



## Economic and Social Council

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### Commission on the Status of Women

Sixty-sixth session

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Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and  
to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly  
entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and  
peace for the twenty-first century”

### Statement submitted by International Federation of Business and Professional Women, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council\*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being  
circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council  
resolution 1996/31.

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\* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



## Statement

We strongly advise the Bureau that experts and negotiators from agencies, ministries and civil society working on environment and climate change are invited explicitly to join the CSW66 meetings to ensure horizontal coordination and capacity development on the topic. It is advisable that the Commission on the Status of Women develops a communication strategy to ensure that findings and guidance from the Commission on the Status of Women reaches other United Nations mechanisms. More than ever, resilience building through mutual support and solidarity, through strong prior networking and advanced investment of broad stakeholder platforms, is essential to face future challenges. Multilateralism and horizontal coordination are crucial here. Women's organizations that work with different ministries and agencies can be of assistance if timely involved and supported.

Lack of implementation of the Paris agreement, sustainable development goal (SDG) 13 (Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact) and chapter K (Women and the environment) of the Beijing Platform for Action

Just 25 per cent of member states have laws or policies that specifically mention women's participation for climate adaptation, waste (water) management, rural sanitation or water resource management; only approximately 60–65 Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) mention gender impacts or roles of women at all so most countries are not complying with the accepted principles or have difficulty on how to operationalize these policies to initiate concrete action.

### **Recommendations to the Member States in the Commission on the Status of Women 66**

- Encourage and support that the gender mainstreaming strategy of UNFCCC is implemented and the guidance of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and Global Gender and Climate Alliance, the NDC partnership and the UNFCCC secretariat are implemented in the NDCs and National Adaptation and Mitigation Actions (NAPS/NAMAS);
- Recommend that it is required that all UN work and UN conferences dedicated to specific SDGs include systematically a component on women and gender. This should be the case of UN conferences on Climate, Environment, Energy, Biodiversity;
- Use gender analyses or social impact assessments and build on existing national gender policies and framework in NDC planning processes; include sex-disaggregated and gender-responsive indicators in Partnership Plans and NDC investment plans and track their progress;
- Support and ensure that women get access to crucial information in a timely-fashion and in understandable language;
- Engage key gender stakeholders during climate change and environment related consultations at national, sectoral and local levels and include key recommendations from these stakeholders;
- Increase country capacity for gender mainstreaming in climate action and environmental measures on the ground by Member States offering training on gender issues to all key officials.

### **Support the role of women's organizations**

Recently women's organizations organized a series of webinars to highlight the role that local women play in climate adaptation and to indicate what needs to be done to multiply and scale up their solutions and involvement. There are two main components: acknowledge what women have done and learn from it and assist with ensuring more information and knowledge reaches women, regardless of whether they are farm workers or business women. Women tend to be more sensitive to environmental considerations but often lack the information and resources to act on them. Our lifestyle and business practices have a major impact on the damage done to both the planet and its people. Guidance from sustainable consumption and production plans (SDG 12-To ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns) can be most enlightening in this context.

### **Recommendations to the Member States of the Commission on the Status of Women 66**

- Take appropriate measures to reduce risks to women from identified environmental hazards and toxic waste at home, at work and in solid waste and waste water including appropriate application of clean technologies, taking into account the precautionary principle agreed to in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development 1992;
- Give women access to suitable equipment with renewable energy resources to enable less dependency on wood collection and use, helping women in their domestic and productive activities;
- Prevail on companies producing pharmaceuticals and pesticides to abolish components that are harmful to women, whether proven or as a precautionary measure, and prevail on colleagues to ensure that gender impacts and women's voices are heard as part of agreements, such as the agreement on Registration, Evaluation, Authorization and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH), the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade;
- Support education and training for women business owners about what happens in the supply chain and how chemicals and waste (water) management are a crucial element of doing sustainable business and using sustainable products (prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse) so they can be responsible business owners;
- Support and ensure female business owners to take measures to be more environmentally friendly by giving them better access to finance and other resources;
- Facilitate discussions with women and local government on how to make their homes more environmentally friendly by using different/traditional building methods such as avoiding the use of air conditioning and having plants, not stones, in their gardens, etc.
- Encourage, consistent with the Convention on Biological Diversity, the effective protection and use of the knowledge, innovations and practices of women of indigenous and local communities, including practices relating to traditional medicines, biodiversity and indigenous technologies, and endeavor to ensure that these are respected, maintained, promoted and preserved in an ecologically sustainable manner, and promote their wider application with the approval and involvement of the holders of such knowledge. We need to learn from existing earlier acquired competences and traditional knowledge and, if necessary, make them fit for purpose in our times and also translating them into adjusted policies and procedures;

- Safeguard the existing intellectual property rights of indigenous and local women as protected under national and international law; work actively, where necessary, to find additional ways and means for the effective protection and use of such knowledge, innovations and practices, and encourage fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge, innovation and practices;
- Support the Call for Action (CfA) to accelerate the achievement of gender equality in the water domain, together with a multi-stakeholder coalition composed by UN agencies, international and regional organizations, NGOs, official development assistance (ODA), Member States institutions, private sector and civil society, facilitated by UNESCO's World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP).

### **The role and importance of education**

To shift to a sustainable future, we need to rethink what, where and how we learn to develop the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that enable us all to make informed decisions and take individual and collective action on local, national and global urgencies. Women are still underrepresented in science and technological education, and when they do have the qualifications, find it very difficult to get or maintain paid positions in the labor market.

Education to resilience should be integrated into curricula as women and children are disproportionately affected by crises and climate change. Education, whether formal or informal, is important to prepare societies for global changes and to raise awareness, for example, on the importance of the right to water and sanitation in the current context of water stress, and to help those who work with vulnerable communities with practical ways to address challenges. Indigenous knowledge should be valued and transmitted between the generations.

UN General Assembly Resolution 72/22214 recognizes Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) as “an integral element of SDG 4 on education and a key enabler of all the other SDGs followed by the ESD A Roadmap for Action” (UNESCO, 2020).

### **Recommendations to the Member States of the Commission on the Status of Women 66**

- Prioritize marginalized populations, including persons with disabilities, refugees and persons affected by conflict, crises and natural disasters, through an inclusive approach by promoting innovative Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) policies which are contextualized and embedding ESD in emergency education;
- Fight against illiteracy and raise the educational level of women. Education is the gateway to awareness and action on climate issues;
- Ensure that education to resilience is integrated in curricula; ensure new policies that use ESD to combat poverty, particularly extreme poverty, and provide learners with relevant competencies to meet individual and societal demands, including Training and Vocational Education and Training and skills development for sustainable livelihoods to ensure human dignity and the right to live decently;
- Enhance multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary collaboration on ESD at all levels of governance, with Ministries of Education collaborating with all other Ministries that have an impact on sustainable development, to ensure a whole-of-government approach, with strengthened cooperation between Ministries of

Education and Environment at the core, as well as with all other relevant stakeholder groups, such as non-governmental organizations, the academic community, the business sector and youth;

- Support and promote education in science and technology for women and ensure that they have access to the labor market so women can be effective their as actors and entrepreneurs.

### **Women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work**

We have copy-pasted below the conclusions from 2017. And, it would appear that there is not much progress:

- Still follow the money;
- Still not enough access for women to get credit;
- Still unequal pay for the same work and level of expertise;
- Still not enough investment and effort to give women access to vocational education and training at different levels, especially in STEM related education and work;
- Still assumptions that assume women cannot do the work, especially when it involves technology.

### **Recommendations to the Member States of the CSW66**

- Endorse the relevant ILO treaties and conventions and urge support of the Small Enterprise Development (IFP/SEED) to provide support services and advocacy to small and medium-sized enterprises in both formal and informal economies;
- Support decent work and a safe workplace, especially for women;
- Support the implementation of the Women Empowerment principles (WEPs), in this context especially principle 3 (Ensure the health, safety and well-being of all women and men workers) facilitated by the UN Global Compact and UN Women;
- Facilitate mentoring schemes for career development of women.

List of undersigned NGOs:

Associated Country Women of the World

Graduate Women International (GWI)

International Alliance of Women

International Council of Women

Servas International

Soroptimist International

Tandem Project

Women's Federation for World Peace International

Women for Water Partnership

Women's World Summit Foundation

Zonta International