GWI United Nation Representative

Advocacy Report

2023

GWI advocacy goals

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

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

NB: *Although these goals represent GWI's mission, UN Reps are also invited to promote GWI key messages on areas where especially relevant e.g., women in STEM, securing investment in women teachers, addressing barriers to girls' education such as child marriage.*

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL'S

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN 67TH SESSION STATEMENT

1. **Digital technologies can be a double-edged sword** for women and girls. They could provide unprecedented advances; conversely, they could perpetuate and deepen existing patterns of gender inequalities.

2. **Governments and intergovernmental need to regulate** digital technologies using measures grounded in international human rights law.

3. **Gender social norms and structural obstacles** limit girls' education, perpetuate negative perceptions towards women who use the Internet, and maintain patriarchal control over their communications and economic decisions.

4. **Teaching and using technology in educational settings are currently limited** by the lack of investments in ICT infrastructure and equipment, school connectivity, the lack of public learning content, and teachers' capacity. Teachers need to be equipped with the knowledge and skills to use gender-responsive blended and hybrid learning methods and be better prepared for emergencies interrupting in-person education such as COVID-19.
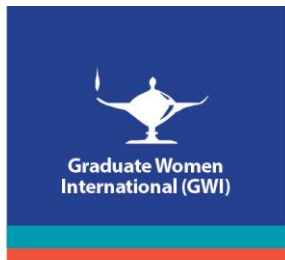
5. Evidence suggests that **exposing girls to computational thinking during their formative early childhood years** can provide them with equal opportunities in technical fields throughout their later educational and career years.

6.   Research demonstrates that **the motivation behind girls' educational and career choices** differs from that of boys, and that they are often driven by their prevailing desire to solve societal challenges, including but not limited to dealing with climate change.

7. **Digital financial services** can be powerful tools to accelerate progress towards women's equal rights to economic resources, especially in rural and remote areas without banking services. However, they can only be successfully accessed and used by all segments of the population if several building blocks are in place, ranging from gender-responsive ICT and energy infrastructure to digital payment system and service providers, distribution system and access points, cybersecurity and consumer protection regulations and an effective user identification system. This also requires removing structural and discriminatory barriers faced by women, such as limitations to women's rights to own property or the lack of the formal identification needed to buy a SIM card.

8. There is a need to **systemically include gender analysis, targets and disaggregated data** collection into all global or sectoral digital projects that are creating knowledge, tools, capacity or services around artificial intelligence, agritech, e-health, e-governments and edtech, among many others.

9.   **Automation and artificial intelligence** may bring major disruptions to industries and the labor force, leading simultaneously to job creation, elimination, and transformation. Women will predominantly bear the impact of those changes, owing to persistent occupational and vertical segregation.

10. **The new jobs** generated by the rise of the platform economy often upends traditional employment models without improving women's overall economic wellbeing. They tend to replicate the same biases found in traditional employment, including lower pay, instability, and a lack of labor protection and entitlements, such as social security, child or long-term care services or care leave policies or the right to engage in collective action.

11. Until the recent emergence of "**femtech**" in 2017, very few digital tools were being developed for sexual and reproductive health. Similar lack of interest and investments can be seen in other sectors, such as the care economy or assistive technology.

12. Providing safe, inclusive and equal access to ICT for all women and girls is essential for the **full enjoyment of their human rights**.

13. **New and existing technologies should be grounded in international human rights** standards and norms and adopt a human rights-based design approach that respect human rights by default, rather than permit abuse or exploitation as part of their business model, the consequences of which are only addressed after they have occurred.

14. **Self-governance systems put in place by companies** have been underpowered. Similarly, external oversight boards making decisions on the removal of content are not in a position to influence structural or design decisions.
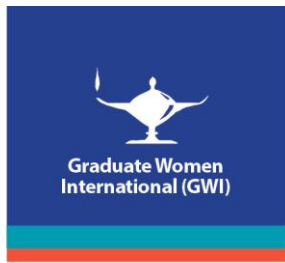
15. The **gender digital divide results in women producing less data,** while the lack of disaggregated data leads to the overrepresentation or underrepresentation of certain groups in data sets.

16. **Teaching children and adolescents digital citizenship** helps to cover not only issues related to online safety, privacy and cyberbullying, but also focuses on positive values of empathy, ethical use of digital media to communicate and engage in society and develop a responsible activist stance.

17. Adequately preventing and responding to acts of **technology-facilitated violence** against women and girls require improved coherence in policy actions and coordination in implementation from a large ecosystem of actors, ranging from policymakers and legislators to the police, the judiciary, researchers, civil society organizations, companies, psychosocial workers, educators, and the media.

18. There is a **lack of comprehensive and accurate data** collection on the extent of the prevalence, forms and impact of technology-facilitated gender-based violence, resulting in fragmented and incomplete information.

19. **Transform digital literacy teaching** to combine technical and transferable skills allowing women and girls to be both safe and empowered in their use of digital technology, and to eliminate gender stereotypes and bias from curricula and educators' behaviors and attitudes.

20. **Adopt regulations mandating evaluation and audit requirements** for the development and use of artificial intelligence to provide a secure and high- quality data infrastructure and systems that are either continually improved or terminated if human rights violation or gendered bias are identified.

21. **Apply international human rights law and internationally agreed standards** or principles and ensure that the Global Digital Compact advances women's rights and builds a human-centred approach to digital transformation.

22.   **Strengthen the capacity of national statistics offices** and foster collaboration among stakeholders to assess data needs and address gaps, including by financing qualitative research on women's and girls' barriers to digital inclusion, the prevalence of technology-facilitated gender-based violence and the lack of disaggregated data by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migration status, disability, geographical location and other characteristics, to ensure targeted policies and interventions.

25. **Strengthen the capacity of government actors,** including policymakers, law enforcement officials, the judiciary, health and social workers and educators, and of civil society organizations to develop knowledge and skills to prevent and eliminate technology-facilitated violence against women and provide survivor-centered support.

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