor women and girls. For these women and girls, education has the power to not only to empower their participation in climate programs and policies, but to unleash their innately knowledgeable capacities in the accomplishment of SDG 13: "Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts".

Similarly, involving educated women in general, harnesses their core academic competencies, expertise, critical problem-solving and decision-making skills to climate change mitigation policies and programs. For, instance, the existing correlations show that having women in positions of political authority leads to lower carbon footprints, and when there is a great number of women in parliament, there is a higher ratification of environmental treaties<sup>8</sup>. It has been demonstrated that among American students, women are more concerned and aware about climate change and its emergency than men<sup>4</sup>, even if they represent less than a third of students enrolled in studies preparing for future green jobs worldwide<sup>9</sup>.

Women, regardless of economic or social background, are usually first to adapt, are first responders in community responses to natural disasters, leaders in disaster risk-reduction, and contribute to post recovery by addressing the early recovery needs of their families and strengthening community building.

When women, in general, are invited to participate in policy development, to share their practical experiences and knowledge in climate adaptation, analytical abilities, skills and innovative ideas, crucial capacities are built into all SDGs

GWI encourages governments to invest in women's education as they are powerful actors of climate action, who will ultimately strengthen community response and adaptation to climate change and to building much needed capacities into policies and programs. GWI reminds Member States that whereas education remains the most powerful foundation to develop capacities. Eleven million girls

---

<sup>8</sup> UNFCCC, Differentiated impacts of climate change on women and men; the integration of gender considerations in climate policies, plans and actions; and progress in enhancing gender balance in national climate delegations, 2019,

[https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/sbi2019\\_inf8.pdf](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/sbi2019_inf8.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>9</sup> Generation Equality Forum, Feminist Action For Climate Justice – Action Coalition – Visual, 2021  
[https://forum.generationequality.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/FACJ\\_FINAL\\_VISUAL\\_EN\\_0.pdf](https://forum.generationequality.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/FACJ_FINAL_VISUAL_EN_0.pdf)

will not return to school after the COVID-19 pandemic<sup>10</sup> and more evidence exists showing that both education and girls are too often the first to be sacrificed in times of crisis. Since women and girls constitute 70% of the world's poor, rendering them uniquely vulnerable to the climate crisis<sup>11</sup>, years of progress and effort towards gender equality in education must not be reversed but reinforced with the provision of inclusive and equal systems of education together with tools that will facilitate girls' and women's skills and power to act against climate change.

As an organization comprised of 52 national affiliates, many in developing countries where the climate crisis severely impacts millions of women and girls, GWI calls member states to fulfil their obligation related to the protection of the rights guaranteed under the Convention on the Discrimination against Women, in particular General Recommendation No. 37 on Gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change<sup>12</sup>. Indeed, ensuring that women's and girls' education reduces their vulnerability to the climate crisis and contributes to their perception as a resource that is needed for response and capacity building efforts.

SDG 13: Climate Action is more than just States' responsibility: it is a global compact that must meaningfully include women who comprise half the world's population without which inclusion, the world stands to lose its most valuable resources in the completion of all SDGs and falling short of the 2030 Agenda.

GWI warns that, unless women's practical learning and experiences, abilities to analyze and solve problems and make recommendations are built into all climate change mitigation efforts, climate change is on track to accelerate exponentially within a mere five years

Therefore, GWI appeals to the 66<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women to urge Member States to:

- Understand the gendered dimensions of climate change and all efforts at recovery from and reduction of change.
- Support and encourage traditionally excluded populations of women and girls to share their success at climate adaptation and then replicate these models.
- Fund and prioritize women's and girls' access to education and retention up to the highest levels of learning, so that they may be empowered to speak climate truth and justice to power.
- Incentivize Member States to include women in all programs and policy development
- Include all women and their innate expertise, academic learning, analytical and critical skills to build much need capacities into the accomplishment of SDG 13 as also a means to achieve SDG 4.

---

<sup>10</sup> UNESCO COVID-19 education response: how many students are at risk of not returning to school? Advocacy paper, 30 July 2020 <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000373992>

<sup>11</sup> International Labour Organisation (ILO), Facts on Women at Work, [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/--dcomm/documents/publication/wcms\\_067595.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/--dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_067595.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> CEDAW General Recommendation 37, [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/1\\_Global/CEDAW\\_C\\_GC\\_37\\_8642\\_E.pdf](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/1_Global/CEDAW_C_GC_37_8642_E.pdf)

## **GW I Co-Sponsored CSW 66 Written Statements**

### **GW I CSW66 Written Statement**



#### **E/CN.6/2022/NGO/21 Graduate Women International**

Co-sponsors: **Canadian Federation of University Women, Federación Mexicana de Universitarias, Federation of American Women's Clubs Overseas (FAWCO), International Alliance of Women, International Council of Women, International Federation of Business and Professional Women, Latter-day Saint Charities, Make Mothers Matter, National Alliance of Women's Organizations, Soroptimist International, Widows Rights International, Women Graduates-USA, Inc., Women's Federation for World Peace International, and Zonta International**

### **GW I Sponsored CSW66 Written Statements**



#### **E/CN.6/2022/NGO/121 Women Graduates-USA**

Canadian Federation of University Women, Federación Mexicana de Universitarias, Graduate Women International (GWI), and Women Graduates – USA, Inc.

#### **E/CN.6/2022/NGO/30**

Graduate Women International (GWI), International Alliance of Women, International Council of Women, International Federation of Business and Professional Women, Soroptimist International, and Zonta International

#### **E/CN.6/2022/NGO/143**

Associated Country Women of the World, Graduate Women International (GWI), Mother's Union, National Alliance of Women's Organizations, National Board of Catholic Women of England and Wales, National Council of Women in Great Britain, Northern Ireland Women's European Platform, Soroptimist International Great Britain and Ireland (SIGBI) Limited, United Nations Association of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UNA-UK), Wales Assembly of Women, Widows for Peace through Democracy, Widows Rights International, Womankind Worldwide, and Zonta International

#### **E/CN.6/2022/NGO/30**

Graduate Women International (GWI), International Alliance of Women, International Council of Women, International Federation of Business and Professional Women, Soroptimist International, and Zonta International

#### **E/CN.6/2022/NGO/103**

Associated Country Women of the World, Graduate Women International (GWI), Mother's Union, National Alliance of Women's Organizations, National Board of Catholic Women of England and Wales, National Council of Women of Canada, National Council of Women in Great Britain, Northern Ireland Women's European Platform, Soroptimist International, Soroptimist International Great Britain and Ireland (SIGBI) Limited, United Nations Association of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UNA-UK), Wales Assembly of Women, Widows for Peace through Democracy, Widows Rights International, and Zonta International

## From the Zero Draft to the Agreed Conclusions – GWI Recommendations

The outcome of the Commission’s consideration of the priority theme during its 66th session takes the form of agreed conclusions, to be negotiated by all Member States. The first format of the Agreed Conclusions is presented to the member states in early February in the form of a Zero Draft. NGOs were invited in late November 2021 to submit their own recommendations for inclusion in the Zero Draft.

GWI submitted several recommendations to the Zero Draft for inclusion in the Agreed Conclusions and monitored the negotiations closely during CSW 66, submitting further recommendations if such was possible.

The GWI Zero Draft Recommendations were prepared by Executive Director Stacy Dry Lara and GWI members from the GWI Education Committee, the GWI United Nations Representatives in NYC and the VP Advocacy and Education: *Maureen Byrne, Shirley Gillette, Maryella Hannum, Stacy Dry Lara, Louise McLeod, Shaila Mistry, Polly Woodard, Sophie Zaretsky*

## ***GWI Zero Draft Recommendations to Member States for inclusion in the CSW 66 Agreed Conclusions***

**7 December 2021**

**Dear H.E. Ambassador Mathu Joyini, Chair of CSW 66 Bureau, 2022:**

Graduate Women International (GWI) respectfully submits the following recommendations for inclusion in the CSW66 Zero Draft. After weeks of collaborative research and outreach by GWI Zero Draft Task Force comprised of GWI members from around the globe, we have identified these as **critical concerns regarding the inclusion of education** in “the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes”. (CSW66 Priority Theme). Our work is well-cited for convenience.

GWI is in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council since 1947 and maintains official relations with the UNESCO and the ILO. GWI is a membership-based international NGO headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, with presence in over 60 countries. Founded in 1919, GWI advocates for women and girls’ right to equality and empowerment through the safe access to quality education and training up to the highest levels.

**We hope that identifying these globally representative issues will assist you as you create the Zero Draft for CSW66 which will be addressing the most significant challenges in education faced today.**

**Commission on the Status of Women 66<sup>th</sup> Session (CSW66)**  
**Zero Draft Recommendations**  
**Education**

*Submitted by GWI members: Maureen Byrne, Shirley Gillette, Maryella Hannum, Stacy Dry Lara, Louise McLeod, Shaila Mistry, Polly Woodard, Sophie Zaretsky*

**Climate change is not gender neutral.** It acts as a risk multiplier for women in climate-affected areas who are disproportionately impacted by climate change. At the same time, women are uniquely positioned to contribute to meaningful climate action. From the grassroots to the institutional level, women bring valuable insight and leadership urgently needed to build climate-resilient communities, lower carbon emissions, and initiate the necessary adaptations to combat the negative effects of climate change.

**Climate Action is more than just States' responsibility:** it is a global compact that must meaningfully include women who comprise half the world's population without which inclusion, the world stands to lose its most valuable resources in the completion of all SDGs and falling short of the 2030 Agenda.<sup>13</sup>

1. **Legal:** Significant standard-setting instruments - conventions, declarations, recommendations, and charters – provide a normative framework for the right to education. They are of great importance because they give Member States a means of translating the right to an education into concrete national-level action that can then be monitored for implementation. Some of these instruments have legally binding force, mainly conventions and treaties. UNESCO's Convention Against Discrimination in Education (1962) has been ratified by 102 States and has binding force in international law. Other instruments include, but are not limited to, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979), and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (1966). Article 13 of this latter document is the most comprehensive on the right to education.
2. **Policy-making:** *Incentivize Member States to include women in all programs and policy development.*
  - a. Education for girls and women is the most important **policy initiative** that can be made in the face of climate change. Education brings empowerment. Girls and women learn their rights, develop skills needed in the new economy, understand how to use social media and advocacy to advance their cause, and develop the knowledge and confidence to demand to 'a seat at the table' where climate change policy- and decision-making takes place. When women obtain political empowerment, their presence is strongly linked to better environmental outcomes, including but not limited to the creation of more protected land areas, ratification of environmental treaties, stricter climate change policies, and smaller environmental footprints.

---

<sup>13</sup> GWI Written Statement to CSW 66

- b. To date the perspectives of women in policy and decision-making at the local, national and international levels as been largely ignored while the need has been repeatedly emphasized. Educated women can harness their core academic competencies, expertise, critical problem-solving and decision-making skills to climate change mitigation policies and programmes leading to lower carbon footprints. There is an intrinsic link between women’s education and political participation: The higher the level of women's formal education, the more the more women participate in policy development. A greater number of women in parliament results in higher ratification of environmental treaties<sup>14</sup>.
  
- c. **Education and Curricula:** *Fund and prioritize women’s and girls’ access to education and retention up to the highest levels of learning, so that they may be empowered to speak climate truth and justice to power.* Years of progress and effort towards gender equality in education must not be reversed but reinforced with the provision of inclusive and equal systems of education together with tools that will facilitate girls’ and women’s skills and power to act against climate change. The Malala Fund estimates that in 2021 climate-related events will prevent at least four million girls in low- and lower-middle-income countries from completing their education. If current trends continue, by 2025 climate change will be a factor in preventing at least 12.5 million girls from completing their education each year! (Girls’ Education Challenges Index GECI & ND-GAIN Index).
  - a. **Make climate change a core curriculum subject;** one that is taught in students’ primary language and in terms of the impact on their local community and nation. This curriculum must include the changes needed in terms of school infrastructure, how to prepare for natural disasters including migration and displacement, how to provide education, both low- and high-tech, if access to school buildings is not available, and what regulations and penalties must be implemented to successfully meet the challenge of climate change.
  
  - b. **Quality Climate Change Education (CCE):** Call for CCE that is genderempowering and gender responsive, intersectorial, and transdisciplinary, based in science, fosters civic engagement and climate action, and builds pathways to future careers in the green economy.
    - i. CCE to ensure and prepare for the needs of the present and future workforce (green economy). <sup>15</sup> CCE to include teaching how different groups, like women and girls, are differentially impacted by climate change. Engage with teachers, education unions, farmers, and other sectors (key stakeholder groups) to address and deliver quality CCE.

---

<sup>14</sup> UNFCCC, Differentiated impacts of climate change on women and men; the integration of gender considerations in climate policies, plans and actions; and progress in enhancing gender balance in national climate delegations, 2019,

[https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/sbi2019\\_inf8.pdf](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/sbi2019_inf8.pdf) <sup>4</sup>

*Ibid*

<sup>15</sup> (Source: Benchmarks for Education International (EI) Climate Change Education as reported by Christina Kwauk and published by Education International, November 2021).

- ii. **Financing:** Call for financing of public education to support the delivery of quality CCE. Ensure that teachers receive adequate training and continuing professional development to deliver quality CCE, and that developing countries receive international support in the development and implementation of quality CCE with wealthy industrial nations taking a leading role in providing funding (Climate Justice).
  - iii. **Crisis education response:** Strengthen education systems to support the delivery of CCE and to continue learning initiatives without interruption in times of crises. Strengthening education systems calls for funding and resources to redesign education systems to continue forward during emergencies. Call for international cooperation to support education and training opportunities and more funding to revamp education systems to deal with crisis and emergency response with limited interruption in girls education. Engaging families and communities to prevent interruptions, develop education infrastructure to withstand extreme weather events and other crises including the ability of school leaders, administrators and leaders to deliver quality educational programs in times of crises, and to enable learners to continue their studies without interruption. To keep girls at the center of the redesigned education systems (crucial). Engage the families of girls in times of crises and emergencies. Develop education emergency systems.
- c. **Gender-Equal Green Learning Agenda** (Malala Fund Report) is a new framework to help leaders simultaneously address girls' education and the climate change crises. The framework consists of four pillars: 1) **Access:** Getting all girls in school and learning for 12 years; 2) **Skills:** Teaching girls an expanded vision of green skills; 3) **Values:** Promoting sustainable values through climate education; and 4) **Activism:** Empowering students to take action on climate justice. It is estimated that if even 16% of high school students in middle- and high-income countries receive climate change education, carbon dioxide emissions would be reduced by 19 gigatons by the year 2050.
- d. **Investment in girls' STEM education** can encourage girls and women to participate in and lead innovations in climate-resilient and green technologies, bringing a gendered perspective that supports more effective and inclusive solutions. Promote equal rights and opportunity for all genders through every aspect of education, including curriculum content and learning materials, learning environments, teacher practice and school management. Girls increased participation in STEM classes ensures there will be a large, skilled workforce to support a successful transition to a low-carbon economy. UNICEF and ITU in The Joint Report (2020) remind us again of the global gender divide not just in STEM but also in access and use of the internet, in digital skills and digital tools, and in tech sector leadership and entrepreneurship. Women need to be Leading Innovation at the highest levels.

- e. **Ensure that NDCs (Nationally Determined Contribution) commit to a twintrack approach** to making education systems gender-equal and resilient so that girls do not drop out of or miss school due to climate-related events, like planning for emergency education provisions in ways that do not disadvantage girls.
3. **Economies:** Climate change will severely impact already struggling economies. When disaster strikes, too many girls will leave school and enter early marriages. Such marriages, by force or by choice, i.e., to provide their families with desperately needed income, will only lead to further generations of poverty and deprive countries of the additional human capital needed to adapt to and mitigate climate change. We already know that by keeping a girl in school even one more year adds 20% to her income as an adult. In addition, women with a secondary education can expect to make almost twice as much as those with no education. Africa could add \$316,000,000,000 or 10% of GDP from 2020-2025 if each Member State made advances in gender equality to match the Member State in their region that has achieved the most progress in parity.
4. **Data Collection:** To better determine how climate change is affecting learning, Member States must collect disaggregated data by State, gender, age, income, geographic location, and racial and ethnic identity. The information gathered can then be used to help States plan for the resources needed in the face of climate change while addressing any inequities inherent in their educational institutions.
5. **Human Rights:** *Member states are asked to fulfil their obligation related to the protection of the rights guaranteed under the Convention on the Discrimination against Women, in particular General Recommendation No. 37 on Gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change<sup>1</sup>. This year UNICEF produced the Children’s Climate Risk Index (CCRI), declaring that “... the climate crisis is a child rights’ crisis.” This is particularly bad news for girls, as they, along with women, die at 14 times the rate of males during natural disasters. UNICEF calculated the threat to children in 163 countries based on the effects of (1) *environmental threats and stresses* due to water scarcity, riverine and/or coastal flooding, cyclones, vector-borne diseases, heatwaves, drought, and air, soil, and water pollution and (2) *child vulnerability* due to inadequate health and nutrition, education, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), and social protection. Globally, nearly half of the world’s children, 1,000,000,000 in all, live in the identified extremely high-risk countries. If used, CCRI provides countries with a blueprint to address their nation’s environmental threats and decrease child vulnerability.*
6. **Rural Women and Girls:** *Include all women and their innate expertise, academic learning, analytical and critical skills to build much need capacities into the accomplishment of SDG 13 as also a means to achieve SDG 4. Support and encourage traditionally excluded populations of women and girls to share their success at climate adaptation and then replicate these models* We cannot talk about climate change without addressing the plight of rural girls and women. UNESCO (1995) stated, “women and girls are the largest single category of persons denied equality of education today. And this is particularly true in developing countries where women are a major part of agricultural workforce.” In such countries women make up 43% of agricultural workers, and up to 60% in Africa and Asia, where they farm the land and tend the forests, fisheries, and ecosystems. Yet they hold only 20% of the world’s land. If women had the same access to production resources as men, they would increase the crop output by 20 to 30% and reduce hunger by 12 to 17 %. (UN WCMC, 2000). Tapping into women’s knowledge of

the land, especially indigenous women, can provide governments, civil society, and educational institutions with the means to mitigate droughts, poor crop yields, and starvation.

7. **Legal Barriers:** The elimination of legal barriers to women's land ownership, resources, and inheritance is imperative. Removing such barriers increases education opportunities, improves livelihoods, reduces the health impacts of climate change on girls and women of all ages who suffer most from food and water insecurity and malnutrition that accompany legal barriers faced.
8. **Water:** Climate change is already affecting water access for people around the world, causing more severe droughts and floods. Increasing global temperatures are one of the main contributors to this problem. Climate change impacts the water cycle by influencing when, where, and how much precipitation falls.<sup>16</sup> Of even more concern, as the planet heats up, clean water will become an even scarcer resource. Investments to improve access to resilient water, sanitation, and hygiene services can considerably reduce overall climate risk for 415,000,000 children as well as decrease over one million deaths related to unclean births, infections, and maternal mortality, while helping to prevent hookworm infections.
  - a. **Women and Water Management:** UN Water (2021) points out that women and girls continue to carry the burden of water supply, sanitation, and health for the household. Yet fewer than 50 countries have laws that speak to the role of women and girls' involvement in rural sanitation and water management. "*Why Water is a Women's Issue*" (Concern Worldwide; 2021) elaborated on the continued perils of carrying water, which can take up to 3½ hours each day. It is physically demanding, especially for girls and pregnant women, poses risks of physical and sexual assaults, and keeps girls from school and women from completing other necessary tasks. Through education girls and women can gain the information and skills needed to address water mismanagement and pollution while demanding easier and more equitable access for their families and communities.
  - b. **Water / Migration linked to Human Trafficking:** Recent studies have linked the water crisis and climate change to human trafficking (either sexual exploitation or forced labor) as a result of 'climate migration' with predictions of as many as 1.4 billion people, 1/8 of the world's population forced to migrate more than 620 miles from their current homes by the end of the century.<sup>17</sup> Many, desperate for security and work, become victims of human trafficking especially women and girls when their lives are disrupted and their access to education including lifelong learning experiences is lost. Mitigating human trafficking can be achieved through access to clean water and adequate food, essential in keeping populations in place and girls in school. Local adaptations to housing that reduce the effects of climate change (such as flooding) and decreasing greenhouse gas emissions along with increasing government resources and strengthening enforcement against traffickers can mitigate these impacts.

---

<sup>16</sup> [How Climate Change Impacts Water Access | National Geographic Society](#)

<sup>17</sup> ["Climate Change and Human Trafficking After the Paris Agreement" by Michael B. Gerrard \(miami.edu\)](#)

## 9. Women Leading Through Technology Innovation

Women's active role as technology drivers is essential to accelerate development of technological advances in climate impact areas such as health, air and water pollution, food production, soil conservation, reforestation, carbon sequestration, and renewable energy. Yet women continue to be marginalized, and men are overrepresented on all constituted bodies on climate process with only 33 % women government delegates. Shockingly in the ICT arena women make up only 17 % of students, 19 % of managers and 9 % of developers

Women are powerful change agents bring specific knowledge, skills, and perspectives to effectively contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation. This may be actualized by women innovating technological advances and solutions, both of which critically require equitable access to participation and decision making at all levels capital financing.

## 10. Financing and Funding

### a. Gender Equity Financing

Climate change financing has largely ignored gender in their funding allocations and decision making, ultimately failing to incorporate gender dimension into their policies, programs, and projects. Climate financing can either alleviate or exacerbate gender equity and poverty, when in fact such mechanisms are catalytic to climate action and should enable, not hinder women.

Financing mechanisms can greatly sensitize mindsets to improve gender equitable deployment of funds by assessing projects through a gendered lens in their investment portfolios and women led projects. Fiscal policies responsive to women's need and gender equality objectives contribute to better economic outcomes and social benefits as stated by IMF 2016

**b. Financial support** for mitigations and adaptation to climate change for girls and women of all ages through **dedicated funds, debt cancellation, grants instead of loans, and reparations** that benefits local ecosystems, rural women and girls, **Indigenous knowledge** and youth leadership is imperative.

## 11. Climate – Collaboration and Inclusion of All Sectors.

Industry in both private and public sector equally, are the key drivers in carbon emissions and the air, water, and land pollution. Conversely both private and public sectors have the largest role in driving causation and for impact for ameliorating the effects of climate change through positive technology changes and renewable energy as well as policy and legislation. Both sectors in collaboration with civil society and academia need to aggregate efforts to educate companies, communities, and individuals to change mindsets and awareness for climate sensitive perspectives and policies for in all sectors for maximum impact and intersectionality.

12. **Women's Health:** 80% people displaced by climate change are women and are 14 times more likely to suffer health consequences and die during disasters like Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans, and the Tsunami in Haiti. Climate change, pollution, destruction of environment equally impacts both hemispheres with a reverberating intertwined negative effect on women. Climate change is the single biggest, alarming health threat facing humanity, already harming women's health disproportionality through air pollution, poor water quality, rampant disease, extreme weather events, forced displacement, food insecurity and pressures on mental health. Combined with the multiple impacts of social determinants, we are witnessing an exacerbated deterioration of women's health, compounded by the lack of good healthcare in US and globally.<sup>18</sup>

The lack of gender-disaggregated health data, disguises the needs of different life stage of women; perpetuates lack of awareness and impedes desperately needed education, awareness, and action at all levels of decision making for governments and global healthcare agencies both at global and regional level.

In summary, the gap between the existence of rights and their effective enjoyment derives from a lack of commitment by Governments to promoting and protecting those rights and the failure of Governments to inform women and men alike about them. The lack of appropriate recourse mechanisms at the national and international levels, and inadequate resources at both levels, compound the problem. The time has come for all sectors of society – governmental, civil society, business, individuals – to take the steps needed to save humanity from itself.

Respectfully,

Graduate Women International

---

<sup>18</sup> Women Graduates – USA, Inc. written statement to CSW 66

## **GWI CSW 66 Parallel Events**

**(Held virtually on the NGO CSW Forum Platform)**

The link below takes you to the GWI Vimeo channel where you can find the GWI CSW66 parallel events as well as other videos for sharing.



### ***Young Women and Climate Action: Educating a Climate Conscious Generation***

(GWI Young Members Network CSW66 parallel event, 23 March 2022)

### ***Climate Crisis and Education: A Women's Voice Included***

(GWI Education Committee CSW66 parallel event, 22 March 2022)

### ***Gendered Dimensions of Corruption and its Impact on Gender Inequality***

(GWI CSW66 parallel event, 18 March 2022)

<https://vimeo.com/user45461092>

## CSW GWI 66 parallel event

### Climate Crisis and Education: A Women's Voice Included

In this parallel event GWI representatives from five diverse regions described features of their country's story about climate crisis and related sustainability concepts particularly in relation to gender,. These were: England; Bangladesh; The Pacific; Sierra Leone and India. The stories covered included; the saving of a lake, women in coastal Bangladesh, developmental perspectives in the Pacific and the role of knowledge brokers, and the role of young people in climate initiatives in Sierra Leone and Africa. A future perspective was presented by an eleven year old describing how eco-anxiety was high among young people. Relevant educational points were presented and an overall summary. There were not a lot of questions probably as the content of the presentations was so very full but those questions asked mainly related to the young presenter's points.

There were 65 people attending and lots of positive comments made about the presentations and the overall webinar. One comment was that it was: "A great success. Well done and great content from all your team. Presenting was professional by all and time keeping spot on. I hope the recording is shared widely".

One of the best aspects, in addition to the content and presentations themselves, was the relationships that developed between the presenters during the planning and preparations. This actually began December 2021 so it was a long period of getting to know each other. Everybody mentioned how much they appreciated each others' material and how they wished to stay in touch. I feel they have become my friends and do hope they all join Graduate Women themselves. One of them who is from Bangladesh but lives in Dunedin is looking to come on the GWO committee. This is a positive outcome from such an international and communal project. The 11 year old wants to attend CSW in person next year!

The parallel event supported GWI's CSW66 written statement, the accomplishment of SDG 13 to achieve SDG 4, and UNESCO's urging that environmental education a core curriculum subject by 2025.

**Dr Shirley Gillett**

***Convener International Relations New Zealand***

### Appendix-summary of presentations

#### **Leila Matheson(London-England)**

"I am an 11-year old girl living in London, UK - one of the most polluted cities in the world. I go to Brookfield School where my I have grown up learning about this steadily approaching apocalypse.

I'm going to talk about two things. Firstly, how I feel about climate change, including the anxiety I have around this issue. I worry most about the people who think this is only going to affect the future - they believe that their actions will have no consequences that they will have to live through - because for them there is no reason to help. These people must be given a reason to fight for Mother Nature.

And secondly, my hopes for 2040 and what little changes are required to get there."

### **Meera Bondre(Pune-India)**

I will present the first hand experience of the actual campaign I launched to save a fresh water Quarry lake in the industrial city like Pune, **India**. This was during 1984- 85. This campaign against the wrong development policies was successful and the lake was saved from the onslaught of concrete. In the process I have been able to educate the civic authorities, the school and college students and teachers , the common citizens , and even some of the scientists. *(The UN took notice of this and I was invited to present my work)*

All over the world water bodies play a crucial role in adequately controlling the climate. I am sure this case study will be useful anywhere when such environmental challenges occur.

Since 22 March is the World Water Day it is very appropriate.

### **Davephine Tholley (Sierra Leone)**

My presentation will focus on empowering young people to contribute to mitigating the climate crisis using Sierra Leone as a case study. I'll also highlight how to do so and sample initiatives that can be pioneered by young people in Africa.

### **Niki Goulding (Fiji)**

What are some examples of work that are being done to help ensure that development initiatives in the Pacific are effectively addressing the climate impacts, needs and anxieties of women and other marginalised communities. Most recently I've been part of a team that delivered training to participants from 21 Pacific Hydrological Meteorological Services (HMS) on integrating GESI into their organisation and services, this also included a session whereby women from grassroot organisations voiced the impacts of recent cyclones and on-going slow onset climate change. I have also worked with IFRC where we worked with local Met offices, Disaster Offices and local communities to design early warning systems that were sensitive to the different needs and access to resources in the community.)

As part of the above I can talk about the important role of knowledge brokers in bridging the knowledge (moving towards 2024) between organisations and people working in the climate and disaster space and in the women's empowerment space.

Niki presented in Talanoa style which is an integral part of Pacific culture and is essentially about communicating through storytelling and dialogue;

### **Shaila Reo Mistry(Los Angeles) bought out the educational aspects of the topic.**

How does climate affect women and girls – different aspects

- How is Education Key to addressing climate change – effective change
- Futurist Trends in Education – Frame education and how it has changed
- Whom are we educating? – Opportunity to make a difference
- Womens role in education and equity - Intersectionality

**Momtaj Khalil (Bangladesh)**

**Women’s immobility and *in-situ* adaptation to climate change in Bangladesh**

While male members of the family migrated to cities for job opportunities after major disasters (e.g., cyclone, flooding), women in coastal Bangladesh remain immobile and in *in-situ* due to socio-cultural and religious factors. Women’s immobility and social disruption possesses some positive results, which allowed women to build links with NGOs to explore in-situ adaptation. I explored how these coastal communities, particularly ‘women’ in this case, devise *in-situ* adaptation strategies in response to climate change.

It was concluded by **Shruti Sonthalia (Mumbai-India)** who summarized and connected up the presentations thoughtfully.

www.graduatewomen.org ©2022

## Climate Crisis and Education: A woman's voice included

GWI experts on the role of education in the current teaching on climate crises and environmental migration regarding women and girls will tell their country's story about the climate crisis and related sustainability concepts.

Graduate Women International presents a  
CSW 66 Parallel Event  
**22 March 2022**  
**4:00 pm - 5:30 pm EDT**

**Register here**

**Moderators**  
**Shirley Gillett PhD (New Zealand), Shruti Sonthalia (India)**

**Speakers**

**Meera Bondre PhD**  
Ecologist and Hydrobiologist,  
Founder Trustee of the Environment  
Education NGO, Arbutus  
Expertise: Environment  
education and protection  
**India**

**Davephine Tholley**  
Civil Engineer  
Expertise: Engineering and Technology; environmental conservation (with a focus on reforestation of water catchment areas); creative arts and media; girls' and women empowerment issues  
**Sierra Leone**

**Nicollette Goulding (Niki)**  
Development Consultant  
Masters in International Affairs  
Expertise: environmental science, climate change and disaster risk reduction  
**Fiji**

**Shaila Rao Mistry**  
BS, MA, MS, MA, MSW, FWPI  
Founder and President of Jayco MMI,  
CEO of STEM-Institute, University of California - Advisory Board  
Expertise: Organizational growth, leadership development, strategy and foresight planning; economic growth, best business practices, diversity and gender equity, education and health  
**United States**

**Momtaj Bintay Khalil**  
PhD in Sustainable Futures  
Expertise: gender and social work, women's engagement with local government and NGOs, women's place-based knowledge in climate adaptation, policy analysis  
**Bangladesh**

**Leila Matheson**  
Leila is an eleven-year old girl living in London, UK - one of the most polluted cities in the world. She goes to Brookfield School where she has grown up learning about climate change and is passionate about the topic.  
**United Kingdom**

Since 1919, GWI is the leading girls' and women's NGO and international network of graduate women advocating for education rights, gender equality and empowerment through safe access to quality education and lifelong training. GWI maintains special consultative status with ECOSOC since 1947 and official relations with UNESCO and ILO.

## Reports

### **Rapporteurs**

- GWI UN Representatives New York, Vienna<sup>19</sup>
- Louise McLeod, VP Advocacy and Education

### ***Executive Summary by Topic of Importance***

#### ***UN Study reveals that only 1 country is almost on track to meet indicator of SDG 5 (Gender Equality)***

#### **CLIMATE CRISIS**

- Over the next decade global temperature will rise by 1.5 degree C.
- COP 26 was "male, pale and stale" per Mary Robinson. Governments must provide plan for climate change for COP27 to be held in Egypt where fortunately there are good women leaders.
- Globally, we must transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy.

#### **COVID 19**

- Pandemic revealed gross economic, gender, minority related and geographic inequalities including access to vaccines and treatments.
- OXFAM report found 99% of humanity was worse off in last 2 years. The poor and marginalized were affected disproportionately.
- Leaders of nations made huge mistakes by applying a nationalist rather than global strategy regarding access to vaccinations and COVID treatments and by leaving key decisions about vaccine development and distribution to private companies.
- A new billionaire was made every 26 hours during the pandemic. 11 billionaires cashed in on vaccines and COVID 19 treatment.
- 116 million people were pushed into poverty.
- 90 countries did not reach WHO target of vaccinating at least 40% of their population against COVID (vaccine apartheid).
- 85% of African population has not yet received a single dose of vaccine.
- Governments and private sector must;
  - Scale up investment in public health systems.
  - Maximize rapid and increased development of safe and effective vaccines.
  - Suspend relevant intellectual property rules to increase affordability.
  - Ensure that testing, vaccination and treatments are affordable or free where appropriate.
- 100 organizations worldwide have formed a People's vaccine alliance to further these efforts in order to streamline pandemic response.

---

<sup>19</sup> Full reports are available on the GWI website

## **JOBS AND ECONOMY**

- In order to successfully transition to renewable energy, workers in fossil fuel industries must have training and job opportunities and be included in discussions.
- Per ILO- millions of \$s will be available for job creation and must include women.
- Need targeted measures.
- Investment in care economy could create 40-60% more jobs than other industries e.g. construction.
- Poorest communities make up 75% of population, major portion in global South. • Climate change disproportionately affects the access to financing is limited

## **WOMEN and GIRLS.**

- Disasters are not gender neutral.
- According to ILO there were 13 million fewer women in employment from 2019 to 2021 but men's employment recovered.
- According to World Economic Forum it will now take 136 years to reach gender equality.
- In the area of unpaid work there was a 2.5 times increase over pre-pandemic level.
- UN Women state that there will be an additional 13 million child marriages between 2020 and 2030 and 2 million FGMs.
- According to UN FAMILY PLANNING ASSOCIATION 12 million women had family planning services disrupted or stopped during the pandemic resulting in 1.4 million unwanted pregnancies, and HIV increased by 50%

In all there was significant increase in all forms of Gender Based Violence and a worsening of women's and girls' rights.

## **EDUCATION**

- According to UNESCO 11 MILLION girls and young women will not return to school due to climate change and the pandemic.
- By 2025, 2.5 million of them/year will not complete their education, making them vulnerable to exploitation, GBV and early child marriage.

## **COMBATING ECOSIDE**

A parallel event highlighting the work women are doing to protect the environment, the important results that can be achieved – but also the costs, in terms of women environmental activists being oppressed and killed.

<https://iadllaw.org/2022/03/video-climate-justice-for-women-and-girls-approaches-to-combating-ecocide>

### *Future of Education Conversation Circle*

Participants were asked to identify the most **pressing concerns/issues/barriers in terms of the future of education.**

The following major categories were identified –

- Curriculum
- Funding
- Mental Health and Resilience
- Poverty
- Inclusivity
- Global Citizenship and Climate Change
- Teacher Shortages
- Values

#### **Additional concerns raised were:**

- Who should determine what gets included and what gets left out?
- Educators need to answer: “what is education?” “who is it for?”
- How do we address the failures highlighted by COVID-19?
- How do we address the disconnect between industry and academia?
- Young people are feeling great pressure to be the future, but they feel they are not taught how to survive or how to get there.

#### **Solutions mentioned:**

- UNESCO
- education scholarships for women
- the nurturing of mothers’ knowledge so that it can be passed on to their children,
- cross school- and socioeconomic group projects,
- creating a safe space to discuss, problem solve, and work together.

*It is my hope, and I’m sure yours, that we as women remain able to celebrate our differences while continuing to work for all women everywhere.* (Maureen Byrne, PhD, GWI UN Rep NYC)

### What needs to be done?

1. We need a new social contract driven by agents of change with meaningful participation by **ALL** stakeholders.
2. Exclusion of women and girls from decision making must stop.
3. According to the UN Women Executive Director
  - a. Promoting women's and girls' full and equal participation and leadership to make natural resource management and climate, environment and disaster risk action more effective
  - b. Expanding gender-responsive finance at scale for climate and environment action and to reach women's organizations, enterprises and cooperatives.
  - c. Building women's resilience in the context of agricultural and food systems, forest and fisheries management and the sustainable energy transition.
  - d. Enhancing gender statistics and sex disaggregated data in the gender-environment nexus; and fostering gender-responsive just transitions.

The pre-pandemic level of gender equality and social justice was totally inadequate even then. Only 24% women hold decision making positions in climate negotiations. This is particularly egregious as rural and indigenous women are the protectors of the environment and their knowledge is indispensable in mitigating the crisis.