

Graduate Women International

GWI 34th Triennial Policy Resolutions

GWI Resolutions Committee 2019-2022

Policy Resolutions - As amended - 21 October 2022



Graduate Women International

***From Growth to
Sustainability***

**34th Triennial
General Assembly and Conference**

(to be held virtually)

11 November - 13 November 2022

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Resolution 1

Securing increased Domestic Funding for Education to include equal and safe access to Digital Learning

Proposed by: Louise McLeod, GWI VP Advocacy and Education

Seconded by: GWI Educom, Graduate Women Scotland, Graduate Women New Zealand, Turkish Association of University Women, Women Graduates-USA

The 34th GWI General Assembly resolves that:

Graduate Women International and its NFAs call for the increase in domestic funding for education, particularly digital education in all its forms, as a means to confront the catastrophic results of the COVID-19 pandemic on education.

Suggested Plan of Action:

1. NFAs to urge their local and national governments to increase domestic funding for education and protect education budgets especially as it applies to digital learning in all its forms.
2. NFAs to urge local and national governments to improve access to electricity in all areas rural and urban and to partner with telecom companies to invest in expanding Internet network coverage along with broadband quality of public WiFi, allow free access in all cities and municipalities and to provide reliable connectivity in remote areas. NFAs to urge local and national governments to partner with private and public sectors to provide sufficient access to the necessary hardware (computer, digital devices) to those who cannot afford it.
3. NFAs to urge local governments and educational facilities to invest in infrastructure for training all staff and students, including women and girls, to use IT services and digital devices to ensure that all students have access to appropriate devices and internet connection.
4. NFAs to encourage the development of specific training systems for educators to enhance their digital instruction skills.¹
5. NFAs to encourage local higher education institutions to offer online classes and to enable students to follow online classes in decent conditions, with safe and secure environments and ensure that e-learning is augmented by the provision of support systems with digital face-to-face meetings as social exchange and coursework follow-up.
6. NFAs to urge that their governments ensure that all asylum seekers in reception centres have Internet access and the appropriate devices to enable them to continue their education.
7. NFAs to encourage the optimization of local use of radio and public television in their native language as platforms for delivery of education.

¹ <https://elearningindustry.com/distance-learning-pedagogy-developing-countries/amp>

8. GWI and its NFAs to encourage women and girls to seize the opportunity of e-learning to undertake higher-level education and training.

Supporting Statement:

The COVID-19 pandemic led to a global learning disruption of unprecedented scale and severity and has caused the most significant threat in history to education. A staggering 300+ million students were locked out of schools.² The closure of schools, universities, and other knowledge institutions and the interruption of literacy and lifelong learning programmes disrupted the lives of an estimated 1.6 billion students globally.³ The pandemic threatens a seismic reversal of the hard-earned gains of 180 million more girls enrolling in primary and secondary school, and a three-fold increase in third-level education since adopting the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 25+ years ago.⁴ The pandemic is the largest shock to education in history, and the magnitude of this shock is not yet realised. The World Bank report estimates a loss of \$10 trillion dollars in earnings over time for the current generation of students.

Even before the onset of the COVID-19 when schools were locked down and moved to virtual education platforms, two thirds of the world's school-age children and 63% of students aged 15-24 did not have internet access at home⁵. Lack of connectivity in the home is more than just communications, it is about the isolation of children, especially girls, who lose access to education opportunities and the cost to their futures.

Now, in 2022, is the time to place collaboration, international solidarity, and domestic funding for education at the centre of COVID-19 recovery and transformation towards more equal and sustainable societies. The right to education is enshrined in Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Declaration calls for free and compulsory elementary education. The Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted in 1989, stipulates that countries shall make higher education accessible to all. What the Declaration and Convention failed to account for is a global health pandemic that would drastically alter conventional classroom access to education and traditional learning methods, perhaps forever.

This Resolution aims to heighten awareness about the critical digital learning crisis continuing during the pandemic fallout in order to urge increase in Member States' commitments to domestic funding for education especially in the areas of digital learning.

² <https://en.unesco.org/news/290-million-students-out-school-due-covid-19-unesco-releases-first-global-numbers-and-mobilizes>

³ UNESCO Policy Brief: Education During COVID 19 and Beyond, https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2020/08/sg_policy_brief_covid-19_and_education_august_2020.pdf

⁴ <https://en.unesco.org/news/unesco-report-illustrates-leap-forward-girls-education-over-past-25-years-now-threatened-1>

⁵ <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/two-thirds-worlds-school-age-children-have-no-internet-access-home-new-unicef-itu>

Related GWI Policy Resolutions:

Right to Safe Access to Education for All Girls and Women (2013, No. 7)

Additional Resources:

1. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brown-center-chalkboard/2022/03/03/the-pandemic-has-had-devastating-impacts-on-learning-what-will-it-take-to-help-students-catch-up/>
2. <https://plan-international.org/education/bridging-the-digital-divide/>
3. <https://www.rbr.com/introducing-public-tv-delivery-of-nextgen-at-home-learning/>

GWI Board Member proposing the resolution: Louise McLeod, GWI VP Advocacy and Education

Resolution 2

Promoting and defending human rights of women in universities and other post-secondary forms of education

Proposed by: Federacion Mexicana de Universitarias (FEMU)

Seconded by: Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW)

The 34th GWI General Assembly resolves that:

1. National Federations and Associations (NFAs) urge their respective universities and other post-secondary education institutions to measure violence against women and devise suitable plans and activities to combat it
2. NFAs urge their respective governments to link funding of post-secondary institutions to effective efforts to eliminate violence against women students on and off campus.

Suggested Plan of Action:

1. NFAs can take the mobilization of the students in Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico (UNAM) as an example on how to encourage their universities to organize and plan activities and campaigns to reject violence against women in universities.
2. As the Mexican Federation of University Women, we participate in the conferences and activities that other students and teachers organize to promote having the institutions protect women in universities against gender violence. We will make available materials on our web page, such as printable images, the FEMUmeter¹, (which measures violence against women), as well as conferences to promote respect of women's rights that the Museum of Women will provide.
3. NFA members are encouraged to take part in workshops online, which will allow them to train students and teachers in universities to promote local action and encouraging organisations to include gender studies in their own universities accompanied by Museo de la Mujer in Mexico.
4. We respectfully ask for GWI to utilize its special consultative status with United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), its special partnership with United Nations Education Science and Culture Organisation (UNESCO) and cooperation with other international bodies to assist in the implementation of this resolution

Supporting Statement:

FEMU is concerned about violence against women in universities and other post-secondary forms of education as the main factor in women discontinuing their studies

We, advocate for the attainment of SDG4: “to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning for all”, as well as SDG 5; “to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls” We simply cannot achieve these goals if harassment of women, while being educated, continues.

FEMU has developed systems that they wish to share with NFAs in order to make a difference. We promote the provision of defense services for women in universities with our allies: the university teachers in Mexican universities, especially UNAM and in private and public universities in Mexico and student organizations all around the globe.

Reference materials

1. *GWI (IFUW) first addressed women’s desertion in universities and post- secondary forms of education in GWI 2019 Resolution 2 Strategic Advocacy Plan: Building Peace through Women’s Education* , also in the *GWI 2019-2022 Resolution 8 Advocacy Plan: Sustainable Development Goals, also known as the Global Goals*
2. As we agreed as a concert of nations in the United Nations, the education of women in key for development in countries that are a part of this worldwide visions.
<https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse/girlseducation>
3. *According to the CEDAW, the American Human Rights Convention and other international law women in universities and post-secondary forms of education must be involved in making their voices heard in their education and the rights to live free of violence and discrimination.*
<https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2021/09/progress-on-the-sustainable-development-goals-the-gender-snapshot-2021>
4. Sexual harassment and violence in further and higher Education Research Briefing
Published: Wednesday, 09 February 2022 House of Commons Library, UK
<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/type/research-briefing/>
5. *Exploring the causal factors and the effects of sexual harassment on female students at the universities in Africa. An overview* Mediterranean Journal of Social sciences Vol. 5 No. 20 (2014): September 2014
<https://www.richtmann.org/journal/index.php/mjss/article/view/4161>
6. Australian Human Rights Commission, *National university student survey on sexual assault and sexual harassment*, <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/executive-summary-8>
7. FEMUmeter [See Appendix 1]

Appendix 1: FEMUmeter Toolkit

Women's Rights in Universities Meter: FEMUMETER/ femumetro

FEMUmeter is a tool kit with an ability to measure the levels of violence against women in post-secondary educational institutions.

OBJECTIVES

- To provide some context awareness of violence against women in education that will allow us to generate proposals to guarantee university women a life free of sexual violence.
- To collaborate with strategies of incidence for University Gender Justice
- The tool kit and the advocacy workshops and the printable material will be online so we can know how many entries we had per month and will be systematizing the results of universities that take our strategy and good practices in UNAM and Museo de la Mujer.

FEMUMETER Measurement Instrument:

- i. With what frequency do you find yourself exposed to misogynist comments by your colleagues and teachers, within the university environment?
- ii. Does your university have spaces where students have ways to denounce digital violence?
- iii. Do you consider that your School / Faculty has the same amount of male and female teachers?
- iv. Are there university mechanisms to defend the rights of women students faced with sexual harassment or misogynist violence? Which?
- v. Are there obligatory subjects that mainly approach women's rights, feminism or gender?
- vi. Are there organizations in your university, of women studies, feminism or for the defense of women studies facing sexual attacks, verbal, etc.?
 - What relation do these collective groups have with the university authorities?
 - Are these organisations or collective groups in some way financed by the university?
 - Are the collective groups or organizations autonomous in resources? Do they have safe spaces in the university?
- vii. Do you know how many cases of violence against university women students take place within the university campus, or outside of the university campus?
- viii. Do you feel safe at the university? Have you been given selfcare strategies?
- ix. Have you personally suffered misogynist violence at the university?
 - a. Verbal
 - b. Physical
 - c. Sexual
 - d. Digital
 - e. Who was the generator of the violence? (a student, faculty or administrative staff?).

Resolution 3

Workplace Harassment

Proposed by: Indian Federation of University Women's Associations (IFUWA)

Seconded by: Egyptian Association of Graduate Women (EAGW)

The 34th GWI General Assembly wishes to reaffirm their former resolutions on Workplace Harassment 2019/07 and further resolves that:

1. National Federations and Associations (NFAs) urge their respective governments to consider workplace harassment in their COVID-19 recovery plans.
2. NFAs urge their respective governments to ensure that policy around workplace harassment includes hybrid and working from home as they become alternate workplaces.

Supporting Statement:

The Indian federation worked to ensure the implementation of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 and whilst developing this and resolution 2016/04 resolution on Harassment, they created their own Resolution 2019/07. 2019 Policy Resolution 7: Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

The pandemic had a devastating effect on the working conditions for many women, notwithstanding the numbers made unemployed. Home working gave workplace harassment a very different dynamic, as women were now at home but answerable to remote bosses. In addition, they were often expected to continue with child care (exacerbated by school closures) as well as to do their jobs.

The programme devised by the Indian federation in 2019 to support the resolution had to quickly be adapted to the new online world.

Having carried out the training and consulted with other NFA the Indian Federation has undertaken the training and advocacy program online to help the other NFAs associated with the GWI.

As Governments talk about pandemic recovery the Indian Federation recognised the need not only to ensure that the 2013 legislation continues to be supported through the previous resolutions but that protection for those using new ways of working are included in these plans.

Suggested plan of action:

- That GWI continue to include workplace harassment as a key area in Pandemic recovery advocacy.
- That NFA's are involved in the pandemic recovery plans and emphasis the need to include protection from harassment for those working from home.
- That NFA's continue to share learning around the variance in workplace harassment legislation in their countries.
- That NFA's continue the plans set by 2019/07 around raising awareness in Corporate and Private companies.

Supporting document:

The Vishakha Guidelines were a set of procedural guidelines laid down by the Indian Supreme Court in 1997. These became the basis for the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013.

The Government of India passed the Sexual Harassment at the Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act in 2013. This law makes it illegal for any kind of sexual harassment defined in the Act as 'the violation of the fundamental rights of a woman to equality under articles 14 and 15 of the Constitution of India and her right to life and to live with dignity under article 21 of the Constitution and the right to practise any profession or to carry on any occupation, trade or business which includes a right to a safe environment free from sexual harassment' to occur against a woman at her place of work.

In the pandemic situation the work pattern of many employees changed, and this still continues. Due to the pandemic worldwide employees are working online i.e. work from home. It has been noticed that while working from home women employees are harassed through the online mode. Employees sometimes work online from home and sometimes offline i.e. at actual work place. To work simultaneously online and offline is called hybrid working system. While working online the device on which employee is working is denominated as the work-place. Our aim and object is to create awareness of preventive measures and prevent workplace and online harassment of women. This harassment may be done by colleagues, employees, senior employees or clients.

References:

1. <https://yourstory.com/2018/01/sexual-harassment-law-implementation-india-experts>
2. https://www.peoplesmatters.in/article/diversity/prevention-of-sexual-harassment-at-workplace-lessons-from-case-laws-19210?utm_source=peoplesmatters&utm_medium=interstitial&utm_campaign=learnings-of-the-day
3. <https://www.hrln.org/admin/Newsroom/subpdf/article%20sex-harass3.pdf>
4. Resolution 2019/07
5. <https://www.un.org/en/coronavirus/communication-resources/un-research-roadmap-covid-19-recovery>
6. India NFA Project:
 - Powerpoint: <https://graduatewomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/POSH-basics.pdf>
 - Wrap Up session video link (29 May 2021) <https://vimeo.com/637947693>
 - The Project <https://graduatewomen.org/members-login/gwi-membership-marketplace-nfa-to-nfa/>

Resolution 4

To end underrepresentation of women in media as a positive contribution to improve the status of all women in the world

Proposed by: Turkish Association of University Women-TAUW

Seconded by: Paraguayan Federation of Graduate Women

The 34th GWI General Assembly resolves that:

Graduate Women International and its NFAs call to end underrepresentation of women in media as a positive contribution to improve the status of women in the world.

Suggested plan of action:

1. That NFAs urge their governments to reject unequal international and national policies, and agreements that are not inclusive or sustainable of women's empowerment.
2. That NFAs involve civil society, particularly women's organizations, in international consultation processes on women in media.
3. That NFAs together with GWI raise awareness about the overall presence of women experts in every media content.
4. That NFAs should partner with other NGOs and women's organizations to support and facilitate advocacy campaigns to support the involvement of women in media
5. That NFAs should write to their local government representatives and United Nations organizations about the need to uphold women in media
6. That NFAs should encourage women experts to be included in media programs, create a pool consist of women from different expertise.
7. That NFAs together with GWI encourage media companies to increase the number of female employees.
8. That NFAs together with GWI conduct campaigns that emphasize the need for equality between women and men as a key element in the media.
9. That NFAs together with GWI make successful role models visible such as reporters, anchor women, script writers, directors, etc.
10. That NFAs implement SDG Goal 5 Gender Equality in all areas of life.

Supporting statement:

Although half of the world's population consists of women, we are still underrepresented in the media. And this can be clearly seen across all aspects of the media in newspapers, radio, television, films, series, commercials, etc. Researchers found that in the media sector *around ¾ of the jobs are held by men*. (Global Report on the Status of Women in the News Media, International Women's Media Foundation, 2011). An

increase of only 6 percentage points since 1998, (Women's Media Center). In addition, there is a serious pay gap and a glass ceiling on women in media. Men do not let us occupy decision-making positions.

Media is an industry that produces not only news, but information about the economic, political, social and cultural events at a local and even global scale, and has the capacity to broadcast them to a wide geography. Media has the power of influencing and directing minds regardless of gender, age or socio-economic status, though it is not a neutral, unbiased instrument that directly reflects information.

The core of media contents is mostly created by men, the owners and decision makers of media patterns are men, following a patriarchal structure. In addition, media contents do not empower women nor contribute to their education. We even watch men discussing about women issues on TV, on 8th March International Women's Day.

Safety is a major issue. Studies have shown that female journalists are targeted online significantly more than their male colleagues, and that the threats they face are highly sexualized, focused on their physical features, ethnicity, or cultural background, rather than on the content of their work, (UNESCO).

There is already a backlash within the film industry, the #MeToo hashtag campaign, shook Hollywood, the headquarters of the world's film industry. Following their statements, every actress being abused shared the #MeToo in their posts during 2017. The campaign spread over other countries and was used by millions. Actresses wore black to protest against sexual harassment at the Academy Awards (Oscars) and the Golden Globe 2018 ceremony. This high profile discussion needs to be maintained and opened to media as a whole.

Women are often presented in the form of an angel or a devil; devoted mother, good and faithful wife, or a nasty woman who breaks the nest. They are often placed in a private sphere while taking care of children or doing housework. They are not portrayed as a professional, a leader, a decision-maker. For instance, we rarely see in films STEM women. We need to remove this patriarchal mind set, that places women in a secondary position.

GWI's Position

This resolution builds on sections of the GWI mission statement; Advocate for the advancement of the status of women and girls; and encourage and enable women and girls to apply their knowledge and skills in leadership and decision-making in all forms of public and private life. This resolution encourages advocating for gender equality, supporting women's full presence in media.

Supporting Information

1. <https://www.iwmf.org/resources/global-report-on-the-status-of-women-in-the-news-media/>
2. <https://en.unesco.org/themes/violence-against-women-and-girls-media>
3. <https://womensmediacenter.com/>

Resolution 5

Violence Against Women in Politics

Proposed by: Canadian Federation of University Women CFUW

Seconded by: Federacion Mexicana de Universitarias (FEMU), Japanese Association of University Women (JAUW)

The 34th GWI General Assembly resolves that:

National Federations and Associations (NFAs) urge their respective governments at all levels to develop and implement action plans to end Violence Against Women in Politics (VAW-P) as promoted in SDG 5/10/16 targets.

Suggested Plan of Action:

1. NFAs should undertake awareness campaign activities regarding issues related to VAW-P in their respective countries.
2. NFAs should urge their respective governments to address VAW-P and
 - To broaden their response to include violence directed at all persons, including the indigenous in politics at all levels of government and
 - to fund, develop and implement action plans and procedures to prohibit such violence, and
 - to include regulatory frameworks for both media and social media companies to ensure they address the online increase of VAW-P.

Supporting Statement:

VAW-P is increasingly recognised around the world as a significant barrier to women's participation in politics. VAW-P happens at all levels of government and is the result of deep-rooted prejudice, structural inequality, and antiquated gender role theory. For the purposes of the development of this resolution, the following definition of VAW-P from Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada has been used: *"Violence Against Women in Politics is part of a spectrum of gender-based violence that includes physical, psychological, economic and symbolic actions or threats against women that result in, or are intended to result in, harm or suffering against women simply because they are women. It is intersectional, as racialized minorities, members of LGBTQ2S community, the poor, religious minorities, disabled persons, and younger women tend to experience violence in politics disproportionately based on their social identities."*

Characteristics traditionally associated with politicians, such as ambition and assertiveness, are perceived to be traits associated with men. Women who demonstrate those traits are moving outside traditional social norms and stigmatized (Carnegie, 2020). “VAW-P is motivated by a desire to repress, deter, control or otherwise coerce the political rights of the victims because of the victim’s gender” (SSHRCC, March, 2019). VAW-P is increasingly recognised around the world as a significant barrier to women’s participation in politics (Krook, M. L., & Restrepo Sanin, J., 2019)

A 2018 study found more than 40% of women MPs and parliamentary staff in Europe experienced sexual harassment on the job (Inter-Parliamentary Union, October 2016). A 2016 Colombian survey showed 63% of respondents (women) were victims of violent acts and, in most cases, perpetrators were colleagues (47%) or in the same party (37%) (Inter-Parliamentary Union, October 2016). Due to the expanded role of digital technology, social media, and the Internet in our societies, the proliferation of online abuse and harassment has increased where women in politics are frequent targets of abuse and threats online. Comprehensive legal frameworks to address and prevent VAW-P is necessary to ensure that women have equal opportunity and access to participate in public life and to do so in a safe environment – both on and offline. While the focus of this resolution is on the experience of women, all individuals in politics should be protected from violence.

References:

1. Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project - Violence targeting women in politics: trends in targets, types, and perpetrators of political violence
<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/acleddata.com-Violence%20Targeting%20Women%20in%20Politics%20Trends%20in%20Targets%20Types%20and%20Perpetrators%20of%20Political%20Violence%20%281%29.pdf>
2. DiMeco, L., & Brechenmacher, S., (November 30, 2020). Tackling Online Abuse and Disinformation Targeting Women in Politics, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. <https://carnegieendowment.org/2020/11/30/tackling-online-abuse-and-disinformation-targeting-women-in-politics-pub-83331>
3. Inter-Parliamentary Union – Violence against women in parliament <https://www.ipu.org/our-impact/gender-equality/womens-rights/combating-violence-against-women/violence-against-women-in-parliament>
4. Krook, M.L. & Restrepo Sanfin, J. (2016). Gender and Political Violence in Latin America: Concepts, Debates and Solutions. *Politica y gobierno*, Volume xx111, Number 1, Semester 2016 pp. 125-157. Retrieved from http://mlkrook.org/pdf/pyg_2016.pdf
5. Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRCC), March 8, 2019. *Democracy During #MeToo: Taking Stock of Violence Against Women in Canadian Politics: A comprehensive Scope Report Prepared for Equal Voice*. Retrieved from Equal Voice website: https://equalvoice.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/VAW-P_Scope_report_-_FINAL.pdf
6. UN Sustainable Development Goals
7. <https://sdgs.un.org>
8. UN Women – Guidance Note: Preventing Violence against Women in Politics
<https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/Library/Publications/2021/Guidance-note-Preventing-violence-against-women-in-politics-en.pdf>

NFA(s) proposing the resolution: Canadian Federation of University Women

Resolution 6

Post Pandemic Recovery for Women and Girls

Proposed by: Canadian Federation of University Women CFUW

Seconded by: British Federation of Women Graduates (BFWG), Japanese Association of University Women (JAUW)

The 34th GWI General Assembly resolves that:

National Federations and Associations (NFAs) urge their respective Governments to develop and fund comprehensive Post-Pandemic(s) Socioeconomic Recovery Plan(s) including specific interventions to address the disparate effect of COVID-19 and other pandemics on the lives of women and girls. This should include but not be limited to the targets listed within SDG 5/8/10.

Suggested Plan of Action:

1. NFAs should undertake activities to enhance their knowledge about socioeconomic factors related to the status of women and girls in their country and abroad to comprehensively understand why women and children are disproportionately impacted by pandemics.
2. NFAs should urge their respective governments to support the implementation of a post-pandemic socioeconomic recovery plan that includes: the recovery and accountability for specific actions and strategies to address racism, the provision of affordable childcare and early learning, the expansion of protections for those experiencing gender-based violence, and the bolstering of the care and informal work sector.
3. NFAs should monitor the impacts of post-pandemic socioeconomic factors on women and children.

Supporting Statement:

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have tremendous impacts on our daily lives across the world.

The economic, health, and social impacts of this pandemic has not had an equal impact on women and girls, particularly those who are racialized, low-income, live with disabilities, or are migrants or refugees, have been disproportionately impacted. COVID-19 presents an unprecedented opportunity to envision new policies and strategies not only to address the negative economic impacts of COVID-19 on the economic status of women but to substantially mitigate the systemic barriers women have historically faced.

Addressing the gendered impacts of the pandemic using an intersectional perspective can not only illuminate why women were vulnerable in the first place, but can also provide a framework to develop socioeconomic interventions that facilitate the full and effective participation of *all* women and girls in public life. The United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) Recovery Plan states “[w]e are all

interconnected and need borderless solidarity”. This Recovery Plan focuses on 5 Pillars to provide a comprehensive recovery framework for countries to follow as they address the COVID-19 pandemic, with “particular focus on the most vulnerable countries, groups, and people who risk being left behind”. These 5 pillars are:

1. Protecting health services and systems
2. Ensuring social protection and basic services
3. Protecting jobs, small-and-medium size enterprises and informal sector workers
4. Supporting macroeconomic response and multilateral collaboration
5. Strengthening social cohesion and community resilience

A comprehensive socioeconomic recovery plan that addresses the disparate effects of pandemics on women’s lives is crucial to building back the global economy so that it becomes more inclusive and ultimately more resilient in future crises.

References:

1. **OECD** - Towards gender-inclusive recovery
<https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/towards-gender-inclusive-recovery-ab597807/>
2. **United Nations Foundation** – The Shadow Pandemic: How the COVID-19 Crisis is Exacerbating Gender Inequality
<https://unfoundation.org/blog/post/shadow-pandemic-how-covid19-crisis-exacerbating-gender-inequality/>
3. **UN Sustainable Development Goals**
<https://sdgs.un.org>
4. **UN Sustainable Development Group** – A UN framework for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID-19
<https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/UN-framework-for-the-immediate-socio-economic-response-to-COVID-19.pdf>
5. **UN Women** – UN Secretary-General’s policy brief: The impact of COVID-19 on women
<https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/04/policy-brief-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-women>

NFA(s) proposing the resolution: Canadian Federation of University Women

Resolution 7

Climate Change and Gender

Proposed by: Graduate Women International - NL (GWI-NL)

Seconded by: Australian Graduate Women Inc (AGW), Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW), Mexican Federation of University Women (FEMU)

The 34th GWI General Assembly wishes to reaffirm the former resolutions on Women & Environment 1995/16, 1998/14, 1998/15, 2007/10, 2010/7 and 2016/9 and further resolves that:

1. National Federations and Associations (NFAs) urge their respective governments to include the perspective of gender in their policies for climate change.
2. NFAs urge their respective governments to research and analyze the impact of climate change on gender equality, in particular in the field of education.
3. NFAs urge their respective governments to address the effects of climate change on gender equality, with regard to the access of education for girls and women.
4. NFAs urge their respective governments to ensure the effective participation of women in all stages of development of climate change policymaking.

Suggested Plan of Action:

1. NFAs should urge their respective governments to include the perspective of gender in their programs for climate change and in their national climate action plan(s) by implementing in these programs and plans the CSW 66 Agreed conclusions.
2. NFAs should monitor the actions of their respective governments on the basis of the CSW 66 Agreed conclusions and take action when their governments are too slow to take action in implementing a gender-responsive climate policy.
3. NFAs should raise awareness about Climate Change & Gender, among others by discussing this resolution within their NFAs, especially with regard to the effects on education.

Supporting Statement:

The *Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)* adopted on 25 March 2022 the CSW 66 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. The conclusions build upon the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as included in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement and the Glasgow Climate Pact.

In the CSW 66 Agreed Conclusions the CSW expresses their concern that climate change, pollution of air, land and water, biodiversity loss and decline in ecosystem functions and services threaten the full enjoyment of human rights of all women and girls and have acute impacts on women and girl, especially on rural, indigenous, and migrant women and girls. Furthermore, the CSW recognizes the disruption caused by climate change, environmental degradation, and disasters to education systems across the world, often keeping girls, adolescent girls, and young women out of school, and limiting their access to education, including to the skills and knowledge needed to adapt and respond to these challenges.

As indicated in *The Netherlands Civil Society priorities for CSW 66* climate change, environmental degradation, and disasters are crises that disproportionately affect girls and women in all their diversity with the most marginalized people experiencing the gravest consequences. The impact of the climate and biodiversity crises and gender-blind policies further aggravate gender inequalities:

- Worldwide, women and girls are at a higher risk for displacement, morbidity, and mortality as a direct consequence of climate and biodiversity related disasters.
- Women and girls often have an important agenda-setting and mobilizing role but are underrepresented in professions in the climate- and environmental sector as well as in participation processes, (political) decision making, and leadership positions overall.
- Women and girls lack access to financial support and capital for climate adaptation technologies, climate action programmes, and environmental protection.

Former Resolutions

Relevant former resolutions on Women & Environment are 1995/16 – Protection of the Environment, 1998/14 – On Desertification and Development, 1998/15 – On Sustainable Forestry, 2007/10 - Global Warming, 2010/7 Climate Change - Greenhouse Gas, 2016/9 – The Use of Carbon Taxes to Reduce Climate Change. These resolutions deal with important particular aspects of the climate crisis. The Resolution on Climate Change & Gender addresses the importance of the perspective of women and the impact on gender equality in all aspects of the (policies on) climate change.

SDGs: Especially the SDG's 4, 5, 6, 7, 13 are relevant for this resolution.

References:

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:

1. **CSW 66 Agreed Conclusions (25 March 2022)**
https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/CSW66%20Agreed%20Conclusions_Advance%20unedited%20version_25%20March%202022.pdf
2. **UN Women – Explainer: how gender inequality and climate change are interconnected**
<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/explainer/2022/02/explainer-how-gender-inequality-and-climate-change-are-interconnected#:~:text=As%20climate%20change%20drives%20conflict,and%20other%20forms%20of%20violence>
3. **UN Women and the SDGs**
<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/women-and-the-sdgs/sdg-13-climate-action>
4. **The Netherlands Civil Society priorities for CSW 66**
[The Netherlands' Civil Society Priorities for CSW66 | CSW \(institute-genderequality.org\)](#)

Resolution 8

A Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment is a Human Right

Proposed by: Canadian Federation of University Women CFUW

Seconded by: Australian Graduate Women (AGW), Japanese Association of University Women (JAUW), South African Association of Women Graduates (SAAWG)

The 34th GWI General Assembly resolves that:

National Federations and Associations (NFAs) urge their respective governments at all levels to commit to the tenets of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) Resolution 48/13 and the United Nations General Assembly Resolution L.75 that “A Clean, Healthy, and Sustainable Environment is a Human Right” in legislation, regulatory frameworks, and programs including, but not limited to:

- Pollution Prevention;
- Climate Change Mitigation; and
- Nature Conservation.

Suggested Plan of Action:

1. NFAs should promote and participate in the development of local strategies for a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment.
2. NFAs should monitor the indicators of UNHRC Resolution 48/13 and its impacts on women and girls in their respective communities.
3. NFAs should actively participate in initiatives that focus on pollution prevention, climate change mitigation, and nature conservation.

Supporting Statement:

In 2022, we mark 50 years since the right to a healthy environment was first alluded to in the 1972 Stockholm Declaration: “*Man has the fundamental right to freedom, equality and adequate conditions of life, in an environment of a quality that permits a life of dignity and well-being.*” (Stockholm..., 1972)

On Oct 8, 2021, the United Nations Human Rights Council passed the landmark Resolution 48/13 with unanimous support: “*The Council recognizes the right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment and encourages states to adopt policies for the enjoyment of the right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, including with respect to biodiversity and ecosystems, as appropriate, and invites the General Assembly to consider this issue.*” (Resolution..., 2021) While the Right to a clean, healthy and sustainable Environment (R2E) is already recognized in a majority of nations, the recognition as a new human right opens the door to effective integration in international law through the UN General Assembly and more robust and thorough domestic implementation in NFA countries and elsewhere.

On July 28, 2022, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution L.75 recognizing the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment as a human right, noting that this right is related to other rights and existing international law.

References:

1. **International Union for Conservation of Nature** - The Right to a Healthy Environment
<https://www.iucn.org/news/world-commission-environmental-law/202110/right-a-healthy-environment>
2. **United Nations General Assembly** - The human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment
<https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/LTD/N22/436/72/PDF/N2243672.pdf>
3. **United Nations Human Rights Council** - The human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment
<https://undocs.org/A/HRC/RES/48/13>
4. **United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner** - Right to a healthy and sustainable environment report
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-environment/right-healthy-and-sustainable-environment-report>

NFA(s) proposing the resolution: Canadian Federation of University Women

Resolution 9

Climate Emergency – Declarations and Action Plans

Proposed by: Canadian Federation of University Women CFUW

Seconded by: Graduate Women International Netherlands (GWI-NL), Japanese Association of University Women (JAUW)

The 34th GWI General Assembly resolves that:

1. National Federations and Associations (NFAs) urge their respective governments to declare a climate emergency if they have not already done so;
2. NFAs urge their respective governments and the corporate private sector to follow the climate emergency declaration by drafting and implementing measurable action plans, based on science and social justice, that work urgently to address the impact of climate crisis and to also prepare for the unavoidable consequences such as floods, fires, storms, climate refugees, food and water insecurity, and social conflict. Action should include but not be limited to the SDG 13 targets.
3. NFAs foster relationships with Indigenous peoples for climate advocacy and the development and implementation of climate action plans with Indigenous peoples, leadership and traditional knowledge as long-time stewards of the environment.
4. NFAs urge all respective levels of governments to put the safety of women and children first in all actions to address climate emergencies and include women in the decision making, recognizing that women and children are disproportionately affected in climate emergencies

Suggested Plan of Action:

1. NFAs should urge their respective governments, local and/or national, to declare a climate emergency if they have not already done so.
2. NFAs should monitor the actions of their respective governments to make sure climate emergency declarations are accompanied with detailed action plans to reduce greenhouse gases.
3. NFAs should collaborate and partner with Indigenous Peoples to advance climate advocacy.

Supporting Statement:

The first entity to declare a climate emergency, was the City of Darebin in Melbourne, Australia, on December 5, 2016. Such a declaration is an acknowledgement that global warming is a reality caused by human action, and that the measures being taken to date have not been sufficient to control or reduce such warming. Extreme weather events are increasing in frequency and the world will face catastrophic impacts of climate change within 80 years if the average global temperature increase exceeds 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. Even with 1.5 degrees of warming there are irreversible climate changes, but the difference between 1.5 degrees and 2 degrees is dramatic in terms of the impacts on ecosystems and human civilization and also the risks of triggering natural processes that lead to further warming. G20 countries are responsible for about 80% of global carbon emissions and have an obligation to undertake rapid and deep cuts to greenhouse gas emissions.

Climate action cannot be separated from the need for climate justice: a fair and equitable transition that promotes inclusive economies and human rights at home and abroad. The climate crisis poses an immediate risk to everything GWI promotes and protects: quality public education, the rights of women and girls, justice and peace. Women and girls are more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change worldwide, experiencing disproportionate risks and burdens, but are also powerful agents for change toward climate justice. Climate change is already causing crop failures, floods, and catastrophic storms increasing financial hardship, food insecurity, and displacement which in turn increase the risk of domestic violence, of girls dropping out of school, and of child marriage (Ethans, 2019). Women and children are 14 times more likely to die in the aftermath of natural disaster and those who survive and are displaced face high risks of sexual assault and trafficking (Inter-Council Network and AQOCI, 2019). This resolution, Climate Emergency – Declaration and Action Plans, addresses the importance of multifaceted action plans at various levels of governance that include gendered and Indigenous perspectives in order to fully address the climate emergency.

References:

1. **Climate Emergency Declaration** – A Call to Declare a Climate Emergency
<https://climateemergencydeclaration.org/>
2. **Inter-Council Network and AQOCI (L'Association québécoise des organismes de coopération internationale)** - A Feminist Approach to Climate Justice
https://www.ocic.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/WD_A-Feminist-Approach-to-Climate-Justice_Final_2019-05-31.pdf
3. **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Sixth Assessment Report** - Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability”
<https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/>
4. **UN Environmental Programme** - Lagging in climate action, G20 nations have huge opportunities to increase ambition
<https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/press-release/lagging-climate-action-g20-nations-have-huge-opportunities-increase>
5. **UN Sustainable Development Goals** <https://sdgs.un.org> 6. **UN Women** – Explainer: How gender inequality and climate change are interconnected <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/explainer/2022/02/explainer-how-gender-inequality-and-climate-change-are-interconnected>

NFA(s) proposing the resolution: Canadian Federation of University Women

Resolution 10

Single Use Plastics and Plastic Packaging

Proposed by: Canadian Federation of University Women CFUW

Seconded by: Indian Federation of University Women

The 34th GWI General Assembly resolves that:

National Federations and Associations (NFAs), in alignment with SDG 12, urge their respective governments to expedite the reduction of single-use plastics including all problematic and unnecessary non-recyclable plastics in order to prevent these items from entering the environment

Suggested Plan of Action:

1. NFAs should urge their respective governments to take action to start phasing out single-use plastics to ultimately implement zero plastic waste.
2. NFAs should monitor the actions of their respective governments relating to waste management and the export of plastic waste to other countries to ensure plastic waste is properly recycled to avoid further environmental and human health repercussions.
3. NFAs can urge their members to identify opportunities to reduce the use of single-use plastics or identify alternatives in their personal lives to reduce plastic waste as related to SDG 12, target 12.5.

Supporting Statement:

Plastics, plastic packaging and plastic wrap labelling form a substantial portion of non-recyclable solid waste. In total, half of all plastic produced is designed for single-use purposes – used just once and then thrown away. Since the 1970s, the rate of plastic production has grown faster than that of any other material. Of the seven billion tonnes of plastic waste generated globally so far, less than [10 per cent](#) has been recycled. Millions of tonnes of plastic waste are lost to the environment, or sometimes shipped thousands of kilometres to destinations where it is mostly burned or dumped. North Americans generate the most solid waste in the world at 2.2 kg per person/per day.

According to the World Bank, by 2050, the world is expected to increase waste generation by 70%, from 2.01 billion tonnes of waste to 3.40 billion tonnes of waste annually. At every step of a plastic's lifecycle, even after it has been discarded, greenhouse gas emissions are created that are contributing to the warming of the planet. Some plastic waste is non-biodegradable and can act as vectors for chemical contaminant exposure for both plastic-derived chemicals and environmental pollutants, release chemicals used in their production, such as plasticizers, flame retardants, and UV stabilizers, some of which have been linked to endocrine disrupting activity and other adverse effects, and are associated with a high capacity to pick up other chemicals present in the environment, such as persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and trace metals, as well as biological contaminants such as bacteria and viruses.

In order to address the unmanaged and improperly managed waste from decades of economic growth around the world, urgent action is necessary at all levels of government across the world to begin phasing out single-use plastics to ultimately implement zero plastic waste. Additionally, comprehensive tracing and monitoring of plastic waste imports/exports must be implemented to address the uneven relationship between countries that export plastic waste versus those who import.

References:

1. **OECD** – Plastic pollution is growing relentlessly as waste management and recycling fall short, says OECD
<https://www.oecd.org/environment/plastic-pollution-is-growing-relentlessly-as-waste-management-and-recycling-fall-short.htm>
2. **Statista** – Which Countries Export & Import Plastic Waste?
<https://www.statista.com/chart/18229/biggest-exporters-of-plastic-waste-and-scrap/>
3. **UN Environment Programme** – Beat Plastic Pollution
<https://www.unep.org/interactives/beat-plastic-pollution/#:~:text=Of%20the%20seven%20billion%20tonnes,per%20cent%20has%20been%20recycled>
4. **UN Sustainable Development Goals** <https://sdgs.un.org>
5. **World Bank** – What a Waste 2.0: A Global Snapshot of Solid Waste Management to 2050
<https://datatopics.worldbank.org/what-a-waste/>
6. **World Wide Fund for Nature Australia** – Plastic waste and climate change - what's the connection?
<https://www.wwf.org.au/news/blogs/plastic-waste-and-climate-change-whats-the-connection#:~:text=As%20it%20does%2C%20sunlight%20and,and%20so%20perpetuating%20the%20cycle.>

NFA(s) proposing the resolution: Canadian Federation of University Women



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