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COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

BACKGROUND GUIDE 2017

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NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS

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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2017 National Model United Nations New York Conference (NMUN•NY)! We are pleased to introduce you to our committee, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). This year's staff is: Directors Lidia Marseglia (Conference A) and Adrian Hassler (Conference B), and Assistant Directors Stephanie Nicole Shady (Conference A) and Kiki Bouwmans (Conference B). Lidia recently received her B.A. in Political Science and she is currently enrolled in a Master's program in International Relations at the University LUISS Guido Carli of Rome. This will be her third year on staff. Adrian has recently graduated with an M.Sc. in Global Development from the University of Copenhagen and currently works as a consultant on human rights and sustainable development. He is looking forward to returning for his third year on staff. Stephanie earned her B.S. in Political Science and B.A. in Spanish at Texas Christian University and is now pursuing her Ph.D. in Political Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Kiki recently received her propedeuse for International and European Law, and she is currently enrolled in the European Law School program at Radboud University in the Netherlands. She is looking forward to her first year on staff.

The topics under discussion for CSW are:

I. Enhancing Women's Role in Peace Processes and Political Transitions
II. Realizing the Rights of Indigenous Women
III. Women's Economic Empowerment in a Changing World of Work

CSW was established as a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Within the UN system, it is the key body working to achieve women's empowerment, to eliminate discrimination against women, and enhance gender equality. Its annual sessions offer an international forum to discuss the link between gender equality and a range of topics including sustainable development. In order to accurately simulate the committee, it is critical that delegates understand its mandate and functions, including its collaboration with ECOSOC and UN-Women.

This Background Guide serves as an introduction to the topics for this committee. However, it is not intended to replace individual research. We encourage you to explore your Member State's policies in depth and use the Annotated Bibliography and Bibliography to further your knowledge on these topics. In preparation for the Conference, each delegation will submit a Position Paper by 11:59 p.m. (Eastern) on 1 March 2017 in accordance with the guidelines in the Position Paper Guide and the NMUN•NY Position Papers website.

Two essential resources for your preparation are the Delegate Preparation Guide and the NMUN Rules of Procedure available to download from the NMUN website. The Delegate Preparation Guide explains each step in the delegate process, from pre-Conference research to the committee debate and resolution drafting processes. The NMUN Rules of Procedure include the long and short form of the rules, as well as an explanatory narrative and example script of the flow of procedure. In tandem, these documents thus serve as essential instruments in preparing for the Conference and as a reference during committee sessions.

Please take note of information in the Delegate Preparation Guide on plagiarism and the prohibition of pre-written working papers and resolutions. Additionally, please review the NMUN Policies and Codes of Conduct on the NMUN website regarding the Conference dress code; awards philosophy and evaluation method; and codes of conduct for delegates, faculty, and guests regarding diplomacy and professionalism. Importantly, any instances of sexual harassment or discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, or disability will not be tolerated. Adherence to these policies is mandatory.

If you have any questions concerning your preparation for the committee or the Conference itself, please contact the Under-Secretaries-General for the ECOSOC Department, Tsesa Monaghan (Conference A) and Dominika Ziemczonek (Conference B), at usg.ecosoc@nmun.org.

We wish you all the best in your preparations and look forward to seeing you at the Conference!

Sincerely,

Conference A
Lidia Marseglia, *Director*
Stephanie Nicole Shady, *Assistant Director*

Conference B
Adrian Hassler, *Director*
Kiki Bouwmans, *Assistant Director*

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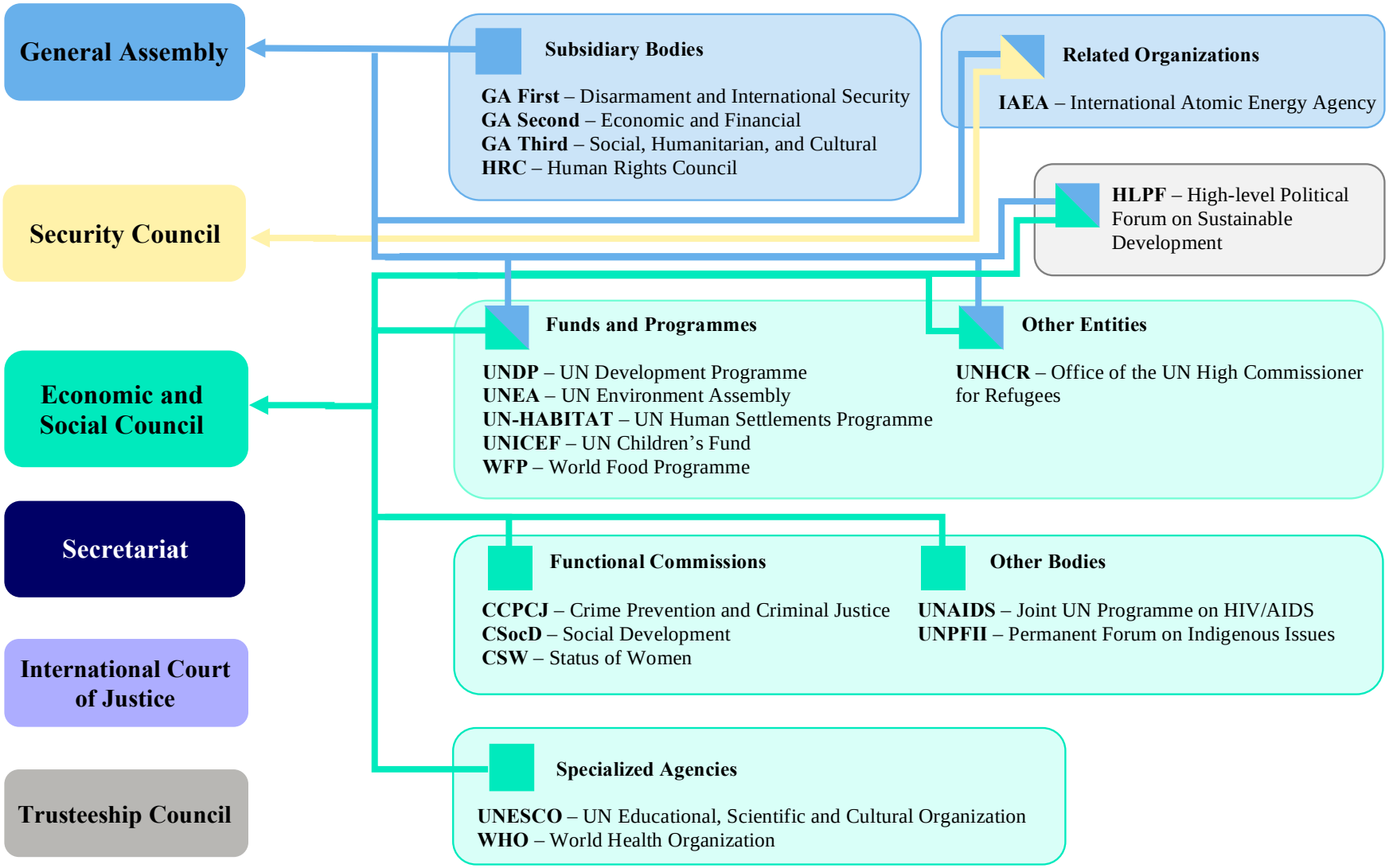
United Nations System at NMUN•NY

This diagram illustrates the UN system simulated at NMUN•NY and demonstrates the reportage and relationships between entities. Examine the diagram alongside the Committee Overview to gain a clear picture of the committee's position, purpose, and powers within the UN system.



Abbreviations

BPfA	*Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*
CEDAW	*Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*
CSO	Civil society organization
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
DDR	Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
EU	European Union
HRC	Human Rights Council
IASG	Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues
ICESCR	*International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights*
ICRW	International Center for Research on Women
IFAD	International Fund for Agriculture and Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
IWGIA	International Working Group for Indigenous Affairs
LDC	Least developed country
NAP	National Action Plan
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights
PBC	Peacebuilding Commission
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
SSR	Security sector reform
STEM	Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics
UN	United Nations
UN-Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDRIP	*United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIPP	United Nations Indigenous Peoples' Partnership
UNPFII	United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
WPS	Women, peace, and security

Committee Overview

"Countries with more gender equality have better economic growth. Companies with more women leaders perform better. Peace agreements that include women are more durable. Parliaments with more women enact more legislation on key social issues such as health, education, anti-discrimination and child support. The evidence is clear: equality for women means progress for all."[1]

Introduction

The **Commission on the Status of Women** (CSW) is a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

A vast amount of data from various United Nations (UN) agencies, intergovernmental bodies, and civil society organizations (CSOs) depicts a concerning state of gender equality and women's empowerment in the world. More than 20 years after the UN General Assembly's adoption of the *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women* (1993), it is estimated that over than 70% of women have been victims of sexual or physical abuse in their lifetime.[2] In Africa and in the Middle East, more than 120 million girls alive today have been subjected to genital mutilation.[3] Furthermore, according to the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), only 22.5% of members in parliaments worldwide are women, one of many challenges for women's participation in decision-making and within the political system.[4] In addition, the Women's Major Group, which facilitations the contributions of women's CSOs in the UN's work on sustainable development, has stressed the prevailing economic discrimination of women, who take on about 80% of the burden of domestic and unpaid care work.[5] Moreover, the informal work sector is the main source of employment for women worldwide, especially in developing countries.[6] These figures demonstrate the need for further action by the international community to promote gender equality, especially within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and to focus on ending the most pervasive form of discrimination of our times: the discrimination against women and girls.[7]

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is the main intergovernmental policymaking body within the UN in the area of women's empowerment, promotion of women's rights, and gender equality.[8] It is a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), reporting to ECOSOC annually.[9] Its main priority is to mainstream gender equality within the UN system and link women's empowerment to sustainable development.[10] Together with the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and civil society actors, the Commission worked to guarantee that the SDGs, adopted during the UN Sustainable Development Summit in September 2015, not only included a standalone goal on gender equality and women's empowerment (SDG 5), but also mainstreamed a gender perspective within all goals.[11] CSW and its secretariat, UN-Women, are the most significant international actors working with Member States and civil society in order to create a discrimination-free world where women and girls are able to fully participate in the economic, political, and social spheres of their societies.[12]

In 1946, the first efforts by the UN to address women's issues were carried out in a sub-commission under the Commission on Human Rights.[13] However, it became clear that the empowerment of women deserved more

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[1] UN-Women, *International Women's Day 2014 Theme: Equality for Women is Progress for All*, 2014.
[2] UN-Women, *Facts and Figures: Ending Violence Against Women*, 2016.
[3] UN DESA, *The World's Women 2015, Trends and Statistics*, 2015.
[4] Inter-Parliamentary Union, *Women in National Parliaments*, 2016.
[5] Women's Major Group, *Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 Presents a Bold Vision for Women and Girls Advocates Gear Up for Work to Come*, 2015; Women's Major Group, *The Women's Group Role and Organisation.*
[6] Alter Chen, *Women in the Informal Sector: A Global Picture, the Global Movement.*
[7] UN General Assembly, *Report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals Established Pursuant to General Assembly Resolution 66/288*, 2014.
[8] UN-Women, *Commission on the Status of Women*, 2015.
[9] New Zealand, *United Nations Handbook 2016-17*, 2016, p. 9.
[10] UN-Women, *Commission on the Status of Women*, 2015.
[11] UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.
[12] UN-Women, *Governments Endorse New Roles for Women's Commission: The UN Commission on the Status of Women revamps working methods to raise the stakes in advancing women's equality, empowerment and rights*, 2015.
[13] UN CSW, *Short History of the Commission on the Status of Women*, 2006, p. 1.

attention and stronger commitment from Member States.[14] As a result of the debates taking place in summer 1946, CSW was established as a fully functional commission under the auspices of ECOSOC through ECOSOC resolution 11(II).[15]

Since its installation as a full commission, CSW has been the driving force behind the ongoing process of creating and implementing international norms related to the advancement of women.[16] CSW's work is mainly guided by the principles of the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW) (1979), the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* (BPfA) (1995), and the outcome document of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly as a follow-up to BPfA, entitled "Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty-First Century" (2000).[17] Additionally, UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on "Women, Peace and Security" has been an influential guiding document.[18] In particular, the BPfA is crucial for CSW's work since it outlined the goals that the international community has set in order to achieve gender equality, such as ensuring the full implementation of women's human rights and promoting women's economic independence.[19]

The year 2015 marked the 20th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the adoption of the BPfA.[20] Beijing+20 took place at a crucial moment for the UN, during the transition from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to the newly adopted SDGs.[21] As the Executive Director of UN-Women stated, "2015 must mark the beginning of the end of gender inequality, with 2030 as the expiry date."[22]

Governance, Structure, and Membership

The Commission consists of 45 Member States, elected for four-year terms.[23] The allocation of seats follows proportional geographical distribution and is comprised of 13 African states, 11 Asia-Pacific states, four Eastern European states, nine Latin American and Caribbean states, and eight Western European and Other states.[24] The chair and the four vice-chairs of the Commission's Bureau rotate without specific geographical regulations and are elected for two-year terms.[25] The Bureau addresses all necessary preparation for the annual meetings of CSW, identifying emerging issues, trends, focus areas, or possible new approaches to implementing the BPfA and all other relevant policy guidelines, and providing the findings as a summary of the chair.[26] This work is done in consultation with all the Member States of the Commission and the regional groups, experts, and other relevant stakeholders, promoting interactive dialogue, such as high-level ministerial panels or expert group meetings.[27] The Bureau is supported in its actions by UN-Women, which provides the Commission with reports on the discussed topics, as well as national and regional reviews on the implementation of the policies set forth by CSW and ECOSOC.[28] The Commission works together with the General Assembly and ECOSOC in a multi-tiered intergovernmental process to provide normative guidance to achieve of gender equality.[29]

In 2010, the UN's institutional setup and operational framework engaged on women's issues underwent significant restructuring in order to streamline efforts in achieving goals on gender equality.[30] All four major UN agencies

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[14] Ibid., pp. 1-2.
[15] UN-Women, *Commission on the Status of Women*, 2015.
[16] UN-Women, *A Brief History of the CSW*.
[17] UN CSW, *Short History of the Commission on the Status of Women*, 2006, pp. 9-15.
[18] Ibid.
[19] UN General Assembly, *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, 1995.
[20] UN-Women, *Beijing+20: Recommitting for Women and Girls*, 2015.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Ibid.
[23] New Zealand, *United Nations Handbook 2016-17*, 2016, p. 156.
[24] Ibid., pp. 156-160.
[25] Ibid., p. 160.
[26] UN CSW, *Report on the 59th session (E/2015/27-E/CN.6/2015/10)*, 2015, pp. 11-15.
[27] Ibid.
[28] UN General Assembly, *System-wide coherence (A/RES/64/289)*, 2010, pp. 9-11.
[29] UN General Assembly, *Proposed strategic framework for the period 2016-2017: Programme 14, Gender equality and empowerment of women (A/69/6(Prog.14))*, 2014, p. 2.
[30] UN General Assembly, *System-wide coherence (A/RES/64/289)*, 2010, pp. 8-14.

merged and resulted in the establishment of UN-Women.[31] As of 2010, UN-Women is now the Secretariat of CSW and provides guidance for operational activities aimed at the advancement of women.[32] Today, UN-Women supports the work of CSW substantively by providing annual documentation on critical areas of concern regarding gender equality and facilitates the interaction between the Commission and CSOs at its annual meeting, which is a key factor in the advancement of women on all levels.[33] Moreover, the Commission has one Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women, which is in charge of producing a report to CSW identifying "trends and patterns of reliably-attested injustice and discriminatory practices against women."[34]

In June 2015, ECOSOC adopted resolution 2015/6 to define the future organization and methods of work of CSW.[35] ECOSOC determined that the 60th session of CSW, held in 2016, had to include a ministerial segment, an interactive dialogue structured in roundtables among Ministers representing the governments of several Member States, in order to "reaffirm and strengthen political commitment to realization of gender equality and the empowerment of Women."[36] The segment included ministerial roundtables focusing on the exchange of experiences and good practice, leading to a general discussion on the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women.[37] Furthermore, ECOSOC requested the UN Secretary-General to submit a report annually to the General Assembly based on the evaluation of the progress made on the issue of the review theme.[38]

Mandate, Functions, and Powers

The original mandate of CSW, adopted in 1946, is to provide "recommendations and reports to ECOSOC on promoting women's rights in political, economic, social, and educational fields ... [and] ... urgent problems requiring immediate attention in the field of women's rights."[39] This mandate has been substantially expanded as a follow-up to the UN Decade of Women from 1975 to 1985 and the Third and Fourth World Conferences on Women in Nairobi in 1985 and Beijing in 1995, respectively.[40] As a result of the Fourth World Conference and the adoption of the BPfA, ECOSOC decided that, as its primary responsibility, CSW must take actions to mainstream "a gender perspective in policies and programmes," as well as to assist ECOSOC and Member States in the implementation and achievement of the goals set in the BPfA.[41] This was re-emphasized at the 23rd special session of the General Assembly in 2000, which set the goal of full gender equality.[42]

The main functions and primary responsibilities are outlined in the original mandate of CSW, its expansions, and several ECOSOC resolutions on the methods of work of the Commission. These methods of work have been examined and expanded several times by ECOSOC within the last 10 years in ECOSOC resolutions 2006/9, 2009/15, and 2013/18 in order to ensure coherence with the work of the Council. The aim of these expansions was to set an effective approach to mainstream gender within the entire UN system and engage in discussions with governmental representatives, experts, and non-governmental actors to identify gaps and challenges to gender equality.[43] At its annual meetings, CSW adopts resolutions that are included in an annual report to ECOSOC.[44]

Taking into consideration the report of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on "Ways and means to further enhance the impact of the work of the Commission on the Status of Women," ECOSOC adopted a resolution regarding the

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[31] Ibid., pp. 8-9.
[32] Ibid., pp. 8-10.
[33] Ibid., p. 9.
[34] UN-Women, *CSW59/Beijing+20 (2015)*, 2015.
[35] UN ECOSOC, *Future organization and Methods of Work of the Commission on the Status of Women (A/RES/2015/6)*, 2015.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid.; UN-Women, *CSW60 (2016)*, 2015.
[38] UN ECOSOC, *Future organization and Methods of Work of the Commission on the Status of Women (A/RES/2015/6)*, 2015.
[39] UN ECOSOC, *Commission on the Status of Women (Res. 11(II))*, 1946, p. 525.
[40] UN CSW, *Short History of the Commission on the Status of Women*, 2006, pp. 9-15.
[41] UN ECOSOC, *Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women (E/RES/1996/6)*, 1996; UN General Assembly, *Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (A/RES/55/71)*, 2000.
[42] UN-Women, *Commission on the Status of Women*, 2015.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Ibid.

matter in June 2015 as 2015/6.[45] The Commission will continue to meet annually to provide policy guidance to UN Member States and other relevant UN entities in the form of Agreed Conclusions on its priority and review theme and resolutions on emerging issues and trends in gender equality and women's empowerment.[46] The Commission continues to organize the Beijing reviews and use the momentum therein to recommit Member States and strengthen their political will.[47] Furthermore, CSW contributes to the annual theme of ECOSOC, strengthening the Council's impact, and works closely with all other gender-specific UN entities, such as the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, to enhance their work.[48]

Recent Sessions and Current Priorities

The SDGs, adopted at the Sustainable Development Summit in September 2015, now guide the work of the international community in international development efforts, and specifically the work of CSW with respect to SDG 5, "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls."[49] Further, a gender perspective is integrated into many of the SDGs, thus CSW aims to consider its crosscutting nature and the evident "gender dimensions of poverty, hunger, health, education, water and sanitation, employment, safe cities and peace and security."[50]

The most recent session of CSW was held in March 2016.[51] In accordance with ECOSOC resolution 2013/18, CSW focused on the theme "Women's empowerment and the link to sustainable development," reviewing "The elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women," as an evaluation of the progress following the conclusions of its fifty-seventh session.[52] During its 60th session, CSW reaffirmed the guiding principles of the Commission within the new SDG framework, specifically regarding the crosscutting nature of SDG 5 across the UN system.

Additionally, during this session, CSW decided on the priority theme for its 61st session in March 2017, "Women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work."[53] This theme finds its basis in the agreed conclusions of the 60th session, which focused on the sub-topic of strengthening women's leadership and their full participation in decision-making processes, as well as their entrance in the labor market.[54] Moreover, along with the theme of women's economic empowerment, CSW will consider "Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for women and girls" as the review theme.[55]

Conclusion

CSW has reached major accomplishments in setting global standards, establishing a legally binding framework for gender equality, and promoting women's rights in all spheres. Nonetheless, the Commission, together with UN-Women and other relevant UN entities, must further align their efforts to achieve total gender equality and the full realization of women's and girls' universal human rights in an effective, coherent, and comprehensive manner. Furthermore, CSW must continue to follow-up on the final implementation of the BPfA and outcomes of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly, as well as assess the progress of women's advancement within the framework of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and the SDGs.[56] Eradicating poverty, ending violence, and guaranteeing access to quality education are all goals that involve women both as beneficiary and active parts of the creation and implementation of effective solutions. CSW plays a fundamental role in this field. With the help of CSOs, expert meetings, and UN-Women reports, CSW can continue to identify prevailing and newly emerging gaps

[45] UN ECOSOC, *Future organization and methods of work of CSW (E/RES/2015/6)*, 2015; UN ECOSOC, *Ways and means to further enhance the impact of the work of the Commission on the Status of Women: Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/2014/14)*, 2013.
[46] UN ECOSOC, *Future organization and methods of work of CSW (E/RES/2015/6)*, 2015, pp. 2-3.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid., pp. 2-5.
[49] UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.
[50] Ibid.
[51] UN ECOSOC, *Commission on the Status of Women: Report on the Sixtieth Session (E/2016/27-E/CN.6/2016/22)*, 2016.
[52] Ibid.
[53] UN-Women, *CSW61 (2017)*, 2016.
[54] UN CSW, *Report on the Sixtieth Session (E/2016/27-E/CN.6/2016/22)*, 2016, p. 17.
[55] Ibid., p. 21.
[56] UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

and challenges to gender equality and address them in an effective manner in their annual meetings advising ECOSOC to take action accordingly to empower women on a local, national, regional, and global level. The policy guidance provided by CSW makes it one of the most important actors on women's issues worldwide. CSW is setting the pace for change by establishing more and more progressive norms and standards, advising Member States how to accomplish full gender equality.[57]

Annotated Bibliography

New Zealand, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. (2016). *United Nations Handbook 2016-17*. Retrieved 2 November 2016 from: https://mfat.govt.nz/assets/_securedfiles/Handbooks/United_Nations_Handbook-2016-2017.pdf

> *The United Nations Handbook, produced by the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, offers up-to-date information on membership and Bureau composition of CSW. Furthermore, it clarifies the purpose, evolution, and structure of the Commission in a concise and easily understandable style. It gives reference to the most important ECOSOC and General Assembly resolutions regarding the mandate and structure of the commission.*

United Nations, Commission on the Status of Women. (2015). *Report on the fifty-ninth session (E/2015/27-E/CN.6/2015/10)*. Retrieved 21 July 2015 from: http://undocs.org/E/2015/27

> *The 2015 report of the CSW to the ECOSOC is a summary of the work that CSW has accomplished within the past few years, including Beijing+20 national and regional review processes, culminating in the 59th session in March 2015. This document offers delegates information on the most pressing themes currently addressed by CSW, as well as its organizational structure. It provides not only a draft resolution on the "future organization and methods of work of the Commission on the Status of Women," but also the political declaration on the Beijing+20 review process, which is considered a core function of CSW. Further, the report includes a full list of all considered documents during the session.*

United Nations Economic and Social Council. (2016). *Commission on the Status of Women: Report on the Sixtieth Session (E/2016/27-E/CN.6/2016/22)*. Retrieved 15 July 2016 from: http://undocs.org/E/2016/27

> *This report on the 60th session of CSW is a comprehensive overview of the issues that the Commission will be dealing with during 2016 and the beginning of 2017. It is crucial to understand the current priorities of the Commission, the outcomes from its recent session, and the recent development of its functions. In fact, it expresses and analyzes the new priority of CSW: women's empowerment and its link to sustainable development. Moreover, it gives several pieces of information regarding the evaluation of progress in the implementation of the conclusions from its fifty-seventh session.*

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2016). *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": implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives: review theme: the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls (E/CN.6/2016/21)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 19 August 2016 from: http://undocs.org/E/CN.6/2016/21

> *This resolution from ECOSOC is a fundamental document to understanding the progress made by the international community, and CSW especially, towards the achievements of the goals set during the 59th session of the Commission. Consisting of the Chair's summary, the resolution gives a concise overview of several areas, covering in particular the issues related to the social and economic causes of gender-related violence. Delegates can benefit from this source by better understanding the actions that are to be enacted by governments of the Member States, as well as how the CSW deals with the topics at hand.*

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. (2015). *Beijing+20: Recommitting for Women and Girls* [Fact Sheet]. Retrieved 16 August 2016 from:

[57] UN ECOSOC, *Ways and means to further enhance the impact of the work of the Commission on the Status of Women: Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/2014/14)*, 2013.

http://www2.unwomen.org/~/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/how%20we%20work/intergovsupport/unw_beijing_brief_v3%20pdf.pdf?v=2&d=20150226T212442

This source in a useful introduction to Beijing+20 and to the implementation of the BPfA. As it was outlined in the introduction of the Committee Overview, the implementation of the Beijing Declaration comes in a crucial moment for the UN as a whole, being related to several of the SDGs. The Declaration and its implementation are leading the work of CSW through the achievement of the SDGs before the deadline of 2030. This brief overview on Beijing+20 can be a useful starting-source for further researches on the issues the Commission is dealing with.

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. (2015). *Commission on the Status of Women* [Website]. Retrieved 21 October 2016 from: http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw

This website is an ideal starting point for understanding CSW and serves as the first overview on its foundation, mandate, methods of work, and multi-year programs of work. It is a great source for information on the various priorities and reviews themes the Commission has dealt with in recent years, especially the 58th (2014) and 59th (2015) sessions. For further research it provides links to the history, official outcome documents, and non-governmental organization participation, as well as the CSW Communications Procedure of the Working Group.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-ninth session. (2014). *Proposed strategic framework for the period 2016-2017: Programme 14, Gender equality and empowerment of women (A/69/6 (Prog.14))*. Retrieved 23 October 2016 from: http://undocs.org/A/69/6(Prog.14)

This documents outlines the strategic framework through which UN-Women is playing a significant role in enhancing the work and building the capacity of CSW to address gender inequality by outlining important intersection of the two entities. It furthermore provides delegates with an extensive list of General Assembly resolutions, ECOSOC resolutions and declarations, Security Council resolutions, CSW agreed conclusions, and UN-Women Executive Board decisions that deal with gender equality. Delegates should be familiar with those approaches to think about further actions CSW should undertake.

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New Zealand, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. (2016). *United Nations Handbook 2016-17*. Retrieved 2 November 2016 from: https://mfat.govt.nz/assets/_securedfiles/Handbooks/United_Nations_Handbook-2016-2017.pdf

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I. Enhancing Women's Role in Peace Processes and Political Transitions

Introduction

Every civil war ignited between 2003 and 2010 was a rekindling of a previous one, suggesting that existing peace processes and political transitions are insufficient.[58] As the international community seeks more sustainable peace, Member States are considering what roles women should play in each step of the process, from negotiating peace accords and designing disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) and security sector reform (SSR) plans; to implementing DDR and SSR; and finally to institutional reform to prevent the resumption of conflict.[59] Between 1992 and 2011, across 31 significant peace processes, just 9% of the negotiators were women, and as of 2015, women made up only 15% of parliaments in countries without legislative quotas, highlighting a startling gender gap in processes that affect both men and women.[60]

Although the United Nations (UN) focuses on various aspects of conflict, its active focus on the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda is fairly recent.[61] Traditionally, women's roles in post-conflict processes have been limited to non-security, apolitical sectors, but sustainable peace requires the engagement of women in all sectors.[62] The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) has begun to engage with other UN bodies and Member States to gender mainstream peace processes and political transition, but much work remains.[63] The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) defines gender mainstreaming as "a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes…so that…inequality is not perpetuated."[64] Bearing in mind the existing international framework and role of the international system in promoting women's participation, this topic will examine ways in which women uniquely contribute to each stage of the post-conflict process and discuss the existing barriers as well as future opportunities for gender mainstreaming peace processes and political transition.

International and Regional Framework

Although many international documents on gender equality mention the role of women in post-conflict processes, the international community has recently begun building legal and normative frameworks that specifically address the WPS agenda. The *Windhoek Declaration and Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations* (2000) (Windhoek Declaration) represents a crucial follow-up to the *Beijing Platform for Action's* (1995) Strategic Objectives E.1, "Increase the participation of women in conflict resolution at decision-making levels and protect women living in situations of armed and other conflicts or under foreign occupation," and E.4, "Promote women's contribution to fostering a culture of peace."[65] As the first comprehensive UN document focused on gender mainstreaming peace processes, the Windhoek Declaration builds a foundation for the WPS agenda by highlighting key UN bodies and policy areas of which "women should be an integral part," including the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), the Peacebuilding Commission

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[58] World Bank, *World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security, and Development*, 2011, p. 57; UN-Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2015, p. 169.

[59] UN DDR Resource Centre, *Post-conflict Stabilization, Peacebuilding and Recovery Framework*, 2006, pp. 5, 139.

[60] UN-Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2015, pp. 14, 175.

[61] Ibid., p. 5.

[62] UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on Women and Peace and Security (S/2015/716)*, 2015, p. 46; UN-Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2015, pp. 5-28.

[63] UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on Women and Peace and Security (S/2015/716)*, 2015, p. 3; UN-Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2015, p. 5.

[64] UN General Assembly, *Report of the Economic and Social Council for 1997*, 1997, p. 28.

[65] UN Fourth World Conference on Women, *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, 1995, pp. 58-62; UN General Assembly & UN Security Council, *Windhoek Declaration on the Tenth Anniversary of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group and Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations (A/55/138-S/2000/693)*, 2000.

(PBC), the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), and the Security Council.[66] It further asserts that women's equal leadership in political, economic, and social spheres is crucial to political stability because they bring diverse perspectives and skills to all of these areas.[67] Importantly, the Windhoek Declaration calls for the gender mainstreaming of Security Council resolutions.[68]

In the same year, Security Council resolution 1325(2000) on "Women and Peace and Security" marked a shift in the Security Council's conversation on the WPS agenda from women's protection to women's participation, as it called for female representation "at all decision-making levels."[69] Since then, clauses addressing women in country-specific Security Council resolutions have increased from 50% to 89% in 2014, which highlights a growing normative shift in favor of WPS as a result of this landmark Security Council resolution.[70]

Additionally, the General Assembly has adopted several resolutions on the WPS agenda. General Assembly resolutions 58/142 (2003) and 66/130 (2011) ask Member States to respect women's right to participate in public office and to evaluate potential structural and educational barriers to their participation, particularly in periods of political uncertainty, such as after a conflict.[71] General Assembly resolutions 65/69 (2010), 67/48 (2012), 68/33 (2013), and 69/61 (2014) call for the increased inclusion of women in disarmament negotiations and emphasize the role of female community leaders in the reintegration of armed combatants into civilian life.[72]

CSW has also contributed to the framework for the WPS agenda. In its resolution 1997/27 on "Women in Power and Decision Making," CSW asserts that gender equality in decision-making roles "provide[s] the balance that is needed to strengthen democracy," and emphasizes that women's roles must be enhanced not only quantitatively but qualitatively.[73] That is, gender quotas themselves may be insufficient if women's ideas are not considered and implemented to the same degree of their male counterparts.[74] In its resolution 2004/27 on "Women in Conflict Resolution," CSW suggests that the drafting of peace agreements and new constitutions provides opportunities for states to restructure women's access to political, economic, and social institutions.[75] It further recommends the inclusion of women in the negotiation of peace agreements, with the goals of empowering women to participate in politics and ensuring that agreements address not only security issues, but also domestic gender equality policies.[76]

Role of the International System

A wide variety of international bodies are critical actors in promoting women's participation in peace processes and political transitions, including the Security Council, DPKO, the PBC, DPA, CSW, and UN-Women; however, as noted in Security Council resolutions 1889, 2122, and 2242 (2015) and the *High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations on uniting our strengths for peace: politics, partnership, and people* (2015) (High-Level Panel on Peace Operations), coordination among them must be strengthened to further promote a gender-mainstreamed approach to

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[66] Ibid.
[67] Ibid., p. 2.
[68] Ibid., p. 3.
[69] UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/1325 (2000))*, 2000, pp. 1-4; UN-Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2015, pp. 28, 44.
[70] UN General Assembly & UN Security Council, *Report on the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations on uniting our strengths for peace: politics, partnerships, and people*, 2015, p. 23; UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on Women, Peace and Security (S/2015/716)*, 2015, p. 46.
[71] UN General Assembly, *Women and Political Participation (A/RES/58/142)*, 2003, pp. 1-5; UN General Assembly, *Women and Political Participation (A/RES/66/130)*, 2011, pp. 1-5.
[72] UN General Assembly, *Women, Disarmament, Nonproliferation, and Arms Control (A/RES/65/69)*, 2010, p. 1; UN General Assembly, *Women, Disarmament, Nonproliferation, and Arms Control (A/RES/67/48)*, 2012, pp. 1-2; UN General Assembly, *Women, Disarmament, Nonproliferation, and Arms Control (A/RES/68/33)*, 2013, pp. 1-2; UN General Assembly, *Women, Disarmament, Nonproliferation, and Arms Control (A/RES/69/61)*, 2014, pp. 1-2.
[73] UN CSW, *Women in Power and Decision-making: CSW41 Agreed Conclusions (1997/277)*, 1997, pp. 1-3.
[74] Ibid.
[75] UN CSW, *Women's Equal Participation in Conflict Prevention, Management and Conflict Resolution and in Post-Conflict Peacebuilding: CSW48 Agreed Conclusions (B)*, 2004, pp. 1-4.
[76] UN CSW, *Women's Equal Participation in Conflict Prevention, Management and Conflict Resolution and in Post-Conflict Peacebuilding: CSW48 Agreed Conclusions (B)*, 2004, pp. 1-4

peace.[77] Each UN body plays a differentiated but complementary role in the WPS agenda. CSW's role is to provide policy guidance to Member States in its resolutions, such as 1997/27 and 2004/27, which are subsequently adopted by ECOSOC and translated into domestic policy as determined by individual Member States.[78] This guidance has largely consisted of ideal goals that states should strive for and calls for further research on WPS topics.[79] CSW last conducted a review of the WPS agenda in 2008 and concluded that although women's participation in post-conflict processes had increased in some areas, there remained incomplete gender mainstreaming in the UN system and a lack of systematic coordination between domestic women's groups and governments.[80]

Whereas CSW writes policy recommendations, UN-Women implements educational and training programs for women and officials to promote women's participation in peacebuilding.[81] For example, in Liberia, UN-Women established Peace Huts, based on a pre-existing custom involving Liberian men, wherein women mediate conflicts between civilians, counsel victims of crimes, and serve as an intermediary between civilians and police forces.[82] DPKO has developed mandates to include women in the planning and mobilization of peacekeeping operations (PKOs), including in military and police roles.[83] In its *Gender Forward Looking Strategy* for 2014-2018, DPKO has reaffirmed its commitment to implementing Security Council resolution 1325, with a focus on personnel recruitment and training as well as special attention to the recommendations of Gender Advisers.[84] The PBC has released its third *Gender Promotion Initiative* (2016) (GPI3), which intends to use the Peacebuilding Fund to support UN, national, and civil society-sponsored projects whose primary objective is women's empowerment in peace agreement implementation or in national capacity-building for political stability.[85] Finally, DPA supports the WPS agenda by increasing the number of women in its own mediation staff as an example for states and by assisting with election monitoring to ensure that women can freely vote.[86]

Additionally, 54 Member States, the European Union (EU), and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) have adopted National Action Plans (NAPs) to implement WPS policy recommendations from CSW, Security Council, and General Assembly resolutions according to their national characteristics, because the responsibility for political solutions to peace ultimately rests with the state.[87] States that have adopted NAPs include current hosts of PKOs and recent conflict areas on the Security Council agenda such as Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Uganda, and Iraq.[88] Some NAPs have been criticized for prioritizing idealism at the expense of realistic budgetary constraints, insufficient monitoring capacity, and the lack of cooperation between relevant state and non-state actors.[89] Other NAPs have proven successful, such as Bosnia-Herzegovina's NAP that improved security sector reform at the local

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[77] UN General Assembly & UN Security Council, *Report on the High-Level Panel on Peace Operations on uniting our strengths for peace: politics, partnerships, and people*, 2015, p. 29; UN Security Council, *Women and peace and security (S/RES/1889)*, 2009, p. 4; UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/2122)*, 2013, p. 4; UN Security Council, *Women and peace and security (S/RES/2242)*, 2015, pp. 4-5.

[78] UN CSW, *Women in Power and Decision-making: CSW41 Agreed Conclusions (1997/27)*, 1997; UN CSW, *Women's Equal Participation in Conflict Prevention, Management and Conflict Resolution and in Post-Conflict Peacebuilding: CSW48 Agreed Conclusions (B)*, 2004.

[79] Ibid.

[80] UN CSW, *Interactive Dialogue: Women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peace-building*, 2008, pp. 1-4.

[81] UN-Women, *In Brief: Peace and Security*, 2013, p. 1.

[82] Ibid., p. 2.

[83] UN DPKO, *Policy on Gender Equality in UN Peacekeeping Operations*, 2010, pp. 3-7.

[84] UN DPKO & UN DFS, *Gender Forward Looking Strategy 2014-2018*, 2014, pp. 1-8.

[85] UN PBC, *Gender Promotion Initiative III: Call for Concept Notes*, 2016, pp. 1-2.

[86] UN DPA, *Women, Peace and Security*, 2014.

[87] UN General Assembly & UN Security Council, *Report on the High-Level Panel on Peace Operations on uniting our strengths for peace: politics, partnerships, and people*, 2015, p. 27; UN-Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2015, pp. 14, 32.

[88] UN-Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2015, p. 240.

[89] Ibid., pp. 240-250.

level following its conflict.[90] One key area for improvement is better identifying regional and international funding partners for NAPs, like Bosnia and Herzegovina's partnership with Austria, Sweden, Switzerland, the UN Development Programme (UNDP), UN-Women, the EU Police Mission, and the EU force.[91]

Civil society organizations (CSOs) complement the work of the aforementioned organizations advocating for the inclusion of women in international documents on peace and political transition, by monitoring Member States' implementation of agreements in the WPS agenda, and by sharing their expertise with national and international bodies.[92] For example, with NAPs, CSOs can bring first-hand expertise to the planning and implementation of international and national programs.[93] Further, they can regularly perform monitoring and evaluations, as they are well-positioned in the community to conduct interviews and collect field data that they can communicate via reports to the national government, as such states as Chile and Ghana have done.[94] CSOs that focus on women's rights and empowerment in particular contribute to gender mainstreaming, but they face many barriers to doing so.[95] Civil society is often excluded from peace processes, political discussions, and post-conflict rebuilding; their work tends to be undervalued; and they often face threats and harassment for being involved in this field and promoting women's participation.[96]

Existing Barriers to Women's Participation in Peace Processes and Political Transition

Although the international community has committed to enhancing women's role in peace processes and political transition and has made progress towards these goals, barriers towards women's empowerment in peace and security remain, including financial constraints, implementation gaps, and cultural tensions.[97]

Financial Barriers

Insufficient funding for the WPS agenda in the national government and civil society further widens the gap between intent and implementation.[98] The UN Secretary-General's Seven-Point Action Plan set forth a goal of directing 15% of peacebuilding funds towards gender equality, but in 2014 that figure stood at only 9.3% ($8.2 million).[99] Conflict often destroys national financial sectors, so states must rely on international donors and investors to help fund a sustainable transition to peace.[100] Assistance from the World Bank and regional development banks have stronger records of including gender equality objectives; in 2014, 97% of the World Bank's assistance to "fragile states" addressed gendered needs.[101] Other key assistance providers include the UNDP, the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), and UN-Women's UN Fund for Gender Equality.[102]

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[90] UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on Women and Peace and Security (S/2015/716)*, 2015, p. 33; UN-Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2015, p. 240.

[91] UN-Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2015, pp. 243-256.

[92] Women's International League of Peace and Freedom, *Civil Society*.

[93] UN-Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2015, pp. 242-248.

[94] UN General Assembly & UN Security Council, *Report on the High-Level Panel on Peace Operations on uniting our strengths for peace: politics, partnerships, and people*, 2015, p. 25; UN Security Council, *Women and peace and security (S/RES/1889)*, 2009, p. 3; UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on Women and Peace and Security (S/2015/716)*, 2015, p. 41; UN-Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2015, p. 248.

[95] Women's International League of Peace and Freedom, *Civil Society*; UN-Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2015, pp. 242-248.

[96] Women's International League of Peace and Freedom, *Civil Society*.

[97] UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on Women and Peace and Security (S/2015/716)*, 2015, p. 42.

[98] Ibid.

[99] UN Peacebuilding Fund, *The PBF and Gender Equality*, 2015; UN Assembly & UN Security Council, *Women's participation in peacebuilding: Report of the Secretary-General (A/65/354-S/2010/466)*, 2010; UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on Women, Peace and Security (S/2015/716)*, 2015, p. 43.

[100] UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on Women and Peace and Security (S/2015/716)*, 2015, p. 42.

[101] Ibid., pp. 42-43.

[102] Ibid., pp. 43-44.

Cultural Barriers

Although women around the world have successfully demonstrated their ability to contribute meaningful policy ideas and negotiation skills in peace processes, women's lack of education on necessary skills has been repeatedly used as a justification for exclusion despite a lack of evidence for this claim.[103] In some regions, traditional perceptions of women's role in the political sphere, whether for religious or other cultural reasons, continue to hinder their participation in post-conflict negotiation and governance.[104] Even in regions that now have increased women's rights, the legacy of past repression renders it more challenging for women to reach decision-making positions than it is for men.[105] Women who do attain high-level diplomatic and government roles do not always receive equal respect for their ideas and work, especially in military and security sectors.[106]

Underlying these barriers to women's participation in peace processes and political transition is the tension between cultural relativity, the belief that rights depend on states' unique cultures, and the universality of the human right to political participation called for in the *Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action* (1993).[107] When women gain access to peace processes as observers without a decision-making role, their potential contributions go unrealized, and this arrangement does not satisfy women's right to political participation.[108] Gender equality in peace processes requires more than passive allowance of women's presence; it requires active efforts of the global and national leadership to ensure that women are respected not only as equal contributors but as equal leaders.[109] In Yemen in 2003, for example, UN-Women, several non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and Yemeni women successfully lobbied for a 30% quota across all constituencies in the National Dialogue Preparatory Committee as well as their own 40-person delegation, and the voting rules were designed such that no decisions could be made if a majority of women opposed them.[110] The case of Yemen highlights that institutional arrangements such as voting procedures can help improve not only the quantity but the quality of women's participation in peace processes and political transition.

Mainstreaming Gender in Peace Processes

Enhancing women's role in peace processes is crucial both for the right to political participation and for tangible improvements in the achievement of sustainable peace.[111] The peace process involves negotiation to settle a dispute between two or more parties, and women may serve as UN mediators, as negotiators representing one of the parties to conflict as they design DDR and SSR plans, and/or as authors of peace agreements.[112]

Negotiation and Mediation

Women's participation in peace negotiations may come in various forms, including direct negotiation, consultation outside the primary negotiations, and issue-specific workshops.[113] Because armed conflict affects different populations in different ways, a diverse set of perspectives in post-conflict negotiation makes the resulting

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[103] UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on Women and Peace and Security (S/2015/716)*, 2015, p. 11; UN-Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2015, p. 56.

[104] UN-Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2015, p. 56.

[105] Ibid.

[106] Ibid., p. 168.

[107] UN World Conference on Human Rights, *Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action*, 1993, p. 4.

[108] UN-Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2015, p. 58.

[109] UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on Women and Peace and Security (S/2015/716)*, 2015, p. 3; UN-Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2015, p. 15.

[110] UN-Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2015, pp. 52-53.

[111] UN General Assembly and UN Security Council, *Report on the High-Level Panel on Peace Operations on uniting our strengths for peace: politics, partnerships, and people*, 2015, p. 25; UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on Women and Peace and Security (S/2015/716)*, 2015, pp. 3-4.

[112] UN DDR Resource Centre, *Post-conflict Stabilization, Peacebuilding and Recovery Framework*, 2006, p. 1.

[113] Paffenholtz et al., *Making Women Count—Not Just Counting Women: Assessing Women's Inclusion and Influence on Peace Negotiations*, 2016, pp. 6-7.

agreements more comprehensive and conducive to lasting peace.[114] During and just after conflict, for example, women are often the victims of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).[115] Issues like SGBV that disproportionately affect women are more likely to be on the agenda if women have a voice at the table.[116] However, as emphasized by UN-Women, women's contributions should not be limited to gender-specific issues; women should be empowered to participate fully in all decision-making that impacts the future of their state, including military and security issues.[117] In DDR planning, women's expertise in their local communities can be of particular use in the demobilization and reintegration stages.[118]

Peace Agreements

Women are valuable not only as negotiators on specific issues, but as mediators and promoters of the overall goal of peaceful dispute resolution.[119] Collectively, women demonstrate high capacity for cooperative dialogue and consensus building.[120] In a study of 40 peace processes, women consistently and successfully exerted pressure on other negotiators to reach diplomatic agreements, and the agreements were more likely to be implemented if not driven solely by men.[121] When talks stalled in the Democratic Republic of Congo (1999-2003), for example, women barricaded the doors until the rest of the negotiating parties finally signed an agreement.[122] Since the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 in 2000, the number of peace agreements that mention women has increased from 11% in the 1990s to 50% in 2014.[123] Additionally, with the inclusion of women in the drafting process, sections that address women's rights in political reform have used stronger language with specific targets for implementation.[124] When women can participate fully in peace negotiations and drafting peace agreements, they represent the diverse perspectives of women in their communities and can ensure that the political, economic, and social issues that women face are on the agenda and addressed using first-hand knowledge.[125]

Women's Empowerment in Domestic Political Transition

The conclusion of peace negotiations does not mark the end of the conflict's consequences.[126] Often, conflict erodes existing institutions and any pre-existing rule of law, and this political transition creates a unique opportunity to redesign the constitution and government institutions with women's rights and empowerment in mind.[127]

Constitutional Reform

In some societies, legal pluralism, the combination of formal government courts and informal legal systems like religious or indigenous community arbitration, reinforces traditional women's roles because the traditional laws overshadow the formal system.[128] One way to ensure that communities respect constitutional rights of women and to further empower women is to allow women to participate in constitutional drafting and the rebuilding of the judicial system.[129] In Timor-Leste, for example, women persuaded village chiefs to refer SGBV cases to the formal justice

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[114] UN DDR Resource Centre, *Post-conflict Stabilization, Peacebuilding and Recovery Framework*, 2006, p. 3.
[115] UN-Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2015, pp. 104-107.
[116] Ibid., p. 105.
[117] Ibid., p. 179.
[118] Ibid., pp. 59, 168.
[119] Ibid., p. 41.
[120] Paffenholtz et al., *Making Women Count—Not Just Counting Women: Assessing Women's Inclusion and Influence on Peace Negotiations*, 2016, p. 6.
[121] O'Reilly et al., *Reimagining Peacemaking: Women's Role in Peace Processes*, 2015, p. 9.
[122] Paffenholtz et al., *Making Women Count—Not Just Counting Women: Assessing Women's Inclusion and Influence on Peace Negotiations*, 2016, pp. 29, 37.
[123] UN-Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2015, p. 14.
[124] O'Reilly et al., *Reimagining Peacemaking: Women's Role in Peace Processes*, 2015, p. 11.
[125] McWilliams, *Women at the Peace Table: The Gender Dynamics of Peace Negotiations*, 2016, p. 8.
[126] UN General Assembly & UN Security Council, *Report on the High-Level Panel on Peace Operations on uniting our strengths for peace: politics, partnerships, and people*, 2015, p. 48.
[127] UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on Women and Peace and Security (S/2015/716)*, 2015, p. 21.
[128] UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Issue of Discrimination against Women in Law and Practice (A/HRC/29/40)*, 2015, pp. 7, 13-15.
[129] UN-Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2015, p. 121.

system, which has resulted in reduced domestic violence.[130] The women involved reported increased confidence in their knowledge of judicial processes, which highlights that active participation is a powerful tool for empowerment.[131]

One way that post-conflict societies such as Afghanistan, Nepal, and Serbia have successfully increased women's government participation is using electoral quotas, particularly for legislative bodies.[132] Some gender quotas are "temporary special measures," or policies enacted in the post-conflict stage to catalyze the transfer of gender equality from documents to practice, but as affirmed in the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (1979) (CEDAW), it is essential to ensure that such measures do not institutionalize a "separate but equal" mentality.[133] Gender quotas may create an illusion that progress has been made where it has not if the women participating are viewed as placeholders rather than as competent policymakers.[134] Additional programs that can strengthen leadership development and promote women's empowerment include training women to run political campaigns and to develop policy within the scope of their government's institutions.[135] States in transition can also raise women's political efficacy through public awareness campaigns about voting procedures and their right to participate.[136] Protection of women as they enjoy their new or expanded political rights can be an additional challenge for states in political transition; for example, the Islamic State, a non-state terrorist organization, has executed Iraqi women who were running for office.[137]

Engagement with Civil Society

Although some policies can be broadly applied, they must be tailored to the unique communities involved in each situation. This requires engagement with local populations and CSOs, including women's empowerment groups.[138] CSOs are instrumental in empowering women in their communities to vote, call for reform, and engage in other political activities.[139] For example, women in Tunisia's National Constituent Assembly fought to keep controversial equality language in its new constitution, after which 47% of parliamentary candidates were women.[140] As emphasized in various documents, increased communication among the UN bodies, national governments, and CSOs is essential to ensure that the input of local women's CSOs is heard.[141] Such communication includes increased expert briefings, formalized inclusion of CSOs in peace negotiations, and engagement of CSOs in humanitarian relief during political transition.[142]

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[130] Ibid.
[131] Ibid.
[132] Inter-Parliamentary Union, *Archived Data: Women in National Parliaments*, 2015.
[133] UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (A/RES/34/180)*, 1979; UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, *General recommendation No. 30 on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations (CEDAW/C/GC/30)*, 2013, pp. 19-20; UN-Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2015, p. 175.
[134] UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on Women and Peace and Security (S/2015/716)*, 2015, p. 11.
[135] UN-Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2015, p. 175.
[136] Ibid.
[137] Iaccino, ISIS Iraq News: Militants Execute Two Female Parliamentary Candidates in Mosul, *International Business Times*, 2014; UN-Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2015, p. 176.
[138] UN Security Council, *High-Level Review of SC Resolution 1325(2000): from Rhetoric to Effective Results*, 2015, p. 4.
[139] Hunt et al., *Women Waging Peace*, 2001, p. 38.
[140] Moghadam, *Democratization and Women's Political Leadership in North Africa*, 2014, pp. 70-72.
[141] UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, *General recommendation No. 30 on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations (CEDAW/C/GC/30)*, 2013, p. 7, 12; UN General Assembly & UN Security Council, *Report on the High-Level Panel on Peace Operations on uniting our strengths for peace: politics, partnerships, and people*, 2015, p. 80; UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security (S/RES/2122)*, 2013, p. 4; UN Security Council, *Women and peace and security (S/RES/2242)*, 2015, p. 4.
[142] UN General Assembly & UN Security Council, *Report on the High-Level Panel on Peace Operations on uniting our strengths for peace: politics, partnerships, and people*, 2015, p. 79.

Conclusion

The international community has begun to establish norms of gender equality and women's empowerment in peace processes and political transitions, especially following the shift in tone of Security Council resolutions.[143] In both negotiation and transition processes, systematic and meaningful inclusion of women at all levels of decision-making has demonstrated the value of women's participation for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in post-conflict societies as well as for sustainable peace. Cultural barriers to enhancing women's role in peace processes and political transition remain, as do gaps between ideal plans and implementation, but the past progress signals that there is opportunity for further advances moving forward.

Further Research

As delegates continue to research this topic, they should consider the following questions: How can CSW better work with other UN bodies, Member States, and CSOs to promote women's political engagement in peace processes and post-conflict transition? What is the appropriate role of CSW in diffusing specific gender equality norms, particularly in more traditional post-conflict societies? In what ways can CSW's policy recommendations help Member States in designing NAPs on enhancing women's participation in these processes? How can CSW strengthen and build upon existing policy recommendations to ensure that policies promoting women's participation in peace, security, and political issues move beyond a symbolic presence in order to promote meaningful women's empowerment in diplomatic and political settings?

Annotated Bibliography

McWilliams, M. (2016). *Women at the Peace Table: The Gender Dynamics of Peace Negotiations*. Transitional Justice Institute. Retrieved 17 July 2016 from: https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2737935

This article analyzes the outcomes of women's participation in peace negotiations, including the addressing of gender-specific needs in peace agreements, the addition of more varied perspectives to deliberate more generally, and a model of political efficacy for other women in their countries to follow. The article also emphasizes the power of women community leaders and CSO members to formulate and implement realistic peace provisions to increase their sustainability. Delegates will find the illustrations of these points useful for understanding the power of civil society to enhance women's right to political participation as well as other rights during and after political transition.

Moghadam, V. (2014). Democratization and Women's Political Leadership in North Africa. *Journal of International Affairs*, 68(1): 59-78. Retrieved 15 August 2016 from: http://connection.ebscohost.com/c/articles/100052747/democratization-womens-political-leadership-north-africa

This scholarly article provides a gendered analysis of five North African countries involved in the 2011 Arab Spring. The article examines women's rights and political engagement prior to and during the varying levels of protest, followed by a comparative analysis of the outcomes of women's rights and political engagement, as well as democratization more broadly. Tunisia and Morocco, historically more progressive in women's rights than their neighbors, are held up as an examples of high levels of female political engagement, though the author states that room for progress remains. Delegates will find these examples of women's varying degrees of success in engaging in political transition useful for understanding both barriers and best practices on this topic that can be applied globally.

O'Reilly, M., et al. (2015). *Reimagining Peacemaking: Women's Role in Peace Processes*. International Peace Institute. Retrieved 17 August 2016 from: https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/IPI-E-pub-Reimagining-Peacemaking.pdf

This document provides an overview of the impact of women's participation in peace processes and the existing barriers to greater and more meaningful participation. It also details various channels through which the international community could better integrate women into each

[143] UN-Women, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, 2015, p. 268.

component of the peace process, along with a myriad of examples of best practices that could be modeled and adapted in other post-conflict situations. Delegates will find this article useful as they contemplate the most practical and effective solutions to address this topic that can be applied in both international and domestic settings.

United Nations, Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Resource Centre. (2006). *Post-conflict Stabilization, Peacebuilding and Recovery Frameworks* [Background Notes]. Retrieved 16 August 2016 from: http://unddr.org/uploads/documents/IDDRS%202.20%20Post-conflict%20Stabilization%20and%20Peace-building.pdf

This framework document summarizes the peace process from post-conflict stabilization to political transition and recovery. It addresses economic and social recovery as well as DDR and SSR, both generally and the roles that women play in each sector. Delegates should refer to this document for a foundational understanding of the steps of the peace process and the economic, political, social, and security issues to take into account as they examine how to more effectively integrate women into each sector to increase sustainable peace.

United Nations, Commission on the Status of Women. (1997). *Women in Power and Decision-making: CSW41 Agreed Conclusions (1997/27)*. Retrieved 17 July 2016 from: http://www2.unwomen.org/~/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/csw/41/2_e_final.pdf?v=1&d=20141222T181647

This resolution asserts that gender equality in decision-making political, social, and economic roles is a necessary step towards strengthening democracy. CSW's recommendations in this resolution emphasize education and training for women to equip them for these roles, as well as further research on the effects of variations on democratic electoral systems on women's representation. This resolution is a useful model for delegates as they discern the unique but complementary roles that CSW and other relevant bodies play in the WPS agenda.

United Nations, Commission on the Status of Women. (2004). *Women's Equal Participation in Conflict Prevention, Management and Conflict Resolution and in Post-Conflict Peace-building: CSW48 Agreed Conclusions (B)*. Retrieved 17 July 2016 from: http://www2.unwomen.org/~/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/csw/48/csw48b_e_final.pdf?v=1&d=20150210T053723

The agreed conclusions in this resolution highlight CSW's particular role in the WPS agenda. The conclusions present the body's agreed-upon norms for the engagement of women in decision-making capacities for conflict prevention, management, and resolution, as well as post-conflict reconstruction that takes into account not only security aspects of peace, but also a gender perspective in reshaping education, healthcare, and electoral processes for sustainable peace. Based upon the agreed-upon principles, CSW then offers policy recommendations for both UN bodies and Member States.

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women. (2015). *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325*. Retrieved 13 July 2016 from: http://wps.unwomen.org/~/media/files/un%20women/wps/highlights/unw-global-study-1325-2015.pdf

In response to a request in Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), UN-Women compiled this report to provide a comprehensive review of the progress on the implementation of the resolution and to identify gender gaps in all aspects of armed conflict and post-conflict transition. Essential topics covered in this report include normative barriers to women's equal participation in decision-making roles in peace negotiations, SGBV in armed conflict and peacekeeping operations, and human rights, such as reproductive and maternal healthcare, education, and asylum and nationality for women in post-conflict areas. Delegates should pay particular attention to Chapter 7, Building Peaceful Societies, which focuses on women's roles in post-conflict processes.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-fifth session & United Nations, Security Council. (2010). *Women's participation in peacebuilding: Report of the Secretary-General (A/65/354-S/2010/466)*. Retrieved 20 July 2016 from: http://undocs.org/A/65/354-S/2010/466

In response to the Security Council's request in resolution 1889, the office of the Secretary-General composed this report to evaluate the state of women's participation in peacebuilding after the Security Council had adopted four resolutions on the WPS agenda. After identifying gaps in the implementation of the Security Council's resolutions, the report outlines a Seven-Point Plan, a set of commitments for all relevant UN bodies as well as state and non-state actors, in order to mainstream common aims and areas for improvement. Delegates can compare the progress and commitments highlighted in this 2010 report with the 2015 Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 and evaluate the extent to which the Seven-Point Plan has succeeded.

United Nations, Security Council, 4213th meeting. (2000). *Women and peace and security (S/RES/1325 (2000))* [Resolution]. Retrieved 13 July 2016 from: http://undocs.org/S/RES/1325(2000)

This Security Council resolution is the foundational legally binding document for the Women, Peace and Security agenda. The resolution calls for women's "full participation in the peace process" in order to fulfill the Council's mandate to maintain international peace and security. It also highlights gender-specific issues related to conflict and post-conflict areas, including SGBV and institutional arrangements that hinder women from participating at all stages of peace negotiations and political transition. The resolution requested the Secretary-General to report on the progress of the implementation of the resolution in order to monitor progress and areas in need of further improvement.

United Nations, Security Council. (2015). *Report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2015/716)*. Retrieved 20 July 2016 from: http://undocs.org/S/2015/716

In response to a request in Security Council resolution 2122 (2013), the Secretary-General compiled this report on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). The report draws upon key findings from the Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 and contains the Secretary-General's recommendations for the UN bodies and Member States to improve upon the implementation of resolution 1325 and subsequent Security Council resolutions. Among various elements of peacebuilding and political transition, delegates will gain an understanding of the gap between normative progress and implementation.

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II. Realizing the Rights of Indigenous Women

Introduction

It is estimated that indigenous peoples represent up to 350 million people in over 5000 distinct groups, spread across more than 70 countries.[144] Existing research shows that indigenous peoples consistently lag behind non-indigenous populations across indicators relating to employment, education, health, and other dimensions of socioeconomic development.[145] This is due to a systematic and entrenched lack of access to services and opportunities, whose effects accumulate over time and form structural disadvantages.[146] Indigenous women face complex and intersecting forms of marginalization as women and as indigenous individuals.[147] Most prominently, indigenous women are confronted with pervasive human rights abuses through physical, sexual, and psychological violence in their families and communities, as well as violence by outsiders, perpetrated or condoned by the state.[148] For example, studies by the United States (US) Department of Justice found that Native American and Alaskan Native women were 2.5 times more likely to fall victim to rape or sexual assault than women in the general population.[149] More than one in three Native American women experience rape in the course of their lifetime, compared to one in five for all American women.[150] In her recent report on the situation of indigenous women and girls, the United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur for the rights of indigenous peoples, Victoria Tauli Corpuz, identifies "endemic violations of collective, civil and political, and economic, social, and cultural rights […]" as the root cause of violence against indigenous women.[151] Indigenous women share many concerns with other women around the world, yet their distinct needs that emerge from intersecting forms of discrimination must to be taken into account to realize their rights.[152]

Indigenous peoples have achieved recognition as a distinct group within the UN over the last few decades. The International Labour Organization (ILO) was concerned with their situation as exploited workers as early as the 1920s, yet it was only in 1957 that ILO Convention 107 was adopted as the first instrument of international law dedicated to the protection of indigenous peoples' rights.[153] The UN has not adopted any official definition for indigenous peoples, and today there is widespread agreement that a formal and universal definition is neither necessary nor desirable for the effective protection of indigenous peoples' rights.[154] While a number of UN specialized agencies such as the World Bank have developed their own working definitions, the understanding of what constitutes indigenous peoples is usually based on a set of objective criteria, complemented by self-identification of a given people as indigenous.[155] Following pertinent international legal instruments, objective criteria for indigenous peoples include the continued historical presence of a people on a given territory from a period prior to colonization, the maintenance of distinct social, economic, and political institutions, and a culture and way of life that differs from that of the majority population.[156]

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[156] Ibid.

International and Regional Framework

Indigenous women are entitled to the full breadth of human rights as individuals, as well as collective rights as part of their indigenous communities. As individuals, their fundamental human rights are anchored in the International Bill of Human Rights, consisting of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) (1948), the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (ICCPR) (1966) and its two Optional Protocols, and the *International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights* (ICESCR) (1966).[157] These foundational treaties establish the right to education and an adequate standard of living, as well as freedom from violence and discrimination.[158] In addition, the *Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination* (ICERD) (1965) and the *Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW) (1979) prohibit discrimination against indigenous women based on sex and ethnicity, respectively.[159] As the pertinent human rights instrument regarding women's equality, CEDAW contains provisions concerning access to health care services, marriage and family planning, protection from trafficking and prostitution, and freedom from violence.[160] While CEDAW makes no explicit reference to indigenous women, Article 14 calls for the participation of women in rural areas in the planning and implementation of development projects and for their equal access to public services.[161] The *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women* (1993) strengthens and complements the provisions in CEDAW on violence against women, recognizing the increased vulnerability of indigenous women and girls to experience violence and urging states to take more decisive action to eliminate it.[162]

Indigenous women enjoy additional protection through international provisions on indigenous peoples' rights. The essential instrument concerning the rights of indigenous peoples is the *Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169)* of the ILO.[163] The convention recognizes collective rights of indigenous peoples, including the right to maintain their culture and institutions and rights to traditionally inhabited lands and territories.[164] Furthermore, it affirms the right of indigenous individuals to public services like education and health care without discrimination.[165] In 2007, the General Assembly adopted the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) after more than 25 years of negotiation.[166] Although the US, New Zealand, Australia, and Canada – all Member States with a significant indigenous population – initially refused to become signatories, they have since moved to endorse the document.[167] Its provisions are "compatible and mutually reinforcing" with those of *ILO Convention 169*, yet UNDRIP takes a more decided stance in acknowledging the right of indigenous peoples to self-determination.[168] Article 22 of UNDRIP calls for the protection of indigenous women and children against all forms of violence and discrimination.[169] In 2014, the General Assembly held a high-level plenary meeting known as the World Conference of Indigenous Peoples, whose outcome document reaffirms the commitment of Member States to implement UNDRIP in cooperation with indigenous peoples and outlines concrete measures to this end.[170]

The central framework guiding the promotion of indigenous women's rights is the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* (1995) and its follow-up provisions.[171] It incorporates the commitment of Member States to advance women's rights across 12 critical areas of concern that include participation in decision-making, poverty and the

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[157] OHCHR, *Fact Sheet No. 2 (Rev. 1) The International Bill of Human Rights*.
[158] UNICEF et al., *Breaking the Silence on Violence Against Indigenous Girls, Adolescents and Young Women. A call to action based on an overview of existing evidence from Africa, Asia Pacific and Latin America*, 2013, p. 16.
[159] Ibid.
[160] UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (A/RES/34/180)*, 1979.
[161] Tugendhat & Dictaan-Bang-oa, *Realizing Indigenous Women's Rights: A handbook on the CEDAW*, 2013, p. 42.
[162] UNICEF et al., *Breaking the Silence on Violence Against Indigenous Girls, Adolescents and Young Women. A call to action based on an overview of existing evidence from Africa, Asia Pacific and Latin America*, 2013, p. 16.
[163] ILO, *Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (169)*, 1989.
[164] ILO, *Indigenous and tribal people's rights in practice: A guide to ILO Convention No. 169*, 2009.
[165] Ibid.
[166] Coppes, Canada's Acceptance of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: Implications for the Inuit, *The Arctic Institute*, 2016.
[167] Ibid.
[168] ILO, *Indigenous and tribal people's rights in practice: A guide to ILO Convention No. 169*, 2009, p. 25.
[169] UN General Assembly, *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/61/295)*, 2007.
[170] UN General Assembly, *Outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/69/2)*, 2014.
[171] UN Fourth World Conference on Women, *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, 1995.

economy, health, and violence against women.[172] The Beijing conference also marked an important milestone for the self-organization of indigenous women, who adopted the *Beijing Declaration of Indigenous Women* at the NGO forum as a key amendment to highlight their specific claims as indigenous individuals and women.[173] Indigenous women have since been active in the follow-up to the Beijing Declaration, including at the Commission on the Status of Women's 2015 session (CSW59) that was dedicated to the 20-year review of implementation of the framework (Beijing +20).[174] CSW itself has adopted two resolutions addressing indigenous women. Resolution 49/7 (2005) calls for enhancing indigenous women's participation in society and civic life.[175] Resolution 56/4 (2012) recognizes the vital role of indigenous women in local economies and urges Member States to ensure indigenous women's access to resources, education, and health.[176]

Finally, the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2015) offers significant potential to realize the rights of indigenous women.[177] The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) received criticism for the lack of a human rights-based approach and their limited capacity to address the structural causes of poverty for indigenous peoples.[178] As national assessments of progress focused on national averages, they did not adequately capture indigenous peoples' realities.[179] The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are now explicitly committed to human rights principles and addressing inequalities, captured in the pledge to "leave no one behind."[180] Several targets explicitly mention indigenous peoples or relate to their human rights and development, and SDG 5 on gender equality is particularly relevant for indigenous women.[181] Finally, the collection of data that is disaggregated by gender and indignity represents a unique opportunity to enhance the visibility of indigenous women in SDG monitoring.[182]

Role of the International System

CSW has touched upon indigenous women's issues on a number of occasions in the past years. In its 56th session in 2012, CSW discussed the role of indigenous women in poverty and hunger eradication as a priority theme and adopted resolution 56/4 that recognized the key contribution of indigenous women to food security.[183] Indigenous women's issues were discussed in many side events of CSW, including two panel discussions at its 60th session in 2016.[184] Following calls by the Working Group on Indigenous Populations and the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) to include the "Empowerment of indigenous women" on its agenda, CSW will now address this issue as an "emerging issue/focus area" during its 61st session."[185] Furthermore, UN-Women has been active in promoting the rights of indigenous women at the global and local levels.[186] Realizing the rights of marginalized and excluded women, including indigenous women, is a priority of the organization's 2014-17 Strategic Plan.[187] UN-Women has reached out to indigenous women in interventions at the regional and country level on economic empowerment, violence against women, and political participation and agency.[188] At the global level, UN-Women advocates for indigenous women in the follow-up to the 2030 Agenda and the WCIP.[189]

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[172] UN-Women, *The Beijing Platform for Action: inspiration then and now*, 2016.
[173] International Indigenous Women's Forum, *Indigenous Women in International Processes*, 2016, p. 515.
[174] Ibid.
[175] UN CSW, *Report on the forty-ninth session (E/2005/27)*, 2005, p. 23.
[176] UN CSW, *Report on the fifty-sixth session (E/2012/27)*, 2012, p. 22.
[177] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.
[178] Tauli-Corpuz, *Indigenous Peoples and the Millennium Development Goals*, 2005.
[179] Ibid.
[180] UNPFII, *Report of the Expert Group Meeting on Indigenous Peoples and the 2030 Agenda (E/C.19/2016/2)*, 2016, par. 13.
[181] Ibid.
[182] Ibid.
[183] UN CSW, *Report on the fifty-sixth session (E/2012/27)*, 2012.
[184] UN-Women, *Calendar of Side Events*, 2016.
[185] UNPFII, *Report on the fourteenth session (E/2015/43)*, 2015, par. 43; UN General Assembly, *Outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/69/2)*, 2014, par. 19; UN-Women, *CSW 61 (2017)*, 2016.
[186] UN-Women, *Submission to the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues on UN Women's Programmatic Initiatives in Support of the Implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2013-2014)*, 2013, p. 2.
[187] Ibid., p. 3.
[188] Ibid., p. 7.
[189] Ibid., p. 5.

The Human Rights Council (HRC) is another body concerned with the rights of indigenous women; resolution 29/14 (2015) recognizes that indigenous women are particularly vulnerable to violence.[190] To promote the rights of indigenous peoples, it has created the mandate of a Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples in 2001 and the Expert Mechanism on Indigenous Peoples in 2007 as special procedures of the HRC.[191] In 2014, the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples presented a comprehensive report on the situation of indigenous women across the full spectrum of their human rights.[192] The HRC also held a panel discussion on "Violence against indigenous women and girls and its root causes" during its 32nd session, attended by the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences.[193]

UNPFII has followed up on the commitments of Member States to indigenous women's rights, including taking measures to realize article 22 of UNDRIP and to implement the *Beijing Declaration of Indigenous Women*.[194] UNPFII is supported by the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues (IASG) that unites more than 30 UN agencies, funds, and programs in a bid to promote indigenous peoples' rights throughout the UN system and achieve better coordination among its members.[195] In 2011, the UN created the Indigenous Peoples' Partnership (UNIPP) to support the realization of indigenous peoples' rights at the national level, combining the expertise of five UN agencies: the ILO, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR), the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA).[196] Gender equality and the rights of indigenous women are a key concern of UNIPP, and it supports projects aiming to strengthen women's political participation and increase access to reproductive health care.[197]

Indigenous women themselves have joined forces through civil society organizations at national, regional, and global levels. A prominent global CSO is the International Indigenous Women's Forum (FIMI/IIWF), which traces its roots to the 1995 Beijing conference and aims to build a leadership network of indigenous women to spread their perspectives and advocate for their priorities.[198] With support from UN agencies, a World Conference of Indigenous Women was held in 2013, ultimately adopting the *Lima Declaration and Plan of Action* that calls for the prioritization of indigenous women's issues and their full participation in political processes at all levels.[199]

Combating Violence against Indigenous Women

The *United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women* defines violence against women as any act aiming to cause physical, sexual or psychological harm to women, perpetrated by State or private persons."[200] Existing research from a variety of regions indicates that indigenous women have a higher risk of experiencing violence compared to the average population.[201] Violence against indigenous women goes beyond individual violent relationships, and must be addressed as a systemic issue through underlying causes and risk

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[190] UN HRC, *Accelerating efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women: eliminating domestic violence (A/HRC/RES/29/14)*, 2015, p. 2.
[191] UNPFII, *Twenty-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and beyond: a framework to advance indigenous women's issues (E/C.19/2015/2)*, 2015, p. 3
[192] UN HRC, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, Victoria Tauli Corpuz (A/HRC/30/41)*, 2015, p. 3.
[193] UN HRC, *Annual full-day discussion on the human rights of women. Panel 1: Violence against indigenous women and girls and its root causes*, 2016.
[194] UNPFII, *Combating violence against indigenous women and girls: article 22 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Report of the international expert group meeting (E/C.19/2012/6)I*, 2012; UNPFII, *Twenty-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and beyond: a framework to advance indigenous women's issues (E/C.19/2015/2)*, 2015.
[195] ILO, *Indigenous and tribal people's rights in practice: A guide to ILO Convention No. 169*, 2009, p. 32.
[196] UNIPP, *UNIPP Success Stories: Cooperating to promote & protect indigenous peoples' rights*, 2014, p. V.
[197] Ibid.
[198] International Indigenous Women's Forum, *History*, 2016.
[199] World Conference of Indigenous Women, *Lima Declaration: Indigenous Women Towards Inclusion and Visibility!*, 2013.
[200] UNICEF et al., *Breaking the Silence on Violence Against Indigenous Girls, Adolescents and Young Women. A call to action based on an overview of existing evidence from Africa, Asia Pacific and Latin America*, 2013, p. 13.
[201] UN HRC, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, Victoria Tauli Corpuz (A/HRC/30/41)*, 2015, p. 13.

factors, which range from the family context, through the community to the national level.[202] With regard to violence originating from outside indigenous communities, the historical violation of indigenous peoples' right to self-determination through colonization and post-colonial suppression is a root cause of violent relations passed on across generations.[203] Disruption of the relationship to the ancestral territory has a detrimental impact on indigenous communities, as the land represents the key source of their livelihood, food security, and spiritual well-being.[204] This affects indigenous women in particular, given their role as stewards of ancestral land and bearers of traditional knowledge.[205] The situation of indigenous women is most dire in the context of armed conflict and the militarization and occupation of indigenous lands, where sexual violence occurs as an extension of forced cultural assimilation, as a strategic weapon of coercion, or merely as sadistic entertainment.[206] There have also been reports from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) about sexual violence perpetrated in the context of business activities in indigenous territories.[207]

Within indigenous communities, domestic violence – physical, psychological, and sexual – constitutes one of the most common, yet least visible forms of violence that indigenous women experience.[208] Although there is a general lack of data on this phenomenon, available data suggests that indigenous women are disproportionally affected by domestic violence as compared to non-indigenous women.[209] Victims of domestic violence suffer severe consequences such as mental health problems and substance abuse, and may subsequently struggle to provide care for their families.[210] This form of violence needs to be considered in the context of the dire circumstances of poverty and unemployment, lack of education, and poor health that many indigenous communities experience, and that are often a result of neglect by state institutions and discrimination and exclusion by the majority society.[211] This lack of opportunities creates a climate of frustration where violence and abuse become accepted, promulgating the erosion of institutions and cultural norms of accountability and mutual respect that potentially inhibit violence.[212] Potential responses to this include the criminalization of domestic violence and better enforcement of this legislation.[213] However, indigenous women's organizations warn that an over-reliance on criminal justice risks overlooking and reinforcing the harmful legacy of states criminalization of indigenous peoples.[214]

In some indigenous communities, women are exposed to violence committed in the name of tradition. An often-cited example is Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C). The prevalence of this harmful practice is in decline: across the states where it is most widespread, only 36% of adolescents and young women have undergone this procedure, compared to 53% of adult women, yet this still represents a sizeable share of the population.[215] Child marriages represent another area of concern: across a number of developing countries, one third of all girls are likely to be married before their 18th birthday, despite firm commitments to end this practice.[216] While these numbers are alarming, political responses have often been limited to sweeping condemnations of indigenous customs based on

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[202] UNICEF et al., *Breaking the Silence on Violence Against Indigenous Girls, Adolescents and Young Women. A call to action based on an overview of existing evidence from Africa, Asia Pacific and Latin America*, 2013, pp. 14-16.
[203] UN HRC, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, Victoria Tauli Corpuz (A/HRC/30/41)*, 2015, p. 5.
[204] UNICEF et al., *Breaking the Silence on Violence Against Indigenous Girls, Adolescents and Young Women. A call to action based on an overview of existing evidence from Africa, Asia Pacific and Latin America*, 2013, p. 16.
[205] International Indigenous Women's Forum, *Mairin Iwanka Raya: Indigenous Women Stand Against Violence*, 2006, p. 16.
[206] UN HRC, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, Victoria Tauli Corpuz (A/HRC/30/41)*, 2015, p. 15.
[207] Ibid., p. 13.
[208] UNICEF et al., *Breaking the Silence on Violence Against Indigenous Girls, Adolescents and Young Women. A call to action based on an overview of existing evidence from Africa, Asia Pacific and Latin America*, 2013, p. 27.
[209] UN HRC, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, Victoria Tauli Corpuz (A/HRC/30/41)*, 2015, p. 16.
[210] Ibid.
[211] Ibid.
[212] UNICEF et al., *Breaking the Silence on Violence Against Indigenous Girls, Adolescents and Young Women. A call to action based on an overview of existing evidence from Africa, Asia Pacific and Latin America*, 2013, pp. 14-16.
[213] International Indigenous Women's Forum, *Mairin Iwanka Raya: Indigenous Women Stand Against Violence*, 2006, p. 26.
[214] Ibid.
[215] UNICEF et al., *Breaking the Silence on Violence Against Indigenous Girls, Adolescents and Young Women. A call to action based on an overview of existing evidence from Africa, Asia Pacific and Latin America*, 2013, p. 13.
[216] Ibid.

generalizations of "backwards" and "primitive" indigenous culture.[217] Such an approach runs the risk of reinforcing the oppressive cultural imperialism that indigenous peoples have long suffered from.[218] However, acceptance of cultural relativism to excuse rights violations against women should be scrutinized just as critically.[219] To dissolve the seeming contradiction between human rights and the preservation of vital indigenous culture, indigenous women's organizations are working to make human rights norms "accessible and meaningful" for local communities through translation and trainings on human rights provisions, thereby enhancing women's capacity to hold their families, communities, and governments accountable.[220]

Eradicating Poverty and Securing the Livelihoods of Indigenous Women

In its most recent resolution on indigenous women – resolution 56/4 – CSW recognized the important contribution of indigenous women to local economies and food security, and their vital role as bearers of traditional knowledge.[221] However, indigenous women continue to experience marginalization from within and outside their communities that impacts their access to resources and their ability to achieve a livelihood for themselves and their families.[222] Women often make up the most disadvantaged group within indigenous communities due to limits on their access to land, credit, and decision-making processes.[223] The ongoing appropriation of indigenous lands and territories further aggravates this situation, because "[l]and appropriation is not gender neutral and indigenous women's rights interact with violations of collective land rights."[224] Research from Africa shows that where investors acquire land, women often lose access to resources and thereby their status as self-reliant food producers, artisans, and healers, with dire consequences for their communities.[225] Adverse effects on gender inequality are amplified in the process by a number of other factors: women are often marginalized in consultation processes, and where compensation is provided, in most cases it is given to the husband.[226] The replacement of traditional cultivation with profit-oriented agriculture may also cause a shift in the gendered division of labor, both because cash crops are traditionally regarded as "men's crops," and because available labor positions are therefore often awarded to men.[227]

A severe challenge in the way of providing alternative income opportunities for indigenous women is that they have lower levels of educational instruction and literacy, not only compared to the majority population, but also to male members of their own communities.[228] This is first and foremost due to the overall neglect of states in their duty to provide education to indigenous communities.[229] Where education is available, it is of poor quality or otherwise unsuitable for the specific needs of indigenous children.[230] On a number of country visits, the Working Group of Experts on Indigenous Populations, a mechanism of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, found that indigenous children were dropping out of school following discrimination and verbal abuse by teachers.[231] While indigenous children therefore experience an overall gap in educational attainment compared to their non-indigenous peers, indigenous girls experience particular disadvantages due to cultural barriers.[232] Indigenous girls

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[217] International Indigenous Women's Forum, *Mairin Iwanka Raya: Indigenous Women Stand Against Violence*, 2006, p. 23.
[218] Ibid., p. 22.
[219] Ibid., p. 24.
[220] Ibid., p. 25.
[221] UN CSW, *Report on the fifty-sixth session (E/2012/27)*, 2012, p. 22.
[222] IFAD, *Enhancing the Role of Indigenous Women in Sustainable Development. IFAD Experience with Indigenous Women in Latin America and Asia*, 2003, p. 1.
[223] Ibid.
[224] UN HRC, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, Victoria Tauli Corpuz (A/HRC/30/41)*, 2015, p. 6.
[225] Waldorf, When land gets grabbed, do women get sidelined?, *Thrive Blog*, 2013.
[226] Ibid.
[227] Ibid.
[228] UN HRC, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, Victoria Tauli Corpuz (A/HRC/30/41)*, 2015, p. 8.
[229] Ibid.
[230] Ibid.
[231] UNICEF et al., *Breaking the Silence on Violence Against Indigenous Girls, Adolescents and Young Women. A call to action based on an overview of existing evidence from Africa, Asia Pacific and Latin America*, 2013, p. 24.
[232] UN HRC, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, Victoria Tauli Corpuz (A/HRC/30/41)*, 2015, p. 8.

are often expected to help with domestic chores and care responsibilities; they may also be subject to child marriages, forcing them to neglect their education or leave school prematurely.[233] Another barrier to indigenous girls' access to education is the risk of falling victim to sexual violence on their way to school.[234] This is particularly problematic given that abortion may not be accessible to indigenous women and girls if they become pregnant as a result.[235] Through long-standing projects on intercultural education, UNICEF has been an important actor working to enhance indigenous children's access to adequate education.[236] It is committed to a gender-sensitive approach that works for the provision of functional literacy programs for indigenous women and "second chance" schooling programs for adolescent girls who were unable to finish their education.[237]

Realizing Indigenous Women's Access to Health Services

Evidence from a range of countries shows that the status of physical and mental health among indigenous peoples is significantly worse compared to the non-indigenous population.[238] Indigenous peoples across the world suffer from disproportionally high rates of infectious diseases, including HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis, as well as diabetes and malnutrition.[239] Poor health outcomes are associated with a prevalence of risk factors such as alcohol and substance abuse and poor nutrition, which is connected to the general poverty many indigenous communities suffer from.[240]

Since indigenous women are often primarily responsible to oversee the well-being of their families and to care for the sick, they carry the burden of poor access to public health services that affects many indigenous communities.[241] Where health care is granted by the state, it often fails to provide care that is culturally appropriate or adequately trained .[242] One significant health concern of indigenous women is inadequate access to necessary sexual and reproductive healthcare, including contraceptives.[243] Cultural barriers to sexual self-determination, as well as an insufficient or low-quality supply of counseling and treatment facilities, may limit the access and provision of such care.[244] As a result, indigenous women experience heightened rates of maternal and child mortality, as well as a high rate of teenage pregnancies among indigenous girls compared to non-indigenous peers.[245] One measure to overcome these disparities is the development and implementation of intercultural health services bridging indigenous and Western medicine.[246] Culturally sensitive healthcare policies have been developed in many regions, including in Latin America, and include, for instance, a woman's right to use traditional equipment during labor, which may increase indigenous acceptance of formal medical treatment.[247] Among indigenous youth, peer education programs have been successful in reducing the number of teenage pregnancies and the transmission of sexually transmittable diseases (STDs) by enhancing awareness about the risks of unprotected sex, overcoming traditional taboos regarding sexuality and reproductive health.[248]

Conclusion

Indigenous women continue to face a vast and interconnected array of challenges that impede the full realization of their rights. Of prime concern are the various forms of violence that indigenous women are currently experiencing.

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[233] Ibid.
[234] Ibid., p. 9.
[235] Ibid.
[236] UNICEF, *Promoting the Rights of Indigenous Children and Women: A Stocktaking of UNICEF's Approach and Practice,* 2009, p. 11.
[237] Ibid.
[238] UN HRC, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, Victoria Tauli Corpuz (A/HRC/30/41)*, 2015, p. 9.
[239] Ibid.
[240] Ibid.
[241] Ibid.
[242] Ibid.
[243] Ibid., p. 10.
[244] UN IASG, *Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, 2014, p. 3f.
[245] UN HRC, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, Victoria Tauli Corpuz (A/HRC/30/41)*, 2015, p. 10.
[246] UN IASG, *Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, 2014, p. 6.
[247] Ibid.
[248] UN IASG, *Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, 2014, p. 1.

Addressing the socioeconomic discrimination of indigenous peoples, and promoting their collective rights to self-determination and their lands and territories, is imperative in mitigating the root causes of this violence. Furthermore, indigenous women are facing discrimination in their access to economic resources and the realization of their right to education and health. Member States should critically evaluate their legislation to ensure they respect indigenous peoples' collective rights, and devise policies for targeted support in order to close the prevailing gaps in the provision of public services for indigenous peoples. Ongoing initiatives supporting indigenous peoples from the global to the local level need to be adapted to ensure gender sensitivity and increased participation of indigenous women in planning and implementation. The 2030 Agenda offers the potential to realize indigenous women's rights, particularly through targeted support and improved data collection and monitoring.

Further Research

The increasing recognition of indigenous peoples and their rights within the United Nations has led to an emerging consensus that targets responses are necessary to promote indigenous women's rights. However, a critical implementation gap remains that needs to be addressed through concrete measures. In order to devise concrete actions, delegates should consider the following questions: How can the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* contribute to the realization of indigenous women's rights? What needs to change to make existing initiatives for women's empowerment more accessible and appropriate for indigenous women? How can indigenous women's rights be realized through the promotion of indigenous peoples' collective rights? How can CSW build up more understanding and organizational capacity on this issue in its own work, and among its partners – including UN-Women? What are necessary steps to mainstream a gender perspective into activities aimed to promote indigenous peoples' rights?

Annotated Bibliography

International Indigenous Women's Forum. (2006). *Mairin Iwanka Raya: Indigenous Women Stand Against Violence.* Retrieved 28 August 2016 from: http://www.fimi-iiwf.org/archivos/7ffd8ee2807b42a0df93d25d70c9cfdb.pdf

This report was published by the International Indigenous Women's Forum as a companion report to the Secretary-General's 2006 report on violence against women. It attempts to complement mainstream perspectives on violence against indigenous women with a critical perspective informed by the history of struggle of indigenous women on their own behalf. The report situates indigenous women's experience of violence in the broader context of colonization and repression that indigenous peoples continue to be subject to. This resource can help delegates understand the skepticism of indigenous women towards state-centric strategies of violence prevention fueled by long-standing experiences of oppression, and the importance of finding culturally sensitive responses in close collaboration with grassroots organizations.

United Nations Children's Fund. (2009). *Promoting the Rights of Indigenous Children and Women: A Stocktaking of UNICEF's Approach and Practice* [Report]. Retrieved 28 August 2016 from: http://www.unicef.org/policyanalysis/rights/files/UNICEF_Final_Indigenous_Stock-Take_Report-2009.pdf

UNICEF is the most important actor working to realize the right of indigenous children to an appropriate and high-quality education, with a special emphasis on the equal realization of this right for indigenous girls and women. This publication offers an insight into UNICEF's activities on the ground and provides reflections in order to further improve the current approach. Delegates can draw on this resource to learn about the numerous issues that influence the quality of, and access to education in indigenous communities through a number of rich case studies.

United Nations Children's Fund et al. (2013). *Breaking the Silence on Violence Against Indigenous Girls, Adolescents and Young Women. A call to action based on an overview of existing evidence from Africa, Asia Pacific and Latin America* [Report]. Retrieved 17 July 2016 from: http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2013/5/breaking-the-silence-on-violence-against-indigenous-girls

This report, prepared in a collaborative effort by five UN entities including UN-Women, represents the most comprehensive study on violence against indigenous women and girls to date. It reviews quantitative and qualitative data on this phenomenon and includes hands-on examples and case studies in a rich analysis of structural and underlying causes for violence. The report then goes on to present ongoing national initiatives to prevent violence against indigenous women

and to protect and support those who have experienced it. Based on this analysis, it formulates recommendations across four issue areas that are adaptable to regional and national contexts. This extensive study will be a relevant resource for delegates to gain insight into the issue of violence against indigenous women through a plurality of concrete examples, as well as to understand its societal context and root causes.

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2015). *State of the World's Indigenous Peoples, Second Volume: Indigenous Peoples' Access to Health Services* [Report]. Retrieved 23 August 2016 from: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/SOWIP/en/SOWIP_web.pdf

The State of the World's Indigenous Peoples, published by UN-DESA, is a flagship report on the status of indigenous peoples. While the first edition in 2009 presented an overview of issues of concern for indigenous peoples, the most recent edition is dedicated solely to the topic of indigenous peoples' access to health services. Across seven chapters, it reviews regional trends as well as national responses, offering rich data and descriptions of the status of indigenous peoples' health. This includes topics such as HIV/AIDS, reproductive health services, and infant mortality, which are all of particular relevance to indigenous women. Delegates are encouraged to use this introductory resource to familiarize themselves with the prevailing situation of indigenous peoples in their respective region.

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. (2013). *Submission to the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues on UN Women's Programmatic Initiatives in Support of the Implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2013-2014)* [Report]. Retrieved 19 July 2016 from: https://papersmart.unmeetings.org/media2/4657056/information-received-from-the-un-women.pdf

This report submitted to the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues offers a summary of UN-Women's activities to enhance the rights of indigenous women at global, regional, and national levels. On the global level, it shows how UN-Women has been mainstreaming indigenous peoples' rights into its current strategic plan (2014-17). On the regional and national level, the report lists key activities of UN-Women's country offices in the issue areas of economic empowerment, violence against women, and political participation and agency. It will provide delegates with a comprehensive insight into UN-Women's efforts to incorporate the issue of indigenous women into its ongoing advocacy and implementation work on the ground.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-first session. (2007). *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/61/295)*. Retrieved 26 August 2016 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/61/295

The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) represents the current international standard regarding the collective rights of indigenous peoples, and universal human rights as they apply to the specific circumstances of indigenous individuals. UNDRIP is grounded in the historical experience of colonization that continues to impact the situation of indigenous communities around the world. The implementation of UNDRIP will be the guiding task for indigenous politics at the UN for the foreseeable future. Delegates should strive to become familiar with the historic context and the essential provisions of this document in order to approach the issue of indigenous women's rights.

United Nations, Human Rights Council. (2015). *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, Victoria Tauli Corpuz (A/HRC/30/41).* Retrieved 19 July 2016 from: http://undocs.org/A/HRC/30/41

In her 2015 annual report, the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples focuses on the situation of indigenous women globally. This thematic analysis documents the violation of indigenous women's human rights across the spectrum of civil and political rights on the one hand, and economic, social, and cultural rights on the other hand. Furthermore, it addresses the violation of collective rights of indigenous peoples as well as violence against indigenous women. Based on an analysis of key challenges and emerging responses, the report presents a broad range of recommendations to Member States and the UN system that delegates can draw on.

United Nations Indigenous Peoples Partnership. (2014). *UNIPP Success Stories: Cooperating to promote & protect indigenous peoples' rights* [Report]. Retrieved 27 August 2016 from: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---nylo/documents/publication/wcms_243275.pdf

Since its establishment in 2011, the UNIPP has already made important progress in promoting indigenous peoples' rights on the ground. This publication introduces the structure and purpose of this cross-agency partnership as well as its strategic priorities. Subsequently, it presents the work of UNIPP on the ground through insights from more than one dozen projects, two of which center on indigenous women's political participation and access to health care, respectively. Delegates can use this resource to gain an understanding of UNIPP's work mode and capabilities in order to develop their ideas to empower indigenous women and their communities through projects at the local level.

United Nations, Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women & United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. (2010). *Briefing Notes: Gender and Indigenous Peoples*. Retrieved 19 July 2016 from: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/Briefing%20Notes%20Gender%20and%20Indigenous%20Women.pdf

This document is a collection of briefing notes prepared by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI – meanwhile merged into UN-Women) that present a gender perspective on a number of issues pertaining to indigenous peoples. The individual notes offer a concise overview of gender-related aspects across the areas of economic and social development, education, culture, environment, and human rights. Structured around guiding questions, this collection represents an accessible resource for delegates to familiarize themselves with the reasoning behind, and the practical implications of applying a gender perspective in working with indigenous peoples' issues.

United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (2015). *Twenty-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and beyond: a framework to advance indigenous women's issues (E/C.19/2015/2)* [Report]. Retrieved 16 July 2016 from: http://undocs.org/E/C.19/2015/2

This report was prepared by the secretariat of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues on the occasion of the twenty-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. It presents an overview of activities undertaken by Member States to advance the implementation of the Beijing Agenda for indigenous women, based on their national review reports to the 2015 session of CSW. The report covers activities from a number of issue areas including education and capacity-building, violence against indigenous women, and indigenous women's political participation. Delegates will find this report a useful resource to get an overview of measures and approaches to empower indigenous women from across a variety of Member States that can serve as a basis to identify best practices.

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III. Women's Economic Empowerment in a Changing World of Work

"Women have the potential to change their own economic status, as well as that of the communities and countries in which they live. Yet more often than not, women's economic contributions go unrecognized, their work undervalued and their promise unnourished."[249]

Introduction

The path towards economic development requires that all members of society are integrated into the global economy, notably through the opportunity to find decent work.[250] While efforts have been made on an international level to better integrate women in economic development, there has been limited progress.[251] In fact, from 1995-2015, women's participation in the global workforce decreased by more than 5%, due in large part to the global economic recession beginning in 2008.[252] While some regions saw a narrowing gap between women and men's employment, in nearly all countries men make up a significantly larger proportion of the formal labor force.[253] Over the same period, other regions, including Southern and Eastern Asia, have seen increased disparity in the employment rates between women and men.[254] In 2013, a global employment study determined that 47.1% of all adult females were employed, while 72% of male adults were employed.[255]

Women´s Economic Empowerment in a Changing World of Work is the priority theme for the 2017 session of CSW.[256] Over the past 30 years, important steps have been made toward gender equality, women´s economic empowerment, and therefore, poverty reduction.[257] However, statistics continue to show that women are more likely to be unemployed than men, and women in traditional domestic roles have little to no access to monetary income.[258] It is therefore clear that action towards gender equality needs to be taken.[259] This will require a long-term commitment to create employment opportunities for women and the recognition of women's unpaid work.[260]

Even though provisions for the empowerment of women exist, enforcement has been insufficient.[261] Women continue to experience discrimination in the economic sector, leading to exploitation and poverty for women and their families.[262] Rampant gender discrimination not only denies women employment opportunities, but it often forces many women to take insecure, low-wage, or unpaid jobs where they are more vulnerable to exploitation.[263] Even when women are able to secure jobs in the traditional labor market, they lack the same opportunities as men; women are often underpaid relative to their male counterparts and have less job mobility than men, meaning women constitute a small minority among those in senior positions.[264] They face restrictions in their access to economic assets such as land and loans or education, which limits their social and economic possibilities.[265] Education is another key to women's economic empowerment, and globally, girls make up a majority of children not enrolled in primary and secondary school, making it more difficult for them to find decent employment in the future.[266] As the main UN body working towards women's empowerment and gender equality, CSW must look for opportunities to

[249] International Center for Research on Women, *IRCW*, 2015.
[250] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.
[251] ILO, *Women at Work, Trends 2016*, 2016, p. 6.
[252] Ibid.
[253] Ibid.
[254] Ibid., p. 7
[255] ILO, *Global Employment Trends 2014: Risk of a jobless recovery?* , 2014, p. 19.
[256] UN-Women, *Expert Group Meeting on ¨Women´s economic empowerment in the changing world of work¨*, 2016.
[257] Ibid., p. 6.
[258] Ibid..
[259] United Nations Statistics Division, *The World's Women 2015,* 2015, ch. 4.
[260] OECD DAC Network on Gender Equality (GENDERNET), *Women´s Economic Empowerment*, 2012.
[261] UN-Women, *Expert Group Meeting on ´Women´s economic empowerment in a changing world of work´*, 2016.
[262] Ibid.
[263] UN-Women, *Economic Empowerment of Women*, p. 1.
[264] Ibid.
[265] Ibid.
[266] UNSD, *The World's Women 2015,* 2015, ch. 3.

increase women's training and job readiness, combat societal norms that bar women from formal workplaces, and enact protections to strengthen workplace protections for women.[267]

International and Regional Framework

Article 2 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) (1948) recalls that everyone is entitled to the freedoms included in the Declaration, without distinction.[268] These freedoms and rights include the right to non-discrimination (art. 7), the right to work (art. 23.1), the right to equal pay for equal work (art. 23.2), and the right to education (art. 26), among other relevant provisions that uphold women's' right to equal work.[269] The *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (ICESCR) (1966) focuses on the dignity of the human person, including specific mechanisms to be taken by States parties to protect these rights.[270] It includes provisions on non-discrimination as well as the right to work, including the free choice to choose and accept work.[271] Article 7 notes that individuals have a right to just and favorable conditions of work, including fair wages and equal pay, while article 8 touches upon the topic of trade unions and the right to strike.[272] The *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW) (1979) equally contains a number of articles relevant to the topic of women's' empowerment in the workplace.[273] These include articles 7 and 8, which call for equal opportunities for men and women to participate in publicly elected bodies, government, non-governmental organizations, and international organizations.[274] Article 14 recognizes the critical role rural women play in the economic survival of their family, and stipulates that access to resources to generate income is essential for the health and survival of communities.[275]

In 1995, the Fourth World Conference on Women took place in Beijing, and as a result of these debates, the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* was adopted.[276] The Declaration recognizes progress towards the advancement of the status of women, but also notes that improvement on a range of issues was uneven within and between states, and that inequalities between men and women have persisted over time.[277] Women in power and decision-making roles, women and the economy, the education and training of women, and women's human rights are 4 of the 12 critical areas of concern recognized in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.[278] The Declaration acknowledges that women are virtually absent from economic decision-making, that they are forced to accept low pay and poor working conditions, and that discrimination and lack of services such as child care have llimited their employment opportunities.[279] Furthermore, it notes that women's economic autonomy is hindered by limited access to land and other resources, that unpaid labor done by women harms their employment prospects in the formal economy, and that there is a lack of opportunities for women in the private sector.[280] The Declaration therefore calls for the design, implementation, and monitoring of new policies and programs through dedicated efforts at the international and national level.[281] It has now been more than 20 years since the Beijing Declaration was adopted, and therefore a review and appraisal of its implementation were conducted.[282] The resulting report from the Secretary-General on the "Review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for

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[267] UN ECOSOC, *Review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/2015/3)*, 2015.
[268] UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (A/RES/217 A (III)), 1948.
[269] Ibid.
[270] UN General Assembly, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (A/RES/2200 (XXI))*, 1966.
[271] Ibid.
[272] Ibid.
[273] UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (A/RES/34/180)*, 1979.
[274] Ibid.
[275] Ibid.
[276] UN Fourth World Conference on Women, *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, 1995.
[277] Ibid., p. 8.
[278] Ibid., pp. 44-54, 101-118, 119-126, 134-148.
[279] Ibid., pp. 101-105.
[280] Ibid.
[281] Ibid., p. 3.
[282] UN ECOSOC, *Review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/2015/3)*, 2015.

Action" (2015) gives an overview of the progress that has been made since 1995, noticing that progress has been made, but that a ¨substantial gender gap¨ is still in place.[283] It touches upon the matter of forced labor, quality and conditions of employment, and the pay gap.[284] The report recommends that states should address the low quality of work, proactively regulate the labor market, create laws to strengthen women´s rights, integrate gender equality provisions in macroeconomic policies, and strengthen existing initiatives by Member States and civil society.[285]

The International Labour Organization (ILO) also has some key frameworks on the topic of women and labor. The *Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No. 111)* (1958) requires States parties to enact legislation and promote educational efforts to ensure non-discrimination and equality of opportunity in the workforce.[286] It also provides that assistance and special measures to support gender equality and equal representation, as mentioned in other ILO conventions, are not to be deemed discrimination.[287] The *Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100)* (1951) establishes the principle of equal remuneration and the means by which this principle can be ensured.[288] Other relevant conventions include *Convention No. 156* (1981) concerning workers with family responsibilities, *Convention No. 183* (2000) on maternity protection, and *Convention No.189* (2011) concerning the rights of migrant workers.[289]

The Sustainable Development Goals (SGDs) were adopted in 2015 through UN General Assembly resolution 70/1 as a successor to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).[290] SDG 5 focuses on achieving gender equality and empowering all girls and women.[291] It calls for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership, and reforms to give women access to economic resources including ownership and access to land and other properties.[292] SDG 8 calls for the promotion of economic growth, as well as full and productive employment and decent work for all, including equal pay for equal work, the eradication of forced labor, and a safe and secure work environment for all, especially women migrants.[293]

In addition to international conventions and frameworks on this topic, there are also regional provisions; one such example is the European Commission´s *Strategic Engagement for Gender Equality (2016-2019)*.[294] Its main objectives are to fight gender-based violence, promote women's rights, ensure gender equality in decision-making, increase women's labor participation, and achieve the economic independence of women.[295] The engagement plan promotes modernizing EU frameworks, monitoring national reform measures, and receiving and publishing reports.[296] Furthermore, it launches a number of programs, including diversity platforms to support companies, and expresses commitment to continue with current initiatives such as Equal Pay Day, a day to recognize and raise awareness of the gender pay gap.[297]

Role of the International System

CSW61 will take place in March 2017, and in preparation for this meeting an Expert Group been established.[298] According to their first meeting, which took place from 26-28 September 2016, CSW61 will focus the session on the developing more inclusive macroeconomic environments, addressing global gender gaps in work and employment, creating pathways from unpaid and informal work to formal decent work, and social protection and trade unions,

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[283] Ibid., p. 47.
[284] Ibid., pp. 47-50.
[285] Ibid., pp. 51-54
[286] ILO, *Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No. 111)*, 1958, art. 3.
[287] Ibid., art. 5.
[288] ILO, *Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100)*, 1958.
[289] ILO, *Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention (No. 156)*, 1981; ILO, *Maternity Protection Convention (No. 183)*, 2000; ILO, *Domestic Workers Convention (No. 189)*, 2011.
[290] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.
[291] Ibid., p. 18.
[292] Ibid.
[293] Ibid., pp.19-20.
[294] European Commission, *Strategic Engagement for Gender Equality*, 2016.
[295] Ibid., p. 9.
[296] Ibid., pp. 9-18.
[297] Ibid., pp. 10-18.
[298] UN-Women, *Commission on the Status of Women*.

among other topics.[299] UN-Women, serving as CSW´s secretariat, has supported a number of initiatives on these issues, such as supporting associations of women farmers in Morocco to adapt to the changing climate.[300] Other initiatives include the preparation of legislation that provided rights and regulations for Nepal´s 2.7 million migrant workers.[301] Furthermore, UN-Women has worked with the Global Compact to develop the Women´s Empowerment Principles on corporate social responsibility for gender equality, now signed by over 1,000 CEOs from all over the world.[302]

The Secretary-General has launched a High-Level Panel on Women´s Economic Empowerment, whose first meeting resulted in a report that aims to draw attention to the topic and the current situation, provides information on key issues as well as facts and figures, and outlines the Panel's agenda for action.[303] On 27 September 2015, UN-Women co-hosted the Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment together with the People's Republic of China, which took place in conjunction with the UN Summit on the post-2015 development agenda.[304] At the meeting, UN-Women called for action through the "Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step it Up for Gender Equality" action plan, showcasing the specific national government commitments of 93 Member States.[305] For example, Costa Rica has vowed to embrace shared care-giving and promote women's equality in the workplace, and the Netherlands has committed to setting up two new funds to back advances in economic and political participation, combat violence, and support sexual and reproductive rights.[306] Finally, the UN General Assembly has convened for their 71st session, where it will discuss gender equality and women´s economic empowerment in the framework of the SDGs.[307]

In addition to the numerous ILO recommendations and conventions, their reports are also imperative to understanding the current situation of women regarding labor. The ILO recently released a report on ¨Women at Work¨, providing data and information on recent trends.[308] The report emerged from the "Women at Work Centenary Initiative," where ILO conducts research to explore why progress on delivering employment opportunities for women has been so slow.[309] In this report, ILO expresses their concern over the fact that only marginal changes have been made in the last 20 years, and that it will take 70 years to close gender gaps at this rate.[310] The report points to gender gaps in all forms, including unemployment and youth unemployment, the low quality of opportunities, and sectoral and occupational segregation and discrimination.[311] ILO wishes to end discrimination, and will put forward a new framework for this, with the blueprint being in the Women at Work Centenary Initiative.[312] The ILO calls on Member States to take action including passing and enforcing legislation, increasing their social investments, putting forward integrated policy measures, and creating education and training programs to enhance awareness of gender bias and discrimination.[313]
Another initiative by the ILO is the Future of Work Centenary Initiative, which has started in 2016.[314] In 2016, all ILO Member States are invited to undertake national dialogues revolving around four topics, namely work and society, decent jobs for all, the organization of work and production and the governance of work.[315] In 2017, a High-Level Global Commission on the Future of Work is to be established, which will examine and report the outcome of these national dialogues, by 2018.[316]

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[299] UN-Women, *Expert Group Meeting on ´Women´s economic empowerment in a changing world of work´*, 2015.
[300] UN-Women, *Economic Empowerment of Women*, p. 2.
[301] Ibid.
[302] Ibid.
[303] UN Secretary General´s High Level Panel on Women´s Economic Empowerment, *Leave No One Behind, A Call to Action For Gender Equality and Women´s Economic Empowerment*, 2016.
[304] UN-Women, *Save the date: 27 September: "A Commitment to Action"*, 2015.
[305] UN-Women, *Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step It Up for Gender Equality*, 2016.
[306] Ibid.
[307] UN General Assembly, *Agenda of the 71st Regular Session*, 2016.
[308] ILO, *Women at Work, Trends 2016*, 2016.
[309] ILO, *the Women at Work Centenary Initiative.*
[310] ILO, *Women at Work, Trends 2016*, 2016 pp. 11-16.
[311] Ibid., pp. 11-16.
[312] Ibid., p. 18.
[313] Ibid., p. 16-20.
[314] ILO, *The Future of Work Centenary Initiative.*
[315] Ibid.
[316] Ibid.

Civil society and businesses are important partners in working towards women's economic empowerment and gender equality. One example is the work of the International Center for Research on Women and their collaboration with partners to design programs, strategies, and policies designed to improve women's economic opportunities.[317] Through the P.A.C.E program, a collaboration with Gap Inc., they reached 17,000 participants in 7 countries in an effort to support life and work skills for women garment workers.[318] An example of a private sector initiative for women's economic empowerment is Walmart's Global Women's Economic Empowerment Initiative, where they have trained nearly 1 million women for various professional positions and continue to provide job training, education, mentoring, and career counseling.[319]

Protecting Rights and Preventing Discrimination

Increasing education for women and girls can have beneficial outcomes for the economy at large: in OECD states, increased education has accounted for approximately 50% of the economic growth.[320] Over half of this is due to girls having access to higher level education, narrowing the gap in years of education between men and women.[321] Today, 58 million children of primary school age are out of school worldwide.[322] In 2013, 84% of the boys in least developed countries (LDCs) were enrolled in primary education, compared to 80% of girls.[323] For secondary education, these numbers are 67% of boys, and 65 of girls, 36 and 33% respectively for the least developed countries.[324] When looking at literacy rates, in 2012 30% of all women were illiterate, whilst this figure for men is 19%.[325] Progress in participation in education has been made over the past two decades, but in some developing countries, disparities between women and men are considerable.[326] Subsequently, many women are excluded from positions where literacy is required.[327]

In addition to challenges of receiving education, many women experience systematic gender discrimination that limits their employment opportunities.[328] Entrenched gender roles that burden women with being the primary caregivers in a household mean that women´s employment opportunities are potentially limited, given challenges in balancing work, domestic chores, and childcare.[329] Even when women are in professional settings, they are usually relegated to lower-level jobs and have less job mobility; men hold 75% of management and leadership positions within the private sector, and in many states that proportion is even higher.[330] Limiting women's mobility in this way restricts their opportunities for professional development and keeping women's overall wages low.[331] Additionally, companies with few women in leadership positions are missing out on development opportunities as well, as it has been demonstrated that companies with three or more women in such positions score higher on all facets of organizational effectiveness.[332] A reduction of the participation gap between men and women would result in faster economic growth.[333]

While there are many domestic and international laws and conventions meant to prevent discrimination against women, generally and in the workplace, recent trends and slow progress indicates a lack of enforcement of international treaties, the absence of effective justice systems, and the lack of educational mechanisms to dismantle

[317] International Center for Research on Women, *Employment & Enterprise Development*, 2015.
[318] International Center for Research on Women, *Global Women´s Initiative Reaps Great Rewards*, 2015.
[319] Walmart, *Walmart's Global Women's Economic Empowerment Initiative.*
[320] OECD, *Gender Equality in Education, Employment and Entrepreneurship: Final Report to the MCM 2012*, p. 3.
[321] Ibid., p. 19.
[322] UNSD *The World's Women 2015*, 2015, ch. 3.
[323] UNICEF, *Education: Primary Net Enrolment Ratio – Percentage*, 2015.
[324] UNICEF, *Education: Secondary Net Enrolment Ratio – Percentage*, 2015
[325] UN-Women, *Progress of the World's Women 2015-2016*, 2015, Chapter 2, p. 69.
[326] UNSD, *The World's Women 2015*, 2015, ch. 3.
[327] Ibid.
[328] ILO, *Women at Work, Trends 2016*, 2016, p. 41.
[329] UN-Women, *Millennium Development Goals: Gender Chart*, 2014, p. 2.
[330] ILO, *Women at Work, Trends 2016*, 2016, p. 41.
[331] Ibid.
[332] *McKinsey & Company, Women Matter 2014*, 2014, p. 6.
[333] OECD, *Gender Equality in Education, Employment and Entrepreneurship: Final Report to the MCM*, 2012.

harmful gender biases.[334] Worse, other states may lack such legislation or even have legislation that permits such discrimination against women.[335] In a study of 143 states, almost 90% had at least one legal regulation in place that restricted the economic opportunities for women.[336] 79 of those have laws that restrict the types of jobs accessible for women, and in 15 economies, husbands can object and prevent women from accepting jobs.[337] In these cases that concern both developing and developed countries, the issue is not only non-enforcement or lack of awareness, but rather gender discrimination by law, leaving women vulnerable to discrimination and exploitation.[338]

Global Gender Gaps in Work

Women are paid less than men globally, earning only 60 to 75% of men´s wages on average.[339] This not only has immediate influence on women´s lives, but it is equally related to longer-term impacts such as savings, credit-worthiness, retirement and social security.[340] Women could increase their income globally by up to 76% if the employment participation gap and the wage gap between genders were closed, answering to a global value of $17 trillion.[341]

While the global gender gap refers to pay disparity between men and women doing the same job, pay disparity is also prevalent where women are barred from high-earning fields. For example, high-paying jobs in sectors such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) are dominated by men.[342] More than 60% of university graduates are women, but they are a minority in the fields of mathematics, computing and engineering.[343] Women face discrimination – both direct and indirect – in these fields, and some women report leaving due to hostile educational and work environments in STEM.[344] There have been efforts to break down biases within the field, as well as better equip women studying and working in STEM through reintegration programs, but many states communities do not provide these programs and resources.[345]

While some gaps in pay emerge from direct discrimination or unconscious biases, these same biases may push women into employment sectors that are notoriously underpaid and under regulated, leaving women vulnerable to exploitation.[346] In most regions, women outnumber men in the service industry; while the service industry may include businesses and public sector jobs, other service industry employment involves working in care provision for children or housekeeping, known as domestic labor.[347] In many states this type of work is governed by legal regulations and recently, many states increased protections for domestic workers, including protected maternity leave and other benefits.[348] However, despite these provisions, the nature of this employment makes it easy to keep employees and their working conditions hidden and therefore, to ignore relevant labor laws.[349] Where women are illegal workers without government authorization, workers may avoid reporting abuses or labor law violations for fear of being detained and/or deported.[350]

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[334] ILO, *Women at Work, Trends 2016*, 2016, p. 69.
[335] World Bank, *Women, Business and Law 2014: Removing Restrictions to Enhance Gender Equality*, 2014, p. 8.
[336] Ibid.
[337] Ibid.
[338] World Bank, *Women, Business and Law 2014: Removing Restrictions to Enhance Gender Equality*, 2014, p. 8.
[339] World Bank, *Gender Data Portal*, 2016.
[340] Mlambo-Ngcuka, *Equal Pay Matters*, 2016.
[341] Actionaid, *Close the gap! The cost of inequality in women's work*, 2015, p. 9.
[342] European Commission, *What are the Causes?*, 2016.
[343] Ibid.
[344] ILO, *Women at Work, Trends 2016*, 2016, p. 92.
[345] Ibid.
[346] Ibid., p. xii.
[347] Kelly & Thompson, The vanished: the Filipino domestic workers who disappear behind closed doors, *The Guardian*, 2015.
[348] ILO, *Women at Work, Trends 2016*, 2016, p. 81.
[349] Kelly & Thompson, The vanished: the Filipino domestic workers who disappear behind closed doors, *The Guardian*, 2015.
[350] Ibid.

Supporting Women's Access to Resources

Women´s economic empowerment is partly dependent on women´s access to resources.[351] Gender differences in access to land and credit affect the ability of female farmers and entrepreneurs to invest, operate to scale, and fully benefit from economic opportunities.[352] Research shows that women often have less access to land, inputs, seeds, credits, and other services and resources than men.[353] This also includes access to productive resources, including labor and capital, housing, property, and microfinance.[354] 43% of the agricultural labor force in developing countries is made up out of women, varying from 20% or less Latin America, to more than 50% in some parts of Asia and Africa.[355]

According to the Beijing Declaration, women do not have the ability to enjoy the benefit of equal access to resources; they may be constricted by national provisions, social norms, lack of knowledge and lack of enforcement of international framework.[356] In many states, laws or custom governing inheritance do not recognize women's right to inherit property; where women require marriage or supportive male relatives to gain control of land, they may be subject to abusive situations, fearing the loss of land should they leave.[357] When spouses or male relatives die, women without the right to such an inheritance are left without property or any means through which to create their own livelihoods.[358] Additionally, drought and desertification due to climate change can seriously harm women's agricultural productivity, and therefore the livelihoods of their families.[359] Education on mitigation and adaptation techniques have proved successful for some farmers, but these programs are not implemented in many states and are particularly lacking in underserved rural areas.[360] Seeing that women are often constricted by social norms and a lack of knowledge of how to navigate complex bureaucratic systems, NGOs and civil society could participate in their empowerment through means such as training, micro financing and providing housing for women.[361] Enabling their access to land, resources, paid work, and planning and budgeting resources offers great potential to secure women's livelihoods, and thereby foster their economic empowerment.[362]

Conclusion

Women's economic empowerment in a changing world of work is CSW´s priority theme for 2017, and is at the heart of UN-Women´s and CSW mandate and agenda. Although women's rights are set forth in a number of international and regional frameworks, gender inequality in the world of work still exists and progress towards equality in the workforce has been slow.[363] Stereotypes and discrimination bar women from certain types of work and prevent their access to equal pay.[364] Where frameworks exist, states should examine challenges with enforcement and the lack of awareness of guaranteed rights in this area.[365] When women's rights are at the center of drafting and implementing economic and social policies, economies and may become fairer, women may diversify their roles in the economy, supporting the well-being and of their families and overall economic growth.[366]

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[351] UN-Women, *CSW58 (2014)*.
[352] FAO, *2014 State of Food and Agriculture*, 2014, p. 35.
[353] World Bank, *World Development Report 2012*, 2012, p. 3.
[354] UN DESA, *Women´s Control over Economic Resources and Access to Financial Resources, including Microfinance*, 2009.
[355] FAO, 2*014 State of Food and Agriculture*, 2014, p. 35.
[356] UN Fourth World Conference on Women, *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, 1995.
[357] UN DESA, *Women´s Control over Economic Resources and Access to Financial Resources, including Microfinance*, 2009, p. 43.
[358] Ibid.
[359] Ibid.
[360] Ibid.
[361] UN Fourth World Conference on Women, *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, 1995.
[362] UNDP, *Women's Economic Empowerment*, 2014.
[363] UN ECOSOC, *Review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/2015/3)*, 2015, p. 53.
[364] UN Women, *Progress of the World's Women 2015-2016*, 2015.
[365] Ibid.
[366] Ibid., p. 3.

Further Research

In order to address the current shortcomings regarding gender equality in the world of work, delegates should focus on the gap between the provisions contained in international and regional frameworks such as the Beijing Declaration and the SDGs. How can states address deep-rooted societal and cultural gender stereotyping and discrimination? Is there a way that enforcement issues can be solved, particularly in working towards equal pay and the dissolution of the pay wage gap? How can gender gaps in management positions and within STEM fields be addressed? What provisions can be enacted to protect women working in information employment sectors? In what ways and in which direction can the Commission influence laws and practices with regard to women´s economic empowerment in a changing world of work?

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International Center for Research on Women. (2015). *Assets and Property Rights* [Website]. Retrieved 18 October 2016 from: http://www.icrw.org/issues/assets-and-property-rights/

> *The International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) is a non-governmental organization, focused on researching all aspect of women and their rights. On the topic of economic empowerment, it provides detailed information about differences in property rights between states, and juxtaposes this with ICRW's own work on this issue. ICRW analyzes how changes in property rights will concretely benefit women, formulates new policies, and conducts monitoring and evaluation on joint projects working to help women realize their rights to property ownership and development.*

International Labour Organization. (2016). *Women at Work, Trends 2016*. [Report]. Retrieved 18 October 2016 from: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_457317.pdf

> *The International Labour Organization's report is imperative to understanding the labor perspective of women´s economic empowerment. It is the most useful source in detailing current global conditions for women at work. It touches upon the labor participation rates, unemployment rates, gender gaps in the work field, quality of work, among other factors. Furthermore, it gives some ideas as to what might be possible solutions for all the above mentioned issues.*

United Nations, Economic and Social Council (2015). *Review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, Report of the Secretary-General* (E/CN.6/2015/3) [Summary Report]. Retrieved 15 October 2015 from: http://undocs.org/E/CN.6/2015/3

> *This is a summary of the report that was made when the Beijing Declaration turned 20. It touches upon matters such as forced labor, the conditions of employment, and the pay gap. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action continues to be the key framework for women's empowerment, and this summary gives an overview of the Declaration as well as the 20-year review, the progress made from 1995 until 2015, and the actions that should be taken now.*

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. (2015). *Expert Group Meeting on ´Women´s economic empowerment in a changing world of work´*. Retrieved 18 October 2016 from: http://www2.unwomen.org/~/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/csw/61/csw61%20egm%20concept%20note.pdf?v=1&d=20160921T134751

> *Because Women´s Economic Empowerment in a Changing World of Work is CSW´s priority theme for 2017, it is imperative to have an understanding of why they chose this topic, in which context they will consider it, and what the key issues are. Seeing as no outcome is available yet, this is the most important source CSW has published in the preparation towards CSW61 in 2017. This concept note will give delegates an insight to the CSW61 meeting of 2017, which will include the most important and recent information on the topic.*

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. (2015). *Progress of the World's Women 2015-2016* [Report]. Retrieved 18 October 2016 from: http://progress.unwomen.org/en/2015/pdf/UNW_progressreport.pdf

This report is seen as UN-Women´s flagship report, providing key elements of a far-reaching new policy agenda, which works towards making women´s equality a reality. It reviews the goals set in the Beijing Declaration and the SDGs, the progress made, and the actions still to be taken. This will help delegates understand UN-Women' policy and agenda, as well as give insight into a new economic agenda that UN-Women will work towards

United Nations, Fourth World Conference on Women. (1995). *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.* Retrieved 18 October 2016 from: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/BDPfA%20E.pdf

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action are viewed as one of the most important documents on the status of women and gender equality. It was adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women and gives perspective as to the status of women and outlines strategies to achieve gender equality. This will give delegates a framework with which to frame solutions, recognizing the progress that has been made towards some of these objectives, and the challenges that remain.

United Nations, General Assembly, Twenty-first session. (1966). *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (A/RES/2200 (XXI)).* Adopted on the report of the Third Committee. Retrieved 16 October 2016 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/2200(XXI)

This covenant is one of the first international frameworks to highlight the importance of economic rights. The ICESCR explicitly acknowledges the need for equality between men and women in economic life, and also enshrines rights including the right to work, equal wages for equal work, and the right to safe and decent working conditions. Many of these continue to be denied women workers, and therefore delegates will find it helpful to use this document to guide a rights-based approach to women's economic empowerment.

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Transforming our World: The 2030 Development Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 18 October 2016 from: http://undocs.org/A/RES/70/1

The Sustainable Development Goals are the key framework guiding the current work of the UN and the international community. Many goals are relevant for this topic, notably goals 1, 5, and 8, as they are focused on poverty eradication, gender equality, and economic growth. Individual targets within the SDGs will also help delegates frame their solutions to reach the agreed-upon benchmarks for progress.

United Nations, Secretary-General´s High-Level Panel on Women´s Economic Empowerment. (2016). *Leave No One Behind, A Call to Action For Gender Equality and Women´s Economic Empowerment* [Report]. Retrieved 18 October 2016 from: https://www.empowerwomen.org/en/resources/documents/2016/09/leave-no-one-behind?lang=en

In preparation for CSW61, High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment was launched by the Secretary-General. Their first meeting has convened in September 2016, and the report on this meeting represents is a milestone, as well as a key step in preparing CSW to address this topic. This report will give delegates an idea of the preparations for the CSW61 meeting of 2017, and all preparations for this meeting should be kept in mind when conducting further research, as it gives an insight to CSW's point of view on the topic.

United Nations Statistics Division. (2015). *The World's Women 2015*. [Report]. Retrieved 5 November 2016 from: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/gender/worldswomen.html

This report consists of information regarding all facets of women's empowerment. This specific source gives statistics on topics such as education, work, and poverty. Delegates will find this source useful to use these statistics to gain a better overview of numbers and figures relating the topic of women's empowerment, particularly to contextualize sources such as international framework or reports and determine next steps.

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