UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

Background Guide

EagleMUNC
Boston College Model United Nations Conference

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Website:
www.EagleMUNC.org

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Letters from the Secretariat

Delegates,

It is my distinct pleasure to welcome you to EagleMUNC V! My name is Kerianne DiBattista, and I am the Secretary-General of EagleMUNC V. I am a senior at Boston College in the Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences majoring in International Studies with a concentration in Economics. I am originally from Long Island, NY, and I have been participating in Model UN conferences since I was in tenth grade, rising to become Head Delegate and Secretary-General of my high school conference. At BC, I travelled to several conferences with our MUN team and I have participated EagleMUNC since my freshman year. As you begin your EagleMUNC V experience, I implore you to explore the conference theme, "The Interplay of Power and Ethics," and make your EagleMUNC experience the best it can be! Thank you, and I'll see you at EagleMUNC!

Best Regards,
Kerianne DiBattista
Secretary-General, EagleMUNC V

Dear Delegates,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to EagleMUNC V! My name is Jack Massih and I am the Under Secretary-General of Political Affairs. I am a senior at Boston College studying Political Science and Economics. I began participating in MUN my sophomore year of high school and have been hooked ever since. I joined the EagleMUNC team as a freshman for the first year we moved off BC’s campus and into Boston, and it has been a joy to witness the conference continuously grow and evolve since then. The Political Affairs team has been working incredibly hard to prepare for the most innovative and exciting conference in EagleMUNC history. I am looking forward to seeing all of your creative and thoughtful responses to the diplomatic predicaments and crises you confront over the weekend.

Best,
Jack Massih
Under Secretary-General Political Affairs, EagleMUNC V
UN Women

Introduction

Hello delegates, and welcome to EagleMUNC V!

My name is Miriam George, and I am the Chair of the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) committee. I am currently a junior at Boston College, majoring in Political Science and Hispanic Studies. I'm from Shrewsbury, MA, but I was originally born in Singapore and lived there for the first few years of my life, which is why I take such an interest in foreign cultures and international affairs. Although I only began participating in Model UN when I came to BC, I have been an active member of EagleMUNC, as well as BC's Model UN travel team, for the past three years. This will be my second year acting as a chair at EagleMUNC.

I am particularly excited to chair the UN Women Committee because of the extent to which this committee embodies and exemplifies EagleMUNC V's theme of "The Interplay of Power and Ethics". In committee, we will grapple with the challenge of addressing the many different barriers and threats that women and girls around the world are facing, from physical and sexual violence, to poverty and economic inequality, to a lack of representation in government. We will strive to facilitate change through the passage of laws protecting women's rights and well-being, through the education of all men and women concerning the proper treatment of women, and through the provision of economic and social services to women and girls in need. Your job as a delegate on the UN Women committee is to use the power that you wield to enforce ethical treatment and equal access for the women and girls of your country, your region, and your world. This task will not be an easy one—your critical thinking skills and ingenuity will be put to the test!

If you have any questions about the Background Guide or the committee in general, do not hesitate to reach out to me using the email address listed on the cover page. Good luck with your research; we look forward to meeting you at the conference!

Best,

Miriam George
Historical Background

Since its founding in 1945, the UN has passed several mandates and spearheaded many initiatives to advance women’s rights and gender equality; these include the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, both of which aimed to foster the empowerment of women.1 Despite these efforts, gender inequalities have remained deeply entrenched in societies throughout the world, in part, because of inadequate funding and “no single recognized driver to direct UN activities on gender equality issues.”2 As a result, in July of 2010, the United Nations General Assembly made the historic decision to create the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.3 UN Women is the culmination of “four previously distinct parts of the UN system, which focused exclusively on gender equality”4: the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), the International Research and

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2 ibid
3 ibid
4 ibid
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Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI), and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

UN Women works primarily in the realms of strengthening women’s leadership and political participation, economic empowerment, ending violence against women, peace and security, humanitarian action, governance and national planning, the sustainable development agenda, and HIV and AIDS. The body performs a number of critical roles, including “[supporting] inter-governmental bodies, such as the Commission on the Status of Women, in their formulation of policies, global standards and norms, [helping] Member States to implement these standards, standing ready to provide suitable technical and financial support to those countries that request it, and to forge effective partnerships with civil society, [and leading and coordinating] the UN system’s work on gender equality as well as [promoting] accountability, including through regular monitoring of system-wide progress.”

UN Women recognizes that the world’s women and girls still face a number of undue challenges, including violence and discrimination, lack of access to basic education and healthcare, denial of access to decent working conditions, as well as occupational segregation and the gender wage gap, and under-representation in political and economic decision-making processes. UN Women strives to address and resolve these challenges by working to eliminate discrimination against women and girls, empower women, and achieve “equality

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5 ibid
6 ibid
between men and women as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action and peace and security.”

Topics

Topic 1: Women’s leadership and political participation

The Inter-Parliamentary Union has found that, of all national parliamentarians around the world, only 22.8 percent are women; this number has only increased 11.5 percent since the year 1995. UN Women has calculated that, as of August 2016, only 11 women serve as Head of State in countries around the world, and 10 serve as Head of Government. Globally, women make up less than 10 percent of the parliamentary body in single or lower houses in 38 different countries, 4 of which have no women at all (Inter-Parliamentary Union). Additionally, only 17 percent of government ministers are women. However, UN Women finds that the presence of female representatives in local government makes a difference in the quality of life in those regions; for example, in India, those local councils led by women had a number of drinking water projects that was 62% higher, on average, than the numbers in regions led by male councils. Similarly, in Norway, there is a direct correlation between the presence of women on municipal councils and the existence of childcare coverage in that region.

7 ibid
9 ibid
10 ibid
11 ibid
12 ibid
UN Women acknowledges that women’s participation in government is slowly expanding, but there still remains work to be done. As of June 2016, there are only 2 countries—Rwanda and Bolivia—which have 50 percent or more women in parliament in single or lower houses. However, 46 countries have reached the level of 30 percent or more; of these countries, 40 have applied some form of quotas—legislative candidate quotas or reserved seats—to increase women’s political participation. UN Women reiterates that “there is established and growing evidence that women's leadership in political decision-making processes improves them. Women demonstrate political leadership by working across party lines through parliamentary women's caucuses - even in the most politically combative environments - and by championing issues of gender equality, such as the elimination of gender-based violence, parental leave and childcare, pensions, gender-equality laws and electoral reforms.”

UN Women is pioneering a number of initiatives across the world to elevate women’s political participation globally. For example, it is partnering with civil society

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13 ibid
14 ibid
UN Women

groups and women's movements around the world to achieve gender equality; in Albania, it is partnering with local women and grassroots civil society organizations to encourage political parties in the country to reflect women's needs and demands in addition to men's.15 UN Women is also advocating for parliaments to increase their numbers of women representatives and leaders, calling for laws and budgets that will help achieve gender equality, and helping legislators develop the skills they need to promote it. UN Women's Fund for Gender Equality has worked in El Salvador to mobilize women from 22 different advocacy groups, as well as Parliament and the Supreme Court of Justice, around a law making public institutions more gender-responsive. UN Women has supported a similar initiative in the Mexican state of Michoacán, boosting the number of women in municipal governments in the state by 7 percent and improving the leadership skills of thousands of women.16 UN Women has also encouraged countries around the world to redraft and update their national constitutions to reflect gender equality, abolishing discriminatory provisions and ensuring that women's rights are upheld. UN Women worked with the Movement on Parity in Morocco, and as a result of its constitutional redrafting, the number of women in Moroccan parliament has surged 7 percent.17 In Montenegro, "UN Women supported the Department of Gender Equality in advocating to amend the Labor Law to include

equal pay for equal work. An amendment to the Law on Civil Servants made gender equality training mandatory for all public employees.”

Moreover, UN Women is striving to increase women’s political participation in national elections. UN Women recognizes that women candidates oftentimes have fewer resources at their disposal in elections than men do. Women voters may also be more reluctant to vote than men if polling places are in distant or unsafe locations. Third, electoral management bodies may not be aware of these obstacles to women’s participation because of a lack of knowledge or data on these issues. As a result, UN Women has taken several steps to increase women’s participation; it has advocated the adoption of quotas to increase the number of women in politics. It has also encouraged and provided evidence “to inform national electoral regulations. These should ensure that women have fair opportunities to campaign and register to vote, and are protected from election-related violence.” In addition, it works to train women to become effective political candidates and leaders in their communities; it also works with political parties to encourage women’s leadership. For example, during Egypt’s political transition, UN Women established the Egypt Feminist Union, composed of 500 women’s groups, as well as the Egyptian Coalition for Civic Education and Women’s Participation, which, together, “serves as an election watchdog.” UN Women also partnered with the Egyptian government to issue ID cards to 2 million

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18 ibid
20 ibid
21 ibid
22 ibid
UN Women

Egyptian women who need them to vote. UN Women has also worked with the Kenyan government to pass a Political Parties Bill which stipulates “that the registration of political parties depends on having no more than two-thirds of any gender in their governing bodies. Another provision requires filling vacant seats in the legislature with people of the same gender.”

Finally, UN Women has been working with media and news agencies around the world to achieve equal coverage for female politicians in election races. It does so by advocating for more women to work in the media, including in leadership positions. It also raises awareness for gender equality among the members of the media so that they can practice gender-sensitive reporting.

UN Women has been working to resolve biased media reporting in Latin America, particularly. In fact, it worked to find Latin America’s first network of indigenous media professionals in Ecuador; this network is dedicated to “fostering the political participation of excluded indigenous peoples, particularly women and youth.”

Question to Consider:

1. What is the state of women’s political representation in my country and my region? What can be done to promote further improvements in this regard?
2. Are there any specific obstacles to women exercising their right to vote in my country and region? What policies can be implemented to alleviate this problem?

23 ibid
25 ibid
UN Women

Topic 2: Eliminating violence against women and girls

The World Health Organization reports that 1 in 3 women experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetime, most frequently at the hands of an intimate partner.26 Women who have undergone physical or sexual abuse “are more than twice as likely to have an abortion, almost twice as likely to experience depression, and in some regions, 1.5 times more likely to acquire HIV, as compared to women who have not experienced partner violence.”27 UNICEF reports that approximately 120 million girls around the world have experienced sexual intercourse or other sexual acts by force at some point; the most common perpetrators of this violence are current or former husbands, partners, and boyfriends.28 UNICEF has also found that over 200 million women and girls who are alive today have experienced genital mutilation and cutting in 30 different countries around the world. In most cases, “the majority of girls were cut before age 5.”29 Moreover, more than 700 million of the women who are alive today were married as children (below 18 years of age); 1 in 3 of these women were married before the age of 15. Oftentimes, child brides are “unable to effectively negotiate safe sex, leaving them vulnerable to early pregnancy as well as sexually transmitted infections, including HIV.”30 Finally, women and girls account for 70 percent of human trafficking victims.31

26 “Global and regional estimates of violence against women,” World Health Organization, accessed August 18, 2016,
27 ibid
29 “Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting: A global concern,” UNICEF, accessed August 18, 2016,
UN Women

United Nations Economic and Social Affairs reports that in most countries where the above atrocities are occurring, less than 40 percent of women who face violence of this kind are willing to seek help of any sort, and less than 10 percent of them seek help from the police.\textsuperscript{32} Despite the fact that “119 countries have passed laws on domestic violence, 125 have laws on sexual harassment and 52 have laws on marital rape,” enforcement of these laws and compliance with international standards has proven to be questionable.\textsuperscript{33} The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights has found that certain characteristics of women, including sexual orientation, disability status, and ethnicity, as well as contextual factors, such as humanitarian crises and conflict situations, increase women’s vulnerability to violence.\textsuperscript{34}

UN Women has taken a number of steps to combat violence against women and girls. On a global scale, it works to provide support to the UN General Assembly and the Commission on the Status of Women, ensuring that prevention of violence against

\textsuperscript{32} “The World’s Women 2015, Trends and Statistics,” United Nations Economic and Social Affairs, accessed August 18, 2016,
\textsuperscript{33} ibid
\textsuperscript{34} “Violence against women: an EU-wide survey,” European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, accessed August 18, 2016,
women and girls is on the international agenda. However, it has also taken several specific steps to combat violence against women, one being the expansion of access to services for women who are victims of physical and sexual violence. These services include “keeping women and girls safe, providing health care for their injuries, responding to their sexual and reproductive health needs, including provision of post-rape care and counselling, and facilitating their access to the police and justice system.”

UN Women has created an Essential Services Program to improve the quality of and access to services for women around the world. In Ethiopia, UN Women has expanded a network of safe houses in its major cities that offers “comprehensive health, legal, job-training and other forms of assistance to survivors.” It has also worked with the Ethiopian police force to improve its response to violations of women’s security and rights. It is working on similar programs in Mexico, Haiti, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Macedonia.

UN Women is also addressing women’s safety in public places, particularly in regard to sexual harassment and sexual violence; it has implemented the Safe Cities Initiative in 15 cities, including New Delhi, Rio de Janeiro, Cairo, Kigali, Port Moresby, Quito, Dublin, and Sakai. It aims to reach 35 cities by 2017. Moreover, UN Women is working to improve knowledge and evidence of violence against women, through its

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36 ibid
37 ibid
39 ibid
UN Women

creation of the Virtual Knowledge Center to End Violence against Women and Girls.40 UN Women also manages the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, which works to create innovative approaches to stem violence against women. The Trust Fund has “provided grants to 368 initiatives in 132 countries, amounting to a total of $95 million”41 since its founding. UN Women also functions as an advocate in this realm, managing the Secretary General’s campaign UNiTE to end violence against women, a campaign which works to garner international awareness for the issue through partnerships with activists, governments, and other UN partners;42 UNiTE works to “to mobilize people and highlight issues relevant to preventing and ending violence against women and girls, not only once a year, on 25 November (International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women), but every month.”43 COMMIT, another advocacy initiative launched by UN Women in 2012, has prompted 60 countries from every region of the world to take action to end violence against women.44

A final critical aspect of UN Women’s initiative to end violence against women is its Education for Prevention program.45 Alongside the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, UN Women has developed a curriculum to end violence against women and girls, designed for age groups ranging from 5 to 25 years old; this is because UN Women believes that working with youth is the best way to stop gender-based violence

41 ibid.
42 ibid.
43 ibid.
44 ibid.
UN Women

and prevent it among future generations. UN Women is also working with men and boys in Asia and the Pacific to “reduce the prevalence of gender-based violence in the region through behavior and attitudinal change among boys and men, increase institutional capacity and facilitate policy enhancements.”

Questions to Consider:

1. In light of the fact that most violence against women is perpetrated by family and acquaintances, what policies are needed to protect vulnerable women and girls?
2. What countries and regions are most in need of targeted education programs to reduce violence against women?

Topic 3: Economic empowerment of women

According to the International Labor Organization, women participate in labor markets at lower rates than men around the world; “in 2013, the male employment-to-population ratio stood at 72.2 percent, while the ratio for females was 47.1 percent.” Women are also paid less than men, earning a mere 60 to 75 percent of men’s wages, on average. There are several factors behind this disparity in wages; women are more likely to be wage workers and unpaid family workers than men, they are more likely to

46 ibid
47 ibid
UN Women

engage in low-productivity activities and to work in the informal sector, they are viewed as economic dependents, and they are more likely to be in unorganized sectors and not represented in unions. Actionaid calculates that if the participation gap and wage gap between men and women were closed, women could increase their income by up to 76 percent globally, equivalent to a global value of 17 trillion USD.

The World Bank reports that women are disproportionately responsible for unpaid care work; they devote 1 to 3 hours a day more to housework than men, 2 to 10 times the amount of time a day to care, and 1 to 4 hours less a day to market activities, which negatively impacts their participation in the labor force. A report by UN Women finds that “when paid and unpaid work are combined, women in developing countries work more than men, with less time for education, leisure, political participation and self-care.” Women are more likely to work in informal employment than men. For example, in South Asia, 80 percent of women in non-agricultural jobs are informally employed, as are 74 percent in sub-Saharan Africa and 54 percent in Latin America and the Caribbean. Women also work in vulnerable, low-paid, or undervalued jobs.

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55 ibid
56 ibid
UN Women

It was found in 2013 that 49.1 percent of working women around the world were in vulnerable employment, unprotected by labor legislation, compared to 46.9 percent of men. This issue was particularly prevalent in areas such as North Africa, where there was a 24.5 percentage point difference between men and women, and the Middle East, where there was a 9.5 percentage point difference. The World Bank has also found that there are gender differences in laws in all regions of the world; “almost 90 per cent of 143 economies studied have at least one legal difference restricting women’s economic opportunities.” 79 countries have laws restricting the types of jobs that women can perform, and 15 countries have laws allowing husbands to prevent their wives from accepting jobs and working. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics finds that “ethnicity and gender interact to create especially large pay gaps for minority women.” In 2013, on average, black women in the US made USD 606 a week, which amounted to a mere 68.6 percent of US white men’s earnings, but 91.3 percent of black men’s earnings (which were also relatively low in comparison to white men). The Bureau of Labor Statistics found this to be a trend, noting that “women of

60 ibid
61 ibid
63 ibid
UN Women

all major racial and ethnic groups earn less than men of the same group, and also earn less than white men.”

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations reports that women make up 43 percent of the global agricultural workforce in developing countries, yet they control less land than their male counterparts, and they have “limited access to inputs, seeds, credits, and extension services”; differences in access to land and credit between males and females also affect the ability of female farmers to invest, operate to scale, and benefit from new economic opportunities. Moreover, it is mainly women and children who are responsible for the collection and transport of fuel and water, with women in developing countries spending an average of 1 to 4 hours a day collecting biomass for fuel. The World Health Organization also estimates that, based on data collected from 25 sub-Saharan countries, women spend at least 16 million hours a day collecting drinking water, while men spend a mere 6 million hours a day on this task. These gender gaps are exacerbated in times of economic crisis, environmental degradation, natural disasters, and inadequate infrastructure and services.

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64 ibid
However, UN Women notes several benefits to the economic empowerment of women. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, “when more women work, economies grow.” Increased female participation in the workforce directly results in more rapid economic growth. Increasing the share of household income controlled by women, through their own earnings or through cash transfers, increases the benefit that children receive from household spending.

Increasing women and girls’ education also results in higher economic growth, according to the OECD; “increased educational attainment accounts for about 50 per cent of the economic growth in OECD countries over the past 50 years, of which over half is due to girls having had access to higher levels of education and achieving greater equality in the number of years spent in education between men and women.”

A study published in The Lancet using data from 219 countries reports that “for every one additional year of education for women of reproductive age, child mortality decreased by 9.5 percent.” The World Bank has found that part of the problem that women face is reduced access to formal financial institutions and saving mechanisms.

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74 ibid
UN Women has taken a number of steps to further the economic empowerment of women around the world. One tool it uses to bring about this goal is macroeconomic policies and social protection. UN Women works with the governments of various countries to create and implement macroeconomic policies that can improve women’s economic prospects, working on issues such as “links between women’s paid work and inclusive growth, the impacts of economic crisis, and the role of gender in agriculture and trade policy,” Globally, UN Women supports the UN Social Protection Floor initiative, which strives to provide “universal access to basic services and social transfers of cash or goods to ensure income and food security.” UN Women has undertaken specific initiatives in Albania, Cote d’Ivoire, Rwanda, Bolivia, and Grenada. It also

78 ibid
79 ibid
80 ibid
UN Women participates in a Gender Economic Policy Management Initiative, in which it partners with UNDP to provide courses on gender and economics for policy makers.  

UN Women is also working for the economic empowerment of women in the specific context of sustainable development and climate change. For example, it is working with Barefoot College to train illiterate older women from rural communities as solar engineers, teaching them to assemble and install solar lamp kits in their own communities, as well as those around them. This practice has spread across Africa, Asia, and Latin America. UN Women is also an active member of the Global Alliance for Clean Cook Stoves, which advocates the implementation of clean cooking devices in all households around the world. UN Women’s Fund for Gender Equality has introduced clean cook stoves in Ghana, specifically, where those women operating small cooking businesses using the stoves report that they are more productive and their incomes have increased.

Third, UN Women recognizes that rural women are critical to “achieving the transformational economic, environmental, and social changes required for sustainable development. But limited access to credit, health care and education are among the many challenges they face, which are further aggravated by the global food and economic crises and climate change,” therefore, empowering rural women is critical.

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81 ibid
83 ibid
84 ibid
85 ibid
UN Women

to boost overall economic productivity. UN Women has subsequently taken a number of steps to do so. For example, in India, UN Women’s Fund for Gender Equality “has helped women marginalized by the caste system engage in the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme.”87 Today, over 14,000 women have bank accounts in their names and are unionized to defend their rights.88 UN Women has also offered new equipment and training along the Zambezi River in Zimbabwe, allowing women from the Tonga ethnic group to break into Zimbabwe’s male-dominated fishing industry. Now these women are able to sell their own catches, rather than selling fish purchased from men’s boats; this has doubled the women’s sales, and allowed them to participate in a revolving fund providing small loans to one another.89 UN Women is also working in China, educating women farmers about the proper use of advanced irrigation systems, increasing their farming success and boosting their confidence as well.90

Finally, UN Women is working in the realm of employment and migration, as a record number of women are now migrating to new countries to seek work, but they face many risks in the process.91 UN Women is working in Pakistan with the International Labor Organization, lobbying for the country’s first Home-Based Workers Policy to open women’s access to finance and markets, easing the path to better work

87 ibid
88 ibid
89 ibid
90 ibid
UN Women

and incomes. ILO and UN Women have joined several leading businesses in Pakistan's Sialkot district to expand employment options for women; they have already found employment for over 1,000 women, and have achieved equal pay for women in the region as well. UN Women has also trained over 6,000 women in Ethiopia in marketing and business management, as well as 8,000 in expanded credit and savings services. They are also working with the "Central American Bank for Economic Integration to develop a gender strategy that will help 130 micro-financing institutions tailor banking services to indigenous and rural women," and as of 2011, over 12,000 women had access to the bank's Service Centers. UN Women is also working towards safe migration for women in Nepal by advocating for the passage of the 2007 Foreign Employment Act, which banned gender discrimination, removed restrictions on women working abroad, and created measures to guarantee women's security and rights.

Questions to Consider:

1. Given that many women spend much of their time performing crucial, yet often unpaid, household labor, what policies will help women attain economic recognition and independence?

2. Given the direction of the economy in the future what skills should be promoted in educational programs aimed at women, especially in the developing world?

92 ibid
93 ibid
94 ibid
95 ibid
96 ibid
97 ibid
BLOC POSITIONS

African States: Poverty rates across the majority of African states remain high. The majority of Africa’s women “work in insecure, poorly paid jobs, with few opportunities for advancement.” Although the number of democratic elections on the continent are increasing and a record number of women have competed for seats in government, electoral-related violence is now on the rise.

Latin America & the Caribbean: There are high levels of income inequality and social exclusion in this region, particularly among women, indigenous peoples, and youth. Moreover, “public security is a growing concern”; new forms of violence are emerging in the region and femicide has become increasingly prevalent.

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99 ibid
100 ibid
102 ibid
103 ibid
UN Women

Arab States & North Africa: Since achieving their independence, Arab and North African countries have faced many difficulties, which have slowed down political, economic, and social development in these countries.¹⁰⁴ Arab women view gender equality as “part of an agenda comprising functioning democracies and meaningful citizenship; equitable development; equality under the law; the closing of deficits in freedom; and the redressing of gender-based human rights concerns, such as violence against women.”¹⁰⁵

Asia & the Pacific: Although Asia and the Pacific contain some of the world’s strongest economies, this region is also riddled with billions of the world’s poorest people.¹⁰⁶ It faces stark socioeconomic disparities, many of which are tied to gender. Although many countries in the region have formally committed to prioritizing gender equality, the implementation of this resolution has been hindered by a number of factors, “from limited resources to inconsistencies in upholding laws to upheaval from natural disasters.”¹⁰⁷ Women have played a critical role in Asia’s economic boom, making up half of all Asian business owners.¹⁰⁸ However, female unemployment rates in Asia are twice as high as those of males; as a result, many women are forced to be migrant workers who are forced to accept jobs with low pay and no protections, particularly in the sectors of care and domestic work.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ ibid
¹⁰⁷ ibid
¹⁰⁸ ibid
¹⁰⁹ ibid
UN Women

Europe & Central Asia: In regard to work on gender equality, this region is very diverse; EU countries largely provide a framework for UN Women’s work on gender equality.110 In contrast, poverty is more prevalent the developing regions of Central and Southeastern Europe and Central Asia.111 As a result, “gender inequalities persist in pay gaps and the low participation of women in decision-making bodies. Rates of intimate partner and other forms of gender-based violence remain high.”112

111 ibid
112 ibid
UN Women

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UN Women


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