



Network

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Interview with Meg Jones

Women and Trade Programme Manager at the International Trade Centre, Geneva



Meet Meg Jones, a passionate voice for the economic empowerment of women through trade. For the past 20 years Meg has been working in the private and public sectors to draw attention to the significant economic and development gains to be achieved through policies and practices that enhance women's capacity to trade. Meg is the Women and Trade Programme Manager at the International Trade Centre (a joint agency of the United Nations and World Trade Organisation -WTO), Geneva, where she led the team that established and secured financial support for ITC's 'Women and Trade Programme'. She is the former Deputy Director of the Evian Group at IMD – a trade think tank. Meg has also worked for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner of Human Rights, prior to which she was on the Australian delegation to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. Meg brings with her private sector experience gained from working in the financial markets and in management consulting. She has

direct experience as an entrepreneur, having established a Swiss-based consultancy firm working on trade and the social dimensions of trade. She has sat on several boards including the Australia-Swiss Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Organization of Women in International Trade, and was the founding president of Geneva Women in International Trade. Meg is the recipient of The International Alliance of Women's 2012 'World of Difference 100 Award'. She holds a Master of International Studies and a Bachelor of Economics (University of Sydney) having studied in Malaysia, Indonesia, Australia and the Netherlands. She speaks English, Japanese and French.

Q.1 You have been a strong advocate for promoting women's participation in trade? How did you come to dedicate yourself to these issues? Why do you feel there is a need to focus on women?

When my parents divorced my mother could not find work. It was hard for her to raise two children on the pension. I could see that. I went for a job interview on my 15th birthday at the local supermarket and got a casual job I did after school and on Saturdays. This paid for clothes and entertainment. What neither of us could afford though, was for me to be an Exchange Student. Every year our school hosted an exchange student – they brought the international to our little town. I was really attracted to the lure of languages and alternative perspectives. I desperately wanted to go out and see the world and I really wanted to go on exchange to Japan. I wanted to get inside the mind of a culture that had risen like a phoenix out of the ashes of WWII to become the super economic power of the 1980s. I wanted to know why Japan had succeeded in such a short space of time when so many countries seemed to be mired in 'development' for decades. But Mum didn't have the money to give me the opportunity and I wasn't making enough to save for a year abroad. It was completely by chance I heard about a scholarship Rotary was offering. I didn't even know what 'scholarship' meant. I went through an intensive selection process and won a place on the Rotary Exchange Student outgoing team, and the scholarship. To this day the experience in Japan has shaped me, giving me a deep appreciation of consensus decision making and valuing the community over the individual. This has helped a lot in my work at the UN. More deeply, carved into my very being is empathy for women who want the best for their children but do not have the economic means to provide. My mother's experience is not unique: She did not complete any formal training past 15: It was expected she would marry. My own father's views were that 'no wife of his would ever work' as this would reflect badly on him as a provider. This is a lethal combination in any society, rich or poor, as death, divorce, disasters and desertion leave many women as heads of households.

Q. 2 What is your key role as programme manager Women and Trade? What in your opinion are the gender specific challenges and constraints to trade? What factors do you believe are most critical to being effective in this area?

My key role as Programme Manager is to put money in the hands of women. This means designing projects that raise women's incomes. There seems to be a dominant and prevailing misconception in development work that objectives such as 'capacity building' or 'creating an enabling environment' are enough. It's time we asked the hard questions: Building capacity and enabling what for whom? If we are indeed seeking to alleviate poverty then the 'for whom' must be the poor. The 'what' must be increasing incomes: By definition, if your income is incrementally increasing, at one point you will pass over the

poverty line. What the development community really needs if it wants to tackle poverty – recalling that the majority of the poor are in fact women and children – is hard indicators in projects that measure ‘increase in women’s incomes’. If we can achieve that and sustain an increase in women’s incomes, we will see sustainable development. There is a lot of talk about ‘transformation’ but we still systematically overlook and underinvest in the transformers – women.

The double challenge in working with women is that we are on the one hand striving to put money in the hands of women, and on the other hand, needing to ensure it stays there. Research shows that women spend up to 90% of their earnings on their family – health, education, bed-nets and so on (for men researchers estimate up to 39%) – this investment helps break inter-generational poverty. Yet this is not going to happen if, when women come home with the pay packet the only place they can put their money is to hide it under a mattress. The Women and Trade Programme is looking into best practice models for ensuring women get paid and that they have access to savings facilities. ITC research into cotton and coffee shows women do a significant amount of labour in these sectors but receive little or no remuneration for their work. Our projects work with communities to tackle that – at the same time we introduce financial institutions active in remote rural areas that offer savings services. We aim to ensure women not only get paid, but retain control over the financial resources.

Q.3 Have you achieved success in making the case for women’s remuneration?

Yes. The issue came into sharp focus during the development phase of our project on ‘Women in Coffee in Africa’. I had not worked in coffee before. I had no idea women did not get paid for their work in growing the coffee and sorting the beans. This was revealed in our field consultations. You can see for yourself in the video of the interviews with women in Burundi on www.intracen.org/womenandtrade. The women clearly state: “Our biggest problem is not getting paid”. From a development perspective this is catastrophic: We know that when women’s incomes increase they spend more on family well-being. Women are the link through which trade yields development dividends. The transformation will not happen if women are not paid. Worse, aims of doubling production to increase export revenues will only add to women’s frustrations: Women may be able to double production, but if they weren’t paid in the first place two times nothing is still nothing, just more work.

Under our project we have raised this issue with coffee buyers. In March 2013, women in Burundi will be paid for the first time, for coffee imported by buyers in the USA and South Africa. Rather than have this as a one-off sale, ITC partnered with the International Women’s Coffee Alliance to build associations of women in coffee in several countries in East Africa - Burundi, Rwanda, Kenya and Uganda. We have also mapped the financial service providers offering services in coffee and specifically to women and have introduced Presidents of the women’s coffee associations to these institutions; and conducted a leadership and mentoring training to build women’s capacity to negotiate and make decisions – that so far has lead to some sales. We are currently responding to a request to replicate this approach in West Africa in coffee; and in East and Southern Africa in cotton.

Q.4 What do you feel has been one of your greatest success for advancing women’s role in trade?

I have built successful partnerships through which women in developing countries and LDCs have sold over USD20m in goods and services in just two years. This was done through the establishment of the Global Platform for Action on Sourcing from Women Vendors and our annual Women Vendors Exhibition and Forum. Partnership is the way to achieve the economic empowerment of women. No one UN entity or non-government organisation hosts the full suite of services required to help women succeed in business and in trade. Each of us holds a piece of the puzzle and we must work together. This requires solid leadership at the top level to secure human and financial resources to engage. I have been truly fortunate to work under the leadership of Patricia Francis, Executive Director of the International Trade Centre, without whom we would not have a Women and Trade Programme. I am also grateful to the leadership of our partner organisations who shared the vision of empowering women through powerful partnerships and worked with us to deliver connections and support to women entrepreneurs that lead to the USD20m in sales. I am grateful to WE Connect International, Vital Voices, the International Federation of Business and Professional Women, the International Women's Coffee Alliance, the UN Global Compact, SPINNA and others. The corporations and governments we work with too have shown exemplary leadership at the top levels: Accenture, IBM, Marriott International and Pfizer; Botswana, Uganda and APEC as a regional group.

Q.5 In your view, what policies better facilitate women's export business and create opportunities for women entrepreneurs?

Targets for buying a specific percentage of goods and services from women entrepreneurs work best. For example, the government of the United States of America has a target of sourcing 5% of government procurement from women and minority owned businesses. The majority of Fortune 500 companies have adopted 'supplier diversity programmes' under which they also source from companies owned by one or more women.

Q.6 Why does targeted sourcing work?

It forces governments and corporates to do the math: To ask 'what percentage are we currently buying from women?' Typically the shocking response is less than 1% of total procurement. This then leads to questions on why women-owned companies aren't winning contracts. Answers vary from country to country but the common threads are lack of access to information on tenders – where they are advertised and how to respond. This includes, a lack of knowledge on how to meet requirements – how to get ISO9000 certified for example, or where to obtain a certificate of origin for locally produced goods. This is where working for ITC has so many benefits: as a joint agency of the United Nations and World Trade Organization we are mandated to work with both government and the private sector, so we have the convening power to bring together those who hold different parts of the procurement puzzle – the government agencies responsible for standards and certification, for example, business women and the procurement officers themselves. We've held several meetings with government procurement officers who are keen to work with us on setting targets to source from women. There is a dawning understanding that the government itself is uniquely positioned, through its own spend to 'be the change it wants to see' – to use its own purchasing power to link trade to development through the best and most under-utilised vehicle in town: the economic empowerment of women.

Q.7 The UN Women has developed in 2012 an accountability framework (known by its acronym SWAP – system wide action plan) for gender equality and women’s empowerment for the UN system? You have been part of the new UN-SWAP. Has this been useful in your work?

Absolutely! Once again, having targets works – and equally importantly being held accountable on meeting those targets, works. It is this latter piece that the UN SWAP brings: It is the first UN system-wide accountability framework and it contains two critical elements – a focus on programming AND a focus on staffing. The longer I am in the UN system the clearer it is that gender equality is as important inside the system as it is outside.. There is ample research from women in village councils to women on corporate boards that proves the value of gender parity at decision-making levels. This is precisely what the UN needs now, particularly in development when we transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The UN SWAP requires entities to report on their plans to achieve gender parity in staffing at the P4 and above levels. I am hoping that the same awakening we are seeing with government and corporates in procurement is what happens in the UN: That the right questions lead us to the right answers that are given adequate human and financial resources, backed with political will, to effect change. We need strong leadership here – from UN Women as the entity responsible for inter-agency coordination on this but also within each of the entities at the highest levels. We have this in Patricia Francis at ITC. We have adopted an ITC Gender Mainstreaming Policy. The changes need to be embedded in policy and in the annual performance appraisal (PAS) so that the accountability that is critical in the SWAP is passed down through line management. Achieving gender-parity in staffing will help the UN better live up to its Charter – that enshrines the equality of men and women – and improve delivery in the field as we reflect the composition of those we seek to serve.

Q. 8 You have managed to balance work and family-life. How can one achieve work-life balance?

Again, this is where the policies of the organization play such an important role. We have telecommuting and compressed working hours at ITC. I signed up for the former. We live quite far from the office because of my husband’s job - I commute three hours each day. Telecommuting makes life possible because I can then be there when my children are ill or when the plumber comes. The most difficult aspect of this is applying the discipline to telecommute on a more regular basis.

Q. 9 What advice do you have for other women who aspire to become leaders?

Meditate on what your true calling is and follow it intelligently. I left the financial markets to study Islamic banking because I was unhappy in a corporation making money for the already wealthy. This eventually led to my working for Médecines sans Frontières (MSF) and later teaching in the Human Rights Programme at the University of Sydney. This diverse and rich experience laid foundation stones for my work in the United Nations. I never would have got here if I’d thought only about the money.

By ‘intelligently’ I mean have at least a two year plan and find a mentor – someone ahead of you who you can go to for guidance on your plan. Choose someone who can help you see the big picture and different options. A good mentor is someone who opens your eyes to more choices than you are currently aware of but at the same time can help you weed out those that are more limiting.

Personal advice: Pick your partner wisely! Working women need supportive mates.

Q. 10 *What drives you? Could you share your personal philosophy which has guided you in your work?*

I believe that the economic empowerment of women is the key to economic and human development. I have worked in health, education and in human rights. Each of these areas is important and deserves adequate human and financial resources to be effective. That said, one can achieve a healthy, well-educated female population and a robust human rights framework and societies can still be slow to change. That is because cash is the catalyst – and it has to be money in the hands of women if we are to see social and economic transformations take place. Decision making power seems to map income: In the household and in the work place, men’s incomes are dominant in both. I believe we will have balanced outcomes when we have balanced incomes.

Q. 11 *Is there a key learning on the topic of the advancement of gender equality in the area of global trade that you could pass on to young women and men?*

To young women: Apply for jobs above your current level. We need women in decision making positions in the public and private sectors. To young men: Enjoy your family. The economic empowerment of women gives men greater flexibility that can usefully be invested in time with children and sharing household responsibilities.

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Letter from the Focal Point for Women



Dear Friends,

We bring you another edition of Network newsletter covering an array of gender related news from September through December 2012.

As always, the team at NETWORK seeks to focus each quarter on the happenings at the UN as well as globally that impact on advancing gender equality and women empowerment. In this issue we begin with our signature interview segment, a conversation with Meg Jones, *Women and Trade Programme Manager at the International Trade Centre, ILO Geneva*, and a passionate voice for the economic empowerment of women through trade.

In this issue we highlight a number of new strategic partnerships, joint programmes and initiatives launched by UN Women with the private sector, intergovernmental bodies and civil society. As part of its unique convening role creating spaces for dialogue between civil society and Governments, UN-Women established 14 advisory groups at the international, regional and national level with civil society representatives to foster dialogue on gender equality and empowerment of women and convened expert group consultations on gender in the post 2015 development agenda. Other partnerships initiated range from joint programme with the European Union '*Spring forward for women*' for south Mediterranean region to ensure women's active engagement in decision making to the '*Equal futures partnership to expand women's political and economic participation*' with the White House to joining forces with the TAG Heuer – linking glamour with women's empowerment through a fundraiser for UN Women amongst others.

This issue also includes news on the launch of the South Asia Regional Center of Excellence on Gender Responsive Governance in India and the passing of the first ever UN resolution on banning female genital mutilation and the first high level General Assembly debate on the rule of law and commemoration of the first international day of the girl child.

In bringing actions related to representation of women this edition of Network spotlights on efforts for opening up of boardrooms in Jamaica to women, the EU Commission proposed legislation for attaining a 40% objective of the under-represented sex in non-executive board-member positions in publicly listed companies, and UN Climate conference decision to enhance gender balance in negotiation teams. We also bring updates on initiatives to strengthen national commitments to end violence against women.

We strive to present a wide spectrum of stimulating and enlightening news and trust that you find these narratives inspiring to impact your advocacy and work for advancing gender equality and women's empowerment wherever you may find yourself around the world.

In solidarity,

Aparna Mehrotra

Focal Point for Women in the UN system &

Senior Advisor for Coordination,

Division for UN system Coordination

UN Women

Congratulations to

Michelle Bachelet for receiving the Gabarron International Award for Lifetime Achievement 2012



Michelle Bachelet, Executive Director of UN Women was awarded for her past and continued commitment to women's and children's rights and her extraordinary work for building a more humanitarian society where women and children's rights are respected. The award also honored her for promoting innovative political and economic reforms in the social system of her country from the positions she held in the Chilean government from 2006-2010.

The Gabarron International Award for Lifetime Achievement is given to that person or group of persons whose career, both personal and professional commitment, in the sociopolitical, cultural or scientific areas over a significant period, has stood out as an example for Humanity.

The award was given out on November 27, 2012 at the New York headquarters of The Gabarron Foundation. The [Cristóbal Gabarrón Foundation](#) has existed since 1992 and it is located in Valladolid, Spain.

Ameerah Haq, on her appointment as Under-Secretary-General for Field Support



Ms. **Ameerah Haq** became the Head of the Department of Field Support on 11 June 2012, following the departure of Under-Secretary-General Susana Malcorra.

Since 2009, Ms. Haq (Bangladesh) was the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste and Head of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT).

She has previously held the positions of Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General as well as United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for Sudan and before that as Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for Afghanistan.

Ms. Haq brings to the position extensive management and operational experience at the senior level, supporting complex mission deployments and transition activities, including crisis management.

She was formerly Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Director, Bureau of Crisis Prevention & Recovery, at United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Headquarters in New York. She served as the United Nations Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Malaysia from 1994 to 1997 and in the same capacity in Laos from 1991 to 1994. Ms. Haq worked in the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific at UNDP Headquarters in various capacities from 1980-1990, which included responsibilities for aid coordination mechanisms and as Desk Officer for Thailand, Myanmar and Bhutan. She also had an assignment with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) from 1985 to 1987. She started her career in 1976 as a Junior Professional Officer in Jakarta, Indonesia and was transferred to Afghanistan as Assistant Resident Representative in 1978.

Ms. Haq holds master's degrees in community organization and planning and in business administration from Columbia University and New York University, respectively. She completed a Bachelor of Arts at Western College in Oxford, Ohio.

Leila Zerrougui, on her appointment as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict



On 13 July 2012, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced the appointment of Leila Zerrougui of Algeria as his next Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict. Ms. Zerrougui succeeded Radhika Coomaraswamy who has served as the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict since April 2006.

Ms. Zerrougui had been the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Deputy Head of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), where, since 2008, she spearheaded the Mission's efforts in strengthening the rule of law and protection of civilians.

As a legal expert in human rights and the administration of justice, Ms. Zerrougui has had a distinguished career in the strengthening of the rule of law and in championing strategies and actions for the protection of vulnerable groups, especially women and children.

Ms. Zerrougui was a member of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention under the United Nations Human Rights Council from 2001, and served as the Working Group's Chairperson-Rapporteur from 2003 until May 2008. She had previously served as an expert member of a number of working groups and committees under the Commission on Human Rights.

Prior to her international engagements, Ms. Zerrougui has had a longstanding career in the Algerian judiciary and in 2000, was appointed to the Algerian Supreme Court. She served as a juvenile judge and judge of first instance from 1980 to 1986, and as appeal court judge from 1986 to 1997. From 1998 to 2000, Ms. Zerrougui served as legal adviser to the Cabinet of the Ministry of Justice.

Ms. Zerrougui graduated from the Ecole Nationale d'Administration (Algiers) in 1980. Since 1993, she has held various academic positions at law schools in Algeria. She has published extensively on the administration of justice and human rights.

Amina J. Mohammed on her appointment as Special Advisor on Post-2015 Development Planning



The Secretary-General appointed Amina J. Mohammed of Nigeria as Special Adviser on Post-2015 Development Planning in June 2012. Ms. Mohammed was previously Senior Special Assistant to the President of Nigeria on the Millennium Development Goals after serving three Presidents over a period of six years. In 2005 she was charged with the coordination of the debt relief funds towards the achievement of Millennium Development Goals in Nigeria. From 2002-2005, Ms. Mohammed served as coordinator of the Task Force on Gender and Education for the United Nations Millennium Project.

Ms. Mohammed brings to the position more than 30 years of experience as a development practitioner in the public and private sectors, as well as civil society. She is currently the CEO/Founder of the Center for Development Policy Solutions, a newly established think tank to address the policy and knowledge gaps within the Government, Parliament and private sector in development and civil society for robust advocacy materials. Ms. Mohammed is also Adjunct Professor of the Master's Programme for Development Practice at Columbia University, New York.

Ms. Mohammed currently serves on numerous international advisory panels and boards, including the Global Development Program of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Secretary General's Global Sustainability Panel, the Hewlett Foundation on Education, African Women's Millennium Initiative, the ActionAid International "Right to Education Project", the Millennium Promise Initiative, and the Institute of Scientific & Technical Information of China. She is a Governor of the International Development Research Centre in Canada, and currently chairs the Advisory Board of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Global Monitoring Report on Education.

Ms. Mohammed received the National Honours Award of the Order of the Federal Republic in 2006 and was inducted in the Nigerian Women's Hall of Fame in 2007.

Naoko Ishii on her assumption of Office as GEF CEO and Chairperson



Dr. Naoko Ishii assumed office in August 2012 as CEO and Chairperson of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) the world's largest public funder of environmental projects. The GEF's Council in June 2012 unanimously selected Dr. Ishii, Deputy Vice Minister of Finance of the Government of Japan, to succeed Monique Barbut, who completed her second term as CEO in July.

Prior to becoming the fourth CEO and Chairperson of the GEF, Dr. Ishii, as Deputy Vice Minister of Finance, was responsible for Japan's international financial and development policies, and for its global policies on environmental issues such as climate change and biodiversity. She led the Japanese delegation at the Transition Committee for designing the Green Climate Fund. Dr. Ishii's career at the Ministry of Finance began in 1981 with a focus on the international sphere, particularly development issues. Later in her career she was Japan's Director for Bilateral Development Finance (2004-2006) and for coordination with Multilateral Development Banks (2002-04).

For nearly half of her career, Dr. Ishii has served in international assignments outside of Japan, including at the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. At the World Bank, Dr. Ishii was the Country Director for Sri Lanka and the Maldives (2006-2010). During that period, while based in Colombo, she managed the World Bank program for Sri Lanka amidst that country's quarter-century old civil conflict by building partnership among key stakeholders. She also served as the country program coordinator for Vietnam at the World Bank (1997-2001), project manager at Harvard Institute for International Development (1996-1997), economist at the International Monetary Fund (1992-1995) working for Africa and Asia, as well as visiting fellow at Center for International Affairs at Harvard University (1984-1985).

Dr. Ishii also taught sustainable development and environment at Keio University. She has published numerous papers and several books, two of which were awarded by Suntory Prize (1990) and Okita Memorial Prize for International Development Research (2004). She is the inaugural recipient of the 2006 Enjoji Jiro Memorial Prize. She holds BA and Ph.D. from University of Tokyo.

Around the UN

Broadening engagement with civil society - 14 UN Women Advisory Groups established in 2012



Executive Director Michelle Bachelet led the inaugural meeting of UN Women's Civil Society Global Advisory Group

From the time of its inception, UN Women has acknowledged that an institutional forum to allow for dynamic engagement with civil society is necessary. To facilitate regular consultations, the creation of Civil Society Advisory Groups (CSAGs), at a global, regional and national level has been pivotal.

The Global Advisory Group was the first group established in May 2012. UN Women Executive Director Michelle Bachelet announced the formation of this Group after wide consultation with civil society networks. The Group held its first meeting in October 2012, reaffirming the strategic importance of partnerships between civil society and UN Women.

Since the announcement of the Global CSAG, 13 other groups have been established at the regional, sub-regional and national levels. The first regional group to be set up was for Latin America and the Caribbean, followed by Central and South Eastern Europe. At the sub-regional level, Caribbean and Pacific groups have been created and nine countries have their own national Advisory Groups Brazil, Cameroon, Georgia, India, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Pakistan, Tajikistan and the United Republic of Tanzania.

The Advisory Groups work as consultative forums for civil society and UN Women. They aim to foster dialogue and engagement on global, regional and national gender equality and women's empowerment issues.

In 2013, UN Women plans to establish at least 13 more civil society advisory groups around the globe.

UN Women convenes expert consultations on gender and the post-2015 agenda

Post-2015 agenda must include gender equality and accountability mechanisms

In the aftermath of the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and the ongoing discussions to advance the global development agenda beyond 2015, UN Women convened an expert group consultation from 26 to 29 November, 2012 to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment are fully integrated into any future international development framework.



Expert group consultation on 26 November 2012 at UN Women headquarters in New York City.

The first consultation on applying a gender perspective to the post-2015 development framework and the *Sustainable Development Goals*, brought together nearly 40 experts from around the world and representatives of 10 United Nations agencies (ILO, ITC, ITU, OHCHR, UNDP, UNEP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIDO and UN-Habitat).

Following the four-day consultation, the experts stressed the critical need to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment are fully integrated into any future global development framework as well as the need to set up efficient accountability mechanisms.

"To achieve success, the post-2015 development framework must explicitly address the complexity and depth of challenges to women's empowerment and gender equality. We must take a comprehensive approach that addresses root causes of inequality," said UN Women Executive Director Michelle Bachelet in her [opening remarks](#).

In their conclusions, experts underlined that accountability has to be ensured both in the content and in the process to ensure that commitments are achieved and that women are actively participating every step of the way. They also stressed that any new framework must build on existing commitments to human rights, development, sustainability and peace and security.

The group also emphasized the need to encourage the transformation of legal, political, economic, environmental, social and cultural structures to facilitate the realization of women's rights.

They also identified specific issues for further discussion, including: unpaid work; improved access to and control over resources and quality services; ending gender-based violence; securing sexual and reproductive rights; and ensuring women's agency, empowerment, participation and leadership.

With two years left before 2015, the members of the expert group committed to finding concrete ways to continue to work together and ensure that any new development framework serves the interests and rights of women and girls around the world.

The group will deliver their recommendations to a panel including UN Women officials and the Special Advisor to the Secretary-General on Post-2015 Development Planning, Amina Mohammed; Assistant Secretary-General of Economic Development, DESA/OUSG, Shamshad Akhtar; and Assistant Secretary-General and Director of the Bureau for Development Policy of UNDP, Olav Kjørven.

UN Women and TAG Heuer link glamour with women's empowerment



UN Women Deputy Executive Director John Hendra with actress Cameron Diaz and CEO Jean-Christophe Babin at the TAG Heuer fundraising gala on 10 November 2012

Hollywood actress Cameron Diaz joined forces with UN Women at a glamorous fundraising event under the stars hosted by Swiss watchmaker TAG Heuer in New York on Saturday 10 November, 2012.

The event, held below the glass-cubed planetarium sphere of the American Museum of Natural History, brought together celebrities such as Leonardo DiCaprio, as well as 500 leaders from business, fashion and media to raise awareness on gender equality and to recall that the proverbial clock is ticking for women's rights worldwide.

"Imagine you worked all day long and didn't get paid for it. Or worse, you came home and got beaten," Cameron Diaz said at a press conference. "We take a lot of our rights for granted, but many women in many countries don't have those rights. I admire the important work UN Women does and I'm very excited to support their work," she added.

A portion of the profits from the sale of TAG Heuer's Link Lady Trilogy edition, for which Cameron Diaz is the Brand Ambassador, will go to UN Women.

UN Women's Deputy Executive Director John Hendra thanked TAG Heuer and Ms. Diaz for their partnership and support. "It's not just the right thing to do from a human rights perspective to empower women – it's also economically a smart thing to do," Mr. Hendra said. "We need to invest more in women in order to have a more balanced and equal world," he added.

UN General Assembly adopts Declaration on Rule of Law

At the 67th GA session, the UN General Assembly's first high-level debate devoted solely to the rule of law, Heads of State and Government, and civil society reviewed progress made and challenges that exist at the national and international level on ensuring the rule of law. They adopted a declaration that includes concrete commitments and language on strengthening women's access to justice.

This included establishing legislative frameworks to prevent and address all forms of discrimination and violence against women and equal and full access to justice, including through human rights respecting informal justice systems.



Today, the rule of law often rules women out. With Member States and civil society partners, UN Women is organized [several events](#) on strengthening women's access to justice during the General Assembly. Highlighting that justice is the foundation for gender equality and women's empowerment.

First International Day of the Girl Child

October 11, 2012 marked the inaugural [International Day of the Girl Child](#) which focuses attention on the need to address the challenges girls face, promote their empowerment and fulfil their human rights.

The United Nations General Assembly on 19 December 2011 voted to designate 11 October as the 'International Day of the Girl Child' (see [UN General Assembly resolution A/RES/66/170 on International Day of the Girl Child](#)).

For the inaugural day, UN agencies have come together to focus on child marriage, which is a fundamental human rights violation and impacts all aspects of a girl's life. Globally, more than one in three young women aged 20-24 years (or approximately 70 million) in developing countries (excluding China) were married before they reached age 18. One third of them entered into marriage before they turned 15.

Preventing child marriage will protect girls' rights and help reduce their risks of violence, early pregnancy, HIV infection, and maternal death and disability

At UN Headquarters, New York a [high-level panel discussion](#), co-organized by [UNFPA](#), [UNICEF](#), [UN Women](#) and [Girls Not Brides](#), took place on Thursday, 11 October 2012.

Around the World

EU Commission – UN Women launch new partnership on women's empowerment



UN Women Deputy Executive Director John Hendra (left) & European Commissioner for Enlargement & European Neighbourhood Policy Stefan Füle (right) sign the contribution agreement for the new joint regional programme Spring Forward for Women.

The European Commission and UN Women launched on November 17, 2012 *Spring Forward for Women*, a new joint regional programme for the South Mediterranean Region. The programme aims to support national and regional stakeholders to empower women economically and politically in the context of the progress that has followed the Arab Spring. The new programme was signed by EU Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy, Štefan Füle, and UN Women Assistant-Secretary-General and Deputy Executive Director Policy and Programmes, John Hendra.

“We need to ensure that women’s voices remain at the heart of the transformation process, so that Southern Mediterranean countries continue to strengthen the inclusive nature of the transition and respond to the calls of Arab women for Dignity. I hope that Spring Forward will be a significant boost in this endeavour.” said Commissioner Füle at the event.

“This programme comes at an important juncture with transformations taking place in many countries and women’s voices calling for lasting change. UN Women is intensifying its support for women’s economic empowerment and political participation in response to women’s demands. This programme is a critical step towards advancing women’s rights against the backdrop of the political, social and economic developments taking place in the region”, said Deputy Executive Director Hendra.

The Spring Forward programme will support initiatives by national and regional institutions and civil society organisations to ensure women’s active engagement in decision-making, empower women economically and enhance regional knowledge and experience-sharing on women’s political and economic rights.

The programme will respond to the support needed at the regional and country level. It will build on local initiatives with the recognition that sustainable change must be locally-owned and led. The work at regional level will focus on several priorities: capacity building; increasing the participation of women in electoral processes; and strengthening local and national governments to have effective services toward poverty alleviation and advocacy. Targeting all Southern Mediterranean countries, the programme will complement actions focused on improving access to economic opportunities for marginalised women in a number of priority countries that are undergoing transition and reforms, such as Tunisia and Egypt. Spring Forward is financed through a contribution of €7 million from the European Neighbourhood Partnership Instrument (ENPI) and of € 1.2 million from the UN Women core budget.

The launch of Spring Forward follows the signature of a strategic partnership agreement between UN Women and the European Commission in April 2012. The EC and UN Women are already working together regularly in areas of gender responsive budgeting, peace and security and political participation in Africa, Asia & Pacific and in Southern Caucasus.

UN launches new programme to empower rural women and girls

As the world celebrates the International Day of Rural Women on 15 October, 2012 UN Women with the three Rome-based United Nations agencies working on food and agriculture (World Food Programme, Food and Agricultural Organization and International Fund for Agricultural Development) launched on September 27, 2012 a joint programme in Rome to empower poor rural women through economic integration and food security initiatives.

The programme, “Accelerating Progress Toward the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women,” is a five-year initiative of the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the World Food Programme (WFP). It will be implemented initially in Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal, Niger and Rwanda.

“When women are empowered and can claim their rights and access to land, leadership, opportunities and choices, economies grow, food security is enhanced and prospects are improved for current and future generations,” said Michelle Bachelet, Under-Secretary-General and UN Women Executive Director.

Women are central to the development of rural areas and to national economies. They make up 43 per cent of the agricultural work force worldwide, and as much as 70 per cent in some countries. Often working longer hours than men, rural women are also the caregivers who look after children, the elderly, and the sick. In addition, many rural women are small business entrepreneurs and investors who dedicate most of their earnings to the well-being of their families and societies.

But despite some progress, most rural women and girls are still struggling. They typically face more obstacles than men in gaining access to public services, social protection, decent employment opportunities, and markets and other institutions.

If women had the same access to resources as men, they could increase farm yields. When women are empowered economically and socially they become leaders and agents of change for economic growth, social progress and sustainable development.

To address these issues, the joint programme will focus on four goals: improving food and nutrition security, increasing incomes, enhancing leadership and participation in rural institutions, and creating a more responsive policy environment at national and international levels.

Together, UN Women, FAO, IFAD and WFP will generate synergies that capitalize on each agency’s mandate to advance gender equality.

Launch of South Asia Regional Centre of Excellence on Gender Responsive Governance



UN Women Executive Director Michelle Bachelet attends a gram sabha (local council) meeting with elected women representatives and grassroots women during a three-day visit to India from 3 to 5 October 2012

In South Asia, women form more than 50 per cent of the population. Yet women's participation in the decision-making process, especially in relation to representation at the different levels of governance is significantly lower.

During her first official visit to India in October 2012, on October 3rd in Jaipur, Executive Director UN Women, Michelle Bachelet acknowledging the success of India's experiment in grassroots democracy whereby over 1.5 million elected women representatives have been elected thus far, launched [South Asia's first ever virtual knowledge hub](#) - a unique Regional Centre of Excellence on Gender Responsive Governance for elected women representatives in the rural areas during the National Leadership Summit hosted by the Government of India in Jaipur. for elected women representatives in rural areas. The launch was attended by more than 200 women leaders, experts and policy makers from South Asia.

The Regional Centre of Excellence (RCoE) on Gender Responsive Local Governance was established under UN Women's programme "Promoting women's political leadership and governance in India and South Asia" to transform institutions to make them more accountable to gender equality and women's rights, and to strengthen the capacity and voice of women's rights advocates.

The South Asia Regional Office in New Delhi covers nine countries of the region, i.e. Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Iran, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. UN Women has country offices in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan.

Visit RCoE website at <http://www.womenchangemakers.net/>

The 'Equal Futures Partnership' initiative to Expand Women's Political and Economic Participation



UN Women Executive Director Michelle Bachelet joined United States Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and other world leaders at the launch of the US-led Equal Futures Partnership on 24 September 2012 in New York.

While the world has seen important progress in expanding opportunity for women and girls, significant gaps remain in the areas of political participation and economic opportunity. In response to the challenge issued by President Obama before the United Nations General Assembly in September 2011 to break down barriers to women's political and economic empowerment - on September 24, 2012, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton launched the Equal Futures Partnership on behalf of the United States along with 12 other founding members (Australia, Benin, Bangladesh, Denmark, Finland, Indonesia, Jordan, the Netherlands, Peru, Senegal, and Tunisia; as well as the European Union). Multilateral stakeholders including UN Women and the World Bank, and leading businesses and non-profit institutions also pledged support for the partnership.

The goal of the Equal Futures Partnership is for women to participate fully in public life and to lead and benefit from inclusive economic growth. Today, founding members are committing to new actions including legal, regulatory and policy reforms to advance this goal. Partners are also reaffirming at the highest levels of government their obligations and commitments to promote and protect women's human rights and fundamental freedoms.

UN Women will work with the Equal Futures Partnership in the areas of economic and political empowerment and ending violence against women, through technical advice, knowledge and capacity development, facilitating and sharing of best practices, and supporting implementation of commitments at the country level. UN Women will also use its knowledge networks to disseminate experience coming from the Equal Futures Partnership, to benefit those working for gender equality and women's empowerment.

Following the launch of this initiative, founding partners will continue consultations with their national stakeholders, including civil society, to translate commitments into action. In April 2013, they will reconvene at the World Bank Spring Meetings to share progress reports and welcome new member countries.

For details see <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/09/24/fact-sheet-equal-futures-partnership-expand-women-s-political-and-econom>

Convention to protect internally displaced persons enters into force

The African Union's Kampala Convention came into force on December 6, 2012 and is the first of its kind to bind governments to protect internally displaced persons. Among other requirements, the continental bill requires that states take steps to protect female heads of household, expectant mothers and mothers of small children, ensure reproductive and sexual health rights of internally displaced women, and provide appropriate psycho-social support for victims of sexual and other related abuses.

UN Women and the Loomba Foundation join forces to empower widows in three continents

A new partnership between UN Women and the Loomba Foundation will promote the empowerment of widows through global advocacy and economic empowerment projects in three countries – Guatemala, Malawi, and India.



UN Women Deputy Executive Director Lakshmi Puri speaks at the dinner event in London

The partnership was announced at a dinner in London organised by the Loomba Foundation and attended by Cherie Blair, President of the Loomba Foundation, and UN Women Deputy Executive Director Lakshmi Puri. Lord Raj Loomba, Founder and Chairman Trustee of the Loomba Foundation, has been a strong advocate for the plight of widows and at the forefront of campaigning for the creation of International Widows Day, recognised by the United Nations in 2010 and to be celebrated on 23 June every year.

Ms Puri hailed the new partnership as “a great example of moving an idea into action”. “Through this partnership, we will work concretely on programmes that create a visible space for widows in their societies and give them the right tools to achieve economic independence,” she said.

There are an estimated 250 million widows globally. In many countries, widows are victims of multiple discrimination and exclusion. UN Women will bring its advocacy power, technical knowledge and presence on the ground to provide better economic opportunities and enhance the voices of widows.

The Loomba Foundation a charitable organization was established by Lord Loomba CBE and his wife Veena in the UK in 1997. It promotes fundamental freedoms and human rights of widows and their children around the world, raising awareness of the gross injustices widows face and seeking to remove stigmas associated with widowhood.

Malala Fund for Girls' Education launched



On Human Rights Day, December 10, 2012 UNESCO and Pakistan launched The Malala Fund for Girls' Education. The move comes following an attack on Pakistani education and gender equality advocate Malala Yousafzai, 15, who was seriously wounded when Taliban gunmen shot her in the head and neck while she was on a school bus in October. Pakistan's President Asif Ali Zardari announced that his country would donate the first \$10 million.

International treaty on domestic workers' rights ratified

On September 5, 2012 Philippines ratified a United Nations Treaty that provides a set of international standards to improve the lives of millions of domestic workers worldwide, allowing the Convention to

come into force in 2013. The treaty required two countries to ratify it. Uruguay was the first country to do so in June 2012.



A domestic worker in India at the early stages of preparing rice for consumption. She will be paid 100 rupees after drying 80 kilograms of rice grain.

Violence Against Women

UN Women Executive Director launches new initiative to spotlight national commitments to end violence against women

Coinciding with the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, 25 November, UN Women Executive Director Michelle Bachelet launched a new initiative [COMMIT](#), and called for bold action and decisive leadership to galvanize efforts to end the pandemic of violence against women and girls. She asked governments to make national commitments which will be showcased globally, Ms. Bachelet underlined that ending violence against women is possible. Today 125 countries have laws that penalize domestic violence, a huge step forward from just a decade ago. But she said this is not enough. Up to seven in ten women continue to be targeted for physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime and 603 million women live in countries where domestic violence is still not a crime. Ms. Bachelet announced that [12 countries had already joined UN Women's recently launched COMMIT initiative](#), The initiative will encourage pledges leading up to CSW57, to be held in March 2013.

“We hope to see new and improved laws and national action plans that provide for safe houses, free hotline services and free health and legal aid to survivors. We count on education programmes that teach human rights, equality and mutual respect, and inspire young people to take leadership on ending violence against women and girls. We need increasing numbers of women in politics, law enforcement, and peacekeeping forces. We need equal economic opportunities and decent jobs for women,” she added.

Next March, the focus of the [UN Commission on the Status of Women](#) will be to tackle violence against women and girls and expectations are high for Governments to agree on frameworks that will truly address ending violence against women and girls.

Stakeholders' Forum for preventing and eliminating violence against women

Stakeholders' Forum for preventing and eliminating violence against women held at UN headquarters from 13–14 December, 2012 concluded with a call to Governments to commit to ending violence against women and girls

“The time is now for Governments to translate international promises into concrete national action. We all must do better to protect women and prevent this pervasive human rights violation, but Governments and leaders must lead by example”, said Michelle Bachelet, Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women, at the closing session of the Stakeholders’ Forum. Member States, civil society, UN entities and the private sector met for two days in New York to review the existing normative work and foster dialogue, build alliances and raise awareness of existing commitments and standards for ending violence against women, in preparation for the [57th session of the Commission on the Status of Women \(CSW57\)](#).

The various panels of the meeting addressed how to prevent and eliminate violence from different perspectives, ranging from reviewing existing global commitments to ensuring leadership, coordination and resources. They also focused on successful preventive strategies and identifying the best policies and services in place around the world.

Participants stressed the need to strengthen norms and standards for preventing and addressing all forms of violence against women and girls, at global, regional and national levels – as well as their implementation. They equally underlined the importance of expanding and strengthening the institutions, mechanisms and tools –as well as capacities–needed to make this happen.

Ms. Bachelet stressed the need for inclusive participation in CSW57 and said its agreed conclusions should also address the issue of sexual violence in conflict. Moreover, she said they should provide a building block for the discussions on the issue at the G8 next year.

UN Women co-hosts first of its kind training symposium on sexual and gender-based violence

From 6 to 7 September, 2012 UN Women and the [Women’s Initiatives for Gender Justice](#) brought together the Chief Prosecutors and key staff of international courts based in The Hague, together with gender justice experts, states parties, academics, donors and women living in armed conflict situations to advance and strengthen international justice including accountability for sexual and gender-based violence.

In this [first of its kind symposium](#) to give training on sexual gender based violence, which was held in The Hague, a distinguished panel provided a review of some of the successes, challenges and lessons learned from tribunals and courts dealing with the prosecution of gender-based crimes. During the two day Symposium, panelists examined obstacles and best practices during the investigation and pre-trial stages of a case, the development of prosecution strategies and courtroom proceedings. Panels also considered access for, and the participation of victims/survivors in justice and reparations processes; the role of States Parties in supporting the development of a global system of justice and peace; and the jurisprudential developments particularly for gender-based crimes over the past 15 years from a judicial perspective.

The Symposium featured a special panel with four chief prosecutors and leaders from the International Criminal Court, the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, and the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

The aim of the Symposium is to further strengthen prosecutions in this area. This is a unique opportunity to examine the importance of and obstacles faced in preparing cases at the investigation and pre-trial phase.

UN Women has been working to stop gender-based crimes and violence and help those who have been victims of such brutality.

“Ride on! Speak Out!”: Nine countries, 15 bikers, one issue – ending violence against women

Timed to coincide with the 16 Days of Activism to End Violence against Women, commemorated each year starting 25 November, [the Ride On! Speak Out! UNiTE to End Violence against Women and Girls initiative](#) was one of the first of its kind. Organized by Harley-Davidson Johannesburg and UN Women, the ride covered 8,200 km (over 5,000 miles) along their journey from 25 November to 10 December 2012.



Women's Health

Women's and children's health at the UN General Assembly 67th Session



Accountability for women's and children's health was again at the center of the 67th session of the UN General Assembly events in September 2012. Some key events included:

Keeping Promises, Measuring Results. How are we measuring up?

This event was aimed at sharing the latest evidence on accountability, through the findings of the 2012 Countdown Report to 2015, focused on equity and financial flows of ODA for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health (MNCH). The latest Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health (PMNCH) report describing the commitments to date to the Global Strategy was presented. An interactive discussion on how to achieve greater accountability ensued, with overall agreement that existing frameworks for accountability must be strengthened and the collaborative efforts between partners continue to ensure that promises are kept and progress is achieved.

UN Commission on Life-Saving Commodities for Women and Children and the UN Commission for Information and Accountability Commission

The Deputy Secretary-General received on behalf of the UN Secretary General two major reports linked to the Global Strategy and the Every Woman Every Child movement:

1) The final report of the Commission on Life-Saving Commodities for Women and Children and implementation plan. The Commission on Life-Saving commodities was created to overcome the challenge of saving lives through improving equitable access to lifesaving commodities. Jens Stoltenberg, Prime Minister of Norway, Goodluck Jonathan, President of Nigeria, and Scott Sherriff, Senior Vice President & Head of Women's Healthcare at Bayer were joined by President Bill Clinton to announce a new commitment, whereby through volume guaranteed purchases, Bayer will be supplying contraceptive implants (one of the commodities recommended by the Commission) at 50% of the price.

2) The first annual report of the independent Expert Review Group (iERG). This is the first of four reports which, as recommended by the Commission on Information and Accountability for women's and children's health, will be presented to the UN SG until 2015 to analyse progress on the implementation of the commission's recommendations. The iERG noted that progress was on track on a number of recommendations, while on others progress is too slow. The iERG made a clear set of recommendations and called for a global governance framework and a global investment framework, as well as for stronger priority setting at the country level.

Every Woman Every Child: The Big Push

At a special dinner hosted by the UN Secretary-General for global leaders, CEOs, and celebrities new commitments were announced to spur even greater progress for women's and children's health. The event gathered leaders from various groups and around the world. Commitments cut across the various areas affecting women and children, therefore highlighting the need to work across issues and MDGs for real progress. The commitments went from increased financial support to the promise from countries to stop applying for resources from international institutions and invest their own resources. Amongst the new commitments announced, Justine Greening, Secretary of State for International Development (UK), announced that the UK will raise to the agreed 0.7% GDP for foreign aid. The Prime Minister of Norway announced an additional \$100 million of investments every year and so did the Minister of International Development Cooperation from Sweden. Director-General Margaret Chan highlighted the importance of working towards the achievement of universal health coverage.

Speakers at the event included: UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon; USAID Administrator Raj Shah, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra of Thailand, iERG Co-Chairs Richard Horton and Joy Pumamphi, UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Malaria Ray Chambers, WHO Director-General Margaret Chan, World Bank President Jim Yong Kim, and many others.

Advancing the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health

On 24 September - during the 67th session of the UN General Assembly, decision-makers and heads of agencies from around the world met in New York to advocate at the highest levels for the health of women and children globally and to further bolster joint efforts towards meeting the targets of the [Millennium Development Goals \(MDGs\)](#), particularly in countries that are lagging the furthest behind.

The heads of the H4+ agencies (UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO, UN Women and the World Bank) shared the progress on the country implementation of the SG's Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health. Joined by country representatives, as well as representatives of other key constituencies, partners elaborated on the vision for the next steps of the work.

Speaking at the H4 +side events Michelle Bachelet, Executive Director UN Women said that the success in improving the health of women and children depends on delivering quality medical supplies and health services. It also depends on advancing women's rights, listening to women's voices and respecting women's choices.

Ms Tamar Manuelyan Atinc, Vice President for Human Development at the World Bank announced that on October 11, the Day of the Girl Child, the World Bank will launch a financing facility for RMNCH – reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health.

To advance the Global Strategy, 57 low- and middle-income countries, 13 high-income countries, and over 100 foundations, NGOs and private sector organizations have made ambitious pledges so that women and children globally have the future they deserve

The H4+ is determined to keep up this momentum through 2015 by strengthening and building new partnerships, and have emphasized their joint commitment by issuing a joint statement.

In 2010, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon launched the [Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health](#), an unprecedented effort to prevent the unnecessary deaths of 16 million women and improve the lives of millions more by 2015. It is re-energizing the international community's efforts, and bringing together a variety of partners to deliver life-saving interventions for women and children, often the most vulnerable of all, around the world.

UN passes first-ever resolution on female genital mutilation

United Nations bans female genital mutilation

The United Nations General Assembly on December 20, 2012 unanimously passed a resolution banning the practice of Female Genital Mutilation. This significant milestone towards the ending of harmful practices and violations that constitute serious threat to the health of women and girls was taken by the 194 UN Member States, who approved five General Assembly resolutions today on advancing women's rights, including one on intensifying global efforts for the elimination of female genital mutilations (FGM).

The first of its kind, this landmark resolution aims to mobilize global efforts to end the practice, which currently affects about 100-140 million women and girls worldwide and it is estimated that an additional three million girls are at risk of being subjected to the practice globally.

The FGM resolution urges countries to condemn all harmful practices that affect women and girls, in particular female genital mutilations, and to take all necessary measures, including enforcing legislation, awareness-raising and allocating sufficient resources to protect women and girls from this form of violence. It calls for special attention to protect and support women and girls who have been subjected to female genital mutilations, and those at risk, including refugee women and women migrants.

As requested in the Resolution, UN Women will continue working to protect and promote the rights of women and girls against female genital mutilations and to end this harmful practice engaging all parts of society, including governments, civil society, private sector and others

Women's Representation

Women shareholders in Jamaica's board rooms are ready to achieve their fair share



In a world where business is still dominated by men, a new coalition in Jamaica is working to open up boardrooms to women and work together to find their leadership potential.

Of the 53 companies listed on the Jamaica Stock Exchange (JSE), women make up just 17.36 per cent of board directors, with ten of the companies having no women on their boards at all. Addressing this lack of equity at its very root, a coalition of women in Jamaica has chosen to act.

“Given the ability of many females – and given the educational statistics, – it begs the question: why is there not more female representation on the boards?” says Marlene Street Forest, General Manager, Jamaica Stock Exchange. “The idea is to highlight the women and their capability, and also the fact that they are willing to serve.”

51 % Coalition, a dynamic advocacy group, is calling for more women to buy shares in private sector companies, and offering training on corporate and public sector governance to help them better realize their economic potential. The trainings also address the importance of a gender focus. The classes look at how national development can affect women differently; how women rank in terms of wealth creation and global research findings on the positive impact of women on boards.

The group includes women business owners, private sector organizations, non-profit organizations such as the Women’s Resource and Outreach Centre (WROC) and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung for Jamaica and the Eastern Caribbean. The coalition aims to use the legitimacy of shareholding to lobby for greater gender balance and inclusion in board rooms and annual general meetings across Jamaica.

The work of the coalition stems from its programme on women’s transformational leadership in Jamaica. Supported by UN Women and running since 2011, it advocates for the use of quotas to increase women’s participation in governance and decision-making, politically, economically or socially. The coalition, led by the WROC members promotes quotas as the fastest track to gender equity, but centre members are also keen to show women the empowerment and change that they can drive as shareholders.

At the stock exchange, Forest notes that this subtle approach has taken root. Meetings have taken place between 51 % Coalition members and listed company representatives, with the group invited to make presentations to the Chief Executive Officers of these companies.

She notes that the Jamaican Stock Exchange has invited articles by coalition members on its website, one of the most visited sites in the country. “We do not believe a woman or man should be on a board solely because they are male or female but rather that they can contribute based on the requirements of the board and contribute to the effective functioning of the board,” says Forest.

Though no deadline has been set for achieving a gender balance on boards, some results are already evident. At the stock exchange's Best Practices Awards for good governance in the industry next year, it will introduce a score-card for companies that are moving towards gender diversity

UN Climate Conference adopts a decision to enhance gender balance in negotiations

The 18th Conference of the Parties (COP-18) to the [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change](#) (UNFCCC) held in Doha, Qatar, concluded on 8 December with a celebrated decision to strive towards gender balance in climate negotiations, strengthening a goal established a decade ago by the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol to include women in talks. Set to expire this year, COP-18 concludes by extending the Kyoto Protocol for eight more years, extending the time to reach a universal climate change agreement.

The decision on "Promoting gender balance and improving the participation of women in UNFCCC negotiations and in the representation of Parties in bodies established pursuant to the Convention or the Kyoto Protocol," takes a significant step in advancing gender-sensitive climate policy by ensuring that women's voices are heard.

UN Women Deputy Executive Director Lakshmi Puri attended the Conference to demonstrate UN Women's commitment to ensuring that gender equality and women's empowerment are key considerations in climate change policy and norm-setting. She hailed the decision as a "landmark achievement" for women's representation and leadership in the global governance framework.

UN Women's engagement with Parties and civil society partners, most notably the Mary Robinson Foundation for Climate Justice, played a critical role in this decision. The Entity provided substantive input to the initial draft text, which was ultimately tabled by the European Union under the Subsidiary Body for Implementation. UN Women subsequently worked to ensure broad and sustained support for the decision through active outreach and expert technical advice to Parties, when requested, throughout negotiations and until its adoption.

A special edition on 'Women and Climate Change' published in [Outreach](#), a multi-stakeholder daily publication led by the Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future, features a jointly written article by Lakshmi Puri, UN Women Deputy Executive Director, and Mary Robinson, President of the Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice.

Beyond the negotiations, UN Women is contributing to and participating in various events on women and gender equality, including UNFCCC's *Momentum for Change Initiative*, where a new pillar on "Women for Results" will be launched. The project will showcase women as an essential part of the solution in addressing climate change. Ms. Puri will be participating in the launch of the initiative and in an interactive panel that follows.

Women on Boards: European Commission proposes 40% objective



On November 14, 2012 the European Commission has taken action to break the glass ceiling that continues to bar female talent from top positions in Europe's biggest companies. The Commission has proposed legislation with the aim of attaining a 40% objective of the under-represented sex in non-executive board-member positions in publicly listed companies, with the exception of small and medium enterprises. Currently, boards are dominated by one gender: 85% of non-executive board members and 91.1% of executive board members are men, while women make up 15% and 8.9% respectively.

Despite an intense public debate and some voluntary initiatives at national and European level, the situation has not changed significantly in recent years: an incremental average increase of the number of women on boards of just 0.6 percentage points per year has been recorded since 2003.

The Commission is today responding to the calls from the European Parliament which, with an overwhelming majority, has repeatedly called for legislation on equality between women and men in business leadership, notably in its resolutions of [6 July 2011](#) and [13 March 2012](#).

The proposed Directive sets an objective of a 40% presence of the under-represented sex among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges. Companies which have a lower share (less than 40%) of the under-represented sex among the non-executive directors will be required to make appointments to those positions on the basis of a comparative analysis of the qualifications of each candidate, by applying clear, gender-neutral and unambiguous criteria. Given equal qualification, priority shall be given to the under-represented sex. The objective of attaining at least 40% membership of the under-represented sex for the non-executive positions should thus be met by 2020 while public undertakings – over which public authorities exercise a dominant influence – will have two years less, until 2018. The proposal is expected to apply to around 5 000 listed companies in the European Union. It does not apply to small and medium-sized enterprises (companies with less than 250 employees and an annual worldwide turnover not exceeding 50 million EUR) or non-listed companies.

José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, said: *"Today, with this proposal, the European Commission is answering the strong call of the European Parliament for EU action to bring about gender equality in corporate boardrooms. Today, we are asking large listed companies across Europe to show that they are serious when it comes to gender equality in economic decision-making. At my initiative, the Commission has significantly strengthened the presence of female Commissioners among its members, with one third of Commissioners being women."*

For details see: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-12-1205_en.htm

UN Women partners with private sector firms in India to strengthen women's role in business

December 20, 2012 New Delhi and Bangalore, India — Wipro Limited has pledged its support to strengthening women's role in the organization and has joined six other leading Indian firms as a signatory to the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs). CARE India, Global Compact Network and UN Women are leading the charge in India to encourage private sector companies to become signatories to these principles. The consortium will conduct research to identify gaps within current corporate policies that limit women's participation and involvement in the workplace.

"Equal treatment of women and men is not just the right thing to do – it is also good for business. To move forward, we must acknowledge the power of women, as contributors, market drivers and consumers, especially in the private sector," said Anne F. Stenhammer, Regional Programme Director, South Asia Sub-Regional Office, UN Women.

"We have always been in the forefront of promoting gender equality. It is imperative that organizations prove to be equal opportunity employers both in spirit and practice. At Wipro, we make sure there is no gender bias. And this helps us do business better," said T.K Kurien, CEO, IT Business and Executive Director, Wipro Limited.

The six signatories in India have committed to creating women friendly workplaces, ensure equal opportunities for women and invest in skills training. "The move will encourage others to follow suit and ensure better working conditions and opportunities for women. Today India has a strong glimmer of hope in successfully advancing the women's empowerment agenda in the private sector," added Ms. Stenhammer.

It is essential that the private sector in India, along with civil society organizations and the Government play a role in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment nationally. According to a McKinsey report, *Women Matter 2011: An Asian Perspective*, Harnessing Female Talent to raise corporate performance, India has the greatest gender gap between university graduates and entry-level professionals: 42 per cent of graduates are female, but only 29 per cent of entry-level professionals are female.

India's declining women's labour force participation rate, which is currently 24 per cent (NSSO, Govt. of India, 2009-10), is one of the lowest in the world. In such a scenario, businesses need to proactively implement policies that ensure the inclusion of women's talents, skills and energies — from executive offices to the factory floors and the supply chain.

Since the inception of the WEPs, more than 466 companies globally have signed the UN Women CEO Statement of Support and have set their own priorities, goals and programmatic approaches to achieving their own mandates.

In Your Interest

UN Women adopts Paper-Smart initiative for its Executive Board sessions

In response to the Secretary-General's call to move towards a paperless UN system and reduce the organization's costs and carbon footprint, UN Women went Paper-Smart at its Executive Board session from 28-30 November, 2012 – and the initiative is to be replicated during the [First Regular Session of the UN Women Executive Board](#), 23-24 January, 2013.

In 2012, UN Women saved an estimated USD 100,000 for that Executive Board session alone, which will be re-directed to improving lives of women and girls at the country level.

Statistics show that the Executive Board Paper-Smart web pages got about 1,200 visitors, from several countries in the five regions during the Board session. This enhanced the transparency of the Board

proceedings while preventing the copying and printing by UN Women and partners of hundreds of thousands of paper.

The Paper-Smart Board session enabled multilingual and real-time access to documents and statements from Member States as well as active participation in New York, capitals and UN Women offices all around the world.

Member States expressed appreciation for UN Women's leadership in ensuring that Board sessions are run in a manner that saves financial resources— mostly voluntary contributions— and puts into practice recommendations of the [Rio+20 Summit](#) on sustainable development.

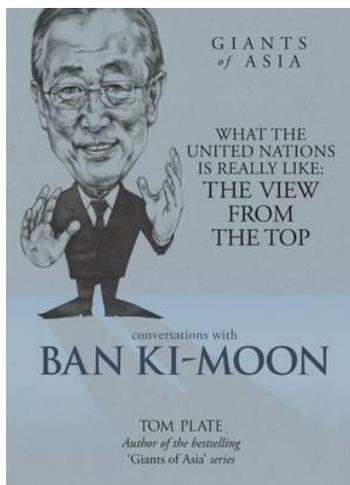
The Paper-Smart Services were provided to the session by the ISPS (Integrated Sustainable Paper-Smart Services) Secretariat of the Meetings and Publishing Division, Department of the General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM).

Other Executive Boards of Funds and Programmes are joining the environmentally friendly initiative. Already it has been agreed that the Joint Meeting of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN Women and WFP will be held in a Paper-Smart manner in February 2013.

Recommended Reading

Conversations With Ban Ki-Moon: What The United Nations Is Really Like: The View From The Top

By Tom Plate



Only eight people have been privileged to hold the job of Secretary General since the United Nations' founding in 1945. And only one of them has ever told the inside story of the UN while still holding that special office. That man is Ban Ki-moon, the veteran diplomat and former star foreign minister of South Korea now in his second term as SG. Because he understands that the UN is in crisis and because he fears the reasons for this are not widely understood he believes it is time to unveil the truth about the organization and explain why its failure would be a catastrophe. The result, via unprecedented conversations with American journalist Tom Plate, is a deeply revealing book about the kinds of issues and challenges whose resolutions (or lack thereof) will in fact determine the future of the world.

Closing the Gender Gap: Act Now – OECD REPORT

Lack of support for motherhood is hurting women's career prospects, despite gains in education and employment, says OECD in its new report 'Closing the Gender Gap: Act Now' released on December 17, 2012.



The report says that gains in female education attainment have contributed to a worldwide increase in women's participation in the labour force, but considerable gaps remain in working hours, conditions of employment and earnings. In OECD countries men earn on average 16% more than women in similar full-time jobs. At 21%, the gender gap is even higher at the top of the pay scale, suggesting the continued presence of a glass ceiling. Even though there has been progress in narrowing the gender gap in pay, especially in employment, this is not enough and much remains to be done in many countries.

The impact of pay inequality is dramatic over a woman's lifetime. Having worked less in formal employment, but having carried out much more unpaid work at home, many women will retire on lower pensions and see out their final years in poverty. Living an average of nearly 6 years longer than men, women over 65 are today more than one and a half times more likely to live in poverty than men in the same age bracket.

"Closing the gender gap must be a central part of any strategy to create more sustainable economies and inclusive societies," OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría said at the launch of the report at the OECD Gender Forum in Paris. "The world's population is ageing and this challenge can only be mastered if all the talent available is mobilised. Governments should make further progress in the access and quality of education for all, improve tax and benefits systems, and make childcare more affordable, in order to help women contribute more to economic growth and a fairer society."

Gender gaps are pervasive in all walks of economic life and imply large losses in terms of foregone productivity and living standards to the individuals concerned and the economy. This new OECD report focuses on how best to close these gender gaps under four broad headings: 1) Gender equality, social norms and public policies; and gender equality in 2) education; 3) employment and 4) entrepreneurship.

Key policy messages are as follows:

- Greater gender equality in educational attainment has a strong positive effect on economic growth;
- Stereotyping needs to be addressed in educational choices at school from a young age. For example, adapt teaching strategies and material to increase engagement of boys in reading and of girls in maths and science; encourage more girls to follow science, engineering and maths courses in higher education and seek employment in these fields;
- Good and affordable childcare is a key factor for better gender equality in employment. But change also has to happen at home as the bulk of housework and caring is left to women in many

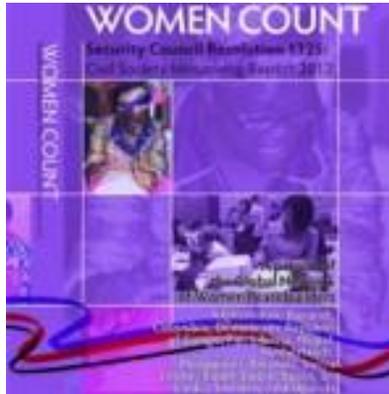
countries. Policy can support such change, for example, through parental leave policies that explicitly include fathers.

- Support policies for women-owned enterprises need to target all existing firms, not just start-ups and small enterprises. Equal access to finance for male and female entrepreneurs needs to be assured.

Available at

http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/close-the-gender-gap-now_9789264179370-en

Women Count – Security Council Resolution 1325: Civil Society Monitoring Report 2012



In-country and Global Monitoring of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325

Women Count 2012 – Security Council Resolution 1325: Civil Society Monitoring Report was launched at the Canadian Mission to the United Nations in New York on November 6, 2012, during the 12th anniversary of UNSCR 1325. In its third year, the report was initiated in 2010 at the tenth anniversary of the Resolution 1325 and the research is undertaken by the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP).

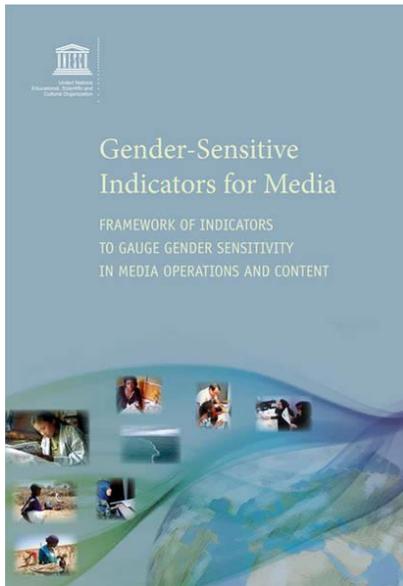
Through its in-country and global monitoring 1325, GNWP contributes to the call for greater accountability by all actors, particularly national governments. The project aims to build the capacity of women's organizations in monitoring policy implementation; develop/identify indicators and benchmarks for monitoring progress and results of 1325 implementation; and conduct in-country monitoring from the perspectives of women's groups and civil society.

The 2012 report provides a global snapshot of the findings of the in-country monitoring of participating countries and individual country reports. The report looks at women's participation in peace-building in 15 countries, from developing nations like Afghanistan, Nepal and Uganda, to the industrialized countries of Netherlands, Spain and Sweden, where involvement in security-sector roles, for example, is measured.

In 2012, the *Women Count* report has also sharpened the country specific analysis and recommendations with a focus on emerging trends in each of the participating countries. This is mainly to enable GNWP members and other partners to use their findings as advocacy tools in pushing for the implementation of the recommendations within their respective countries. GNWP also intends to come up with policy briefs for each country, highlighting the women, peace and security profile; main findings and specific recommendations in a reader-friendly format to be used as an advocacy tool both at the local and global levels. In addition to this, the report will have a directory of women, peace and security actors in each country which is one of the gaps often encountered in the women, peace and security environment.

UNESCO - Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Media:

A framework of indicators to gauge gender sensitivity in media operations and content



UNESCO continues to be on the forefront of the drive for gender equality. This commitment is at the heart of Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Media (GSIM) prepared in collaboration with the International Federation of Journalists.

The purpose of this **GSIM tool** is to facilitate gender equality and women empowerment in and through media of all forms, irrespective of the technology used. The tool addresses topics related to internal media policy and strategies, as well as to capacity building. It is versatile as with it media organizations can:

- assess their gender sensitivity,
- formulate necessary policies and strategies to address gaps detected,
- set measureable goals, and
- monitor progress towards desired goals.

The GSIM tool also informs training needs as it contains all the salient elements of gender and media.

The GSIM tool is a non-prescriptive set of indicators, designed for adaptation and use particularly by media of all forms. It is also relevant and useful to citizens' media groups advocating for gender equality, media associations, journalists' unions and clubs, media self-regulatory bodies, government entities, academic institutions and research centres such as journalism, communication, technology schools and universities.

Annexed to the GSIM tool is a set of "self-assessment" case studies carried out by partner broadcasting associations/unions. They provide a snapshot of gender mainstreaming efforts within selected media houses representing all regions of the world.

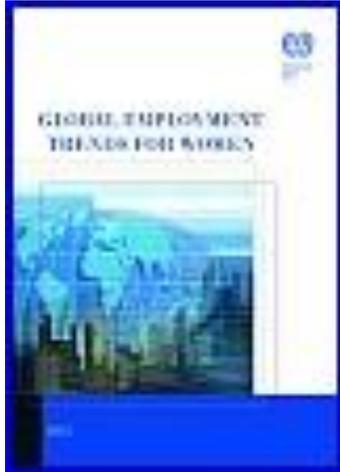
Access at GSIM tool at

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/publications-and-communication-materials/publications/full-list/gender-sensitive-indicators-for-media-framework-of-indicators-to-gauge-gender-sensitivity-in-media-operations-and-content/>

ILO report on Global Employment Trends for Women 2012

Reversal of gains in women's employment

Women are still more likely to be unemployed than men around the world. That's one of the conclusions of the ILO's Global Employment Trends for Women 2012. And the report also found that, while the numbers vary from region to region, the steady progress being made by women in the workplace slowed, stopped or reversed as a result of the global economic crisis.



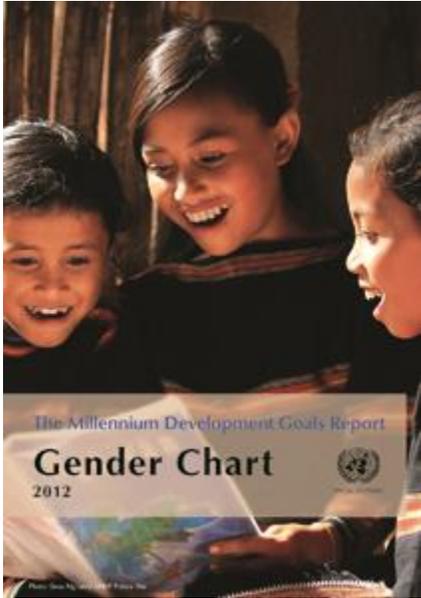
Part of the Global Employment Trends series, this publication delivers the most current information on emerging trends and key challenges facing women in labour markets around the world.

The Global Employment Trends for Women 2012 report launched on December 15, 2012 focuses on the gender dimensions of labour underutilization and gender inequalities. As the global jobs crisis continues unabated, the report analyses trends in employment opportunities and the extent of unemployment, but it is also concerned with developments in employment quality. To this end, the report analyses recent trends and gender gaps in different employment categories, including sectoral and occupational segregation in labour markets. It also illustrates the main factors at the household level that influence female labour market outcomes, presents examples of good practices and highlights key policy areas for reducing gender-based inequalities around the world.

Women face particular challenges both in terms of the sectors in which they wish to work as well as the conditions they work under. Promoting gender equality and empowering women is vital to achieving decent work for all and finally stamping out the discrimination that has plagued labour markets. This publication considers a wide variety of quantitative data collected from around the globe, organizing it into a format that projects the causes and effects of gender-related employment trends. It also analyses policy considerations that affect gender and employment.

This report was produced by the ILO in collaboration with UN Women.

The Millennium Development Goals Report: Gender Chart 2012



How women and girls are faring: Charting progress on the Millennium Development Goals

In 2012, with three years left for the 2015 deadline for the MDGs, women continue to be poorer than men on a global scale. More girls are in primary school, but big gaps remain in secondary school, and the poor are still less likely to attend. And while women now account for nearly 20 per cent of all parliamentarians around the world, it will take more than 40 years to reach equal representation at this pace. These are just some examples of how women are faring in global progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), detailed in the [2012 Gender Chart](#).

With colourful graphs and striking statistics, this just-launched addendum to the UN Secretary General's 2012 Millennium Development Goals Report focuses specifically on Goal 3, which calls for gender equality and women's empowerment and also tracks the impact of gender equality on the achievement of each of the remaining seven MDGs.

By looking at the other goals from a gender perspective, the MDGs Chart also emphasizes the inter-linkages between the goals and the important role that gender equality and women's empowerment plays in development and the achievement of all of the MDGs.

Jointly produced by UN Women and the UN Statistics Division for the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on MDGs Indicators, this publication aims to chart progress towards the time-bound targets set by world leaders in 2000

Gender pay gap drops, but not for the right reasons

Global Wage Report

The ILO Global Wage Report 2012/2013 launched in December 2012 says that the gap between women's and men's pay has declined in most countries but not for the right reasons. It warns that in some cases this may just mean that men are worse off now than before the crisis. For example, men worked in sectors that were hardest hit by the crisis and also worked fewer hours, which helped to narrow the pay gap. And in some Middle Eastern countries, few women are employed and those who are, earn more than men.

EU REPORT: The Impact of the Economic Crisis on the Situation of Women and Men And on Gender Equality Policies in Europe

Have men and women been impacted differently by the crisis in Europe? On 19 December 2012 the European Commission published a report on the consequences of the crisis on women and men from a social and economic point of view. This report proposes a thorough analysis as regards employment, poverty and social inclusion (including material deprivation, education, housing, health and long-term care), covering 33 European countries between 2005 and 2012.

This report assesses the impact of this crisis on the situation of women and men in Europe and on gender equality policies. This is important as economic crises are deeply gendered. Past experience cannot provide sufficient insight into the gender impact of this crisis as the position of women has changed considerably since the last major recession. This crisis offers opportunities for radical change, including a potential to advance equality for women and men. However, the crisis also poses challenges where gender equality may be seen as an issue only for the good times.

This report is a product of the Expert Group on Gender Equality and Employment - EGGE and the Gender Equality, Social Inclusion, Health and Long-term care - EGGSI expert networks of the European Commission. It covers twenty seven Member States, the EEA-EFTA countries and three candidate countries: Turkey, Croatia and FYROM. The core reference period for analysis of the labour market impact is the (nearly) four years between the second quarter of 2008 - when the crisis technically started for the EU as a whole¹ - and the first quarter of 2012 - the latest quarter for which Eurostat data is available at the time of writing. Analysis of the social impact extends over the period between 2005 and 2010.

For details: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/enege_crisis_report_dec_2012_final_en.pdf

2012 Catalyst Census: Fortune 500 Appendix 2—Companies With 25% Or More Women Directors

The *2012 Catalyst Census: Fortune 500* annual report provides critical statistics to gauge women's advancement into leadership and highlights the gender diversity gap. Appendix 2 includes a list of *Fortune 500* companies with 25% or more women directors.

The *2012 Catalyst Census: Fortune 500 Women Board Directors* provides critical statistics to gauge women's advancement into leadership and highlights the gender diversity gap

http://www.catalyst.org/knowledge/browse-knowledge-center/?title=&keys=&op=&field_research_type_tid%5B%5D=29&title_1=&date_filter%5Bvalue%5D%5Bdate%5D=&date_filter_1%5Bvalue%5D%5Bdate%5D=#search-results

Recommended Websites

The OECD launched its new Gender Equality website in December 2012. The Gender Data Portal includes 40 selected indicators shedding light on gender inequalities in education, employment and entrepreneurship -- the focus areas of the OECD Gender Initiative. Data and metadata for all the indicators are easily and freely accessible and displayed through interactive visualizations. Over the next year, OECD plans to expand the country coverage and add new indicators, notably on time use and entrepreneurship. Access the site at www.oecd.org/gender

INFO

Employment opportunities

You can find a monthly list of vacancy announcements

at <http://www.unwomen.org/about-us/employment>

You can read **Network** online at

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/fpnetworks.htm>

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