

Forum:	United Nations Economic and Social Council
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Introduction

Gender inequality has long been one of the most prolific and endemic problems within the global society. Despite continuous global and domestic efforts to enhance gender equality, gender-based stereotypes and disparities remain deep-seated in many fields of life. Along with households, communities, and media, workplaces and political institutions are places in which gender inequality has consistently been observed. Discrimination in work and political institutions take on different forms; some are more conspicuous than others, and some are harder to detect. Either way, the global society is responsible for combatting such gender discrimination as gender equality is a fundamental human right as well as an essential component in creating “bonds of unity.” With women accounting for approximately half of the world’s population with equal potential to impose change, it is essential that women are also included in every aspect of society to uphold human rights, reach peace and security, and achieve development. Integrating women and uniting them into our workforce will further empower societies by providing more wisdom, skill, and knowledge.

The causes of gender inequality are diverse and often deeply rooted in our society. One such cause is social norms.¹ Throughout history, society has proceeded to treat the differences between men and women by assigning them different roles in society. For example, women in many societies have been more associated with household work, cooking, and caring for babies. Men, on the other hand, have been more involved with outside work and work requiring power. Role distribution has also led to the characterization of people based on gender, also known as gender stereotyping.² Individuals are assumed and expected to have specific attributes, characters, or roles solely based on their genders. Although the distribution of roles may initially have been done to give members of society a fair amount of work based on their physical or mental capabilities, it has proceeded to become a type of discrimination as people are expected and forced to act in accordance with the already set gender roles and stereotypes. In a modern-day context, especially in workplaces and political institutions, these gender stereotypes have

¹ Soken-Huberty, Emmaline. “10 Causes of Gender Inequality.” Human Rights Careers, May 1, 2022. <https://www.humanrightscareers.com/issues/causes-gender-inequality/>.

² “Gender Stereotyping.” OHCHR. Accessed July 2, 2022. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/women/gender-stereotyping>.

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evolved to act as barriers to entering specific fields or positions as people are underrated or overrated. In worse cases, gender is considered a qualification, making access itself impossible. With either no women or too less women within the system, they are naturally underrepresented with not enough chances to voice out their rights and needs.

Gender inequality is also intensified due to uneven access to education.³ UNICEF estimates 129 million girls worldwide to be out of school. 32 million are subject to primary education, 30 million to lower-secondary school age, and 67 million to upper-secondary school. On the other hand, boys have relatively more access to education. In fact, only 49 percent of countries are said to have gender parity in primary education. The difference in access to secondary education is even greater, as 42 percent of countries have reached gender parity in lower secondary education, and a mere 24 percent have done so in upper secondary education. Lack of education and the due lack of skill results in fewer opportunities for employment, career selection, political representation, or even bodily autonomy.

Lack of legal protection also hinders women's entrance into workplaces and political institutes. The World Bank research claims that more than one billion women remain legally unprotected from domestic sexual violence or domestic economic violence. These violations keep women from fully exercising their freedom and abilities. Moreover, the lack of strong legal protections against harassment happening in workplaces, schools, and public areas keep women from actively participating in public activities. Because workplaces are considered unsafe, women are forced to compromise on their goals and abilities and stay away from their dreams.

Women's need to take a leave in cases of pregnancies and birth giving is also a crucial factor that hinders women from pursuing their careers. Instead of hiring women who need to leave work to give birth, companies are more incentivized to hire men who do not have to leave for reproductive reasons. Maternity or parental need pays is another reason why corporations prefer to hire men. Women themselves also feel pressure in returning back to their places after they take leave as it is harder to find a new job with age and a career break. Excessive workloads from both home and work are also a reason why women feel pressured to keep on working.

Historically, efforts to reach gender equality in work and politics are relatively recent. Women used to have significantly smaller pay than their male counterparts, were excluded from labor unions, and were not allowed to enter professional fields such as lawyers and doctors. In some countries, women were

³ Soken-Huberty, Emmaline. "10 Causes of Gender Inequality." Human Rights Careers, May 1, 2022. <https://www.humanrightscareers.com/issues/causes-gender-inequality/>.

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forced to take up domestic roles in order to claim the benefits of the domestic welfare system. However, as the two World Wars hit the global economy, women's integration into the workforce accelerated. One effort to extend women's economic pursuits was the National Service Act (no 2). This Act recognized the legality of the conscription of women in workplaces. This resulted in extended nursery facilities and childcare welfare systems which helped women feel less burdened from household activities. The Equal Pay Act(1970) helped recognize women's right to equal pay and benefits and served as a foundation for the elimination of structural barriers that kept women receiving lower pay rates.

Political rights, along with economic rights, have long been regarded as male-centric activities. However, through collective efforts such as the suffrage movement and the establishment of the National Women's Political Caucus women in some states were granted acceptance into the political field. Subsequent actions to address new problems that uprose with women's integration into the field, such as sexual harassment, have been one of the core bases of now-day women's political participation. Nonetheless, many studies show that women are yet discriminated against and underrepresented within the political field. Studies prove, that on average women have less or believe to have less knowledge of politics than men.⁴ Reports claim that unequal access to resources like time, money, and networks still blocks the influx of women to the political realm.

The United Nations has continuously made effort to reach gender equality in all aspects of society. The UN Charter states gender equality is a basic human right. In adherence to this article, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) established a sub-organization, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) to oversee policies regarding gender equality and women's advancement.⁵ This commission played a big role in the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, by ensuring that gender-neutral language was used in all of its contents. In 1979, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted by the General assembly. Its explicit definition of discrimination against women has been an introduction to all numerous agendas adopted to solve various forms of discrimination. The past decade has also seen many efforts introduced to achieve gender equality. Many organizations solely dedicated to women, sustainable development goals that stress the importance of equal gender representation, efforts to eliminate violence against women, and enacting international days have helped spread recognition of the status of women.

The advancement of gender equality is critical in creating a healthy society, reducing poverty, and

⁴ "Women in Politics in the EU - European Parliament." Accessed July 16, 2022.

[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/689345/EPRS_BRI\(2021\)689345_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/689345/EPRS_BRI(2021)689345_EN.pdf).

⁵ "Gender Equality." United Nations. United Nations. Accessed July 16, 2022.

<https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/gender-equality>.

ensuring safety.⁶ Gender stereotypes and gender roles affect everyone regardless of gender. Men can also be victims of gender inequality, are expected to be the breadwinner of a family, and are burdened by economic pressures. More intellectual resources in the workforce mean more opportunities for improvement in companies and governments. Less conflict revolving around gender issues leads to a safer society and security. The United Nations must continue to find more effective solutions and counter methods to ensure women's empowerment.

Definition of Key Terms

Gender Role

Gender roles refer to social and behavioral standards that are generally accepted as being proper for people of particular sex within a given culture. These frequently determine the conventional duties and obligations given to men, women, boys, and girls. Household structure, resource availability, specific effects of the global economy, the incidence of conflict or disaster, and other locally pertinent elements like ecological circumstances are frequently determinants of gender-specific roles.

Gender equality

Gender equality is the idea that girls, boys, and women all have equal rights, opportunities, and opportunities to realize their full potential, uphold their human rights, and participate in (and benefit from) political, social, economic, and cultural development. Therefore, gender equality is the equal value placed by society on the similarities and differences between men and women, as well as the roles they play. The foundation of it is that men and women are equal partners in the family, the community, and society. Equality does not imply that men and women will become equal, but rather that each gender's rights, obligations, and opportunities will be independent of the gender they were given at birth.

Gender equality implies that all people are free to develop their unique talents and make decisions without being constrained by stereotypes and prejudices about gender roles. It also implies that the interests, needs, and priorities of both men and women, as well as children and adolescents, are taken into account. Gender equality is a human rights issue that is both a requirement and a sign of sustainable, people-centered development.

⁶ “Gender Equality: Why It Matters 1 in 3 - Un.org.” Accessed July 16, 2022.
<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Goal-5.pdf>.

Gender Equity

Gender Equity is the act of treating everyone equally, including men, women, boys, and girls, and, most crucially, in terms of outcomes and results. Temporary special measures may be used as part of gender equity to make up for past or current bias or discrimination. It refers to equitable differential treatment that actively counteracts bias or disadvantage brought on by gender roles, norms, or other sex-related issues. Equity makes sure that everyone has an equal chance, from the outset to the finish line, including men, women, and children. It is about treating both sexes equally and justly, taking into account the differing needs of men and women, cultural obstacles, and historical injustice against the group.

Gender Gap

Gender gap is a term that refers to the disproportionate and statistical differences between men and women, as well as between boys and girls, especially as they relate to the achievement of development goals, access to resources, and participation levels. There is gender inequality when there is a gender disparity.

Glass ceiling

Glass ceiling refers to the situation when a qualified individual who wants to move up the organizational hierarchy is prevented from doing so at a higher level owing to prejudice, most frequently based on sexism or racism. Thus, the term "glass ceiling" alludes to vertical discrimination, which most usually targets women in the workplace. Ultimately, it can be characterized as subtle but persistent impediments or obstacles that prevent talented women from obtaining top or senior management roles and are supported by discriminatory, conscious, and unconscious practices, and attitudes.

Structural discrimination

Structural discrimination is a type of discrimination brought on by laws that, despite appearing to be neutral, disproportionately harms some social groups.

Gender socialization

Gender socialization is the process by which boys, girls, and women learn social roles based on their sex, leading to distinct behaviors and forming different expectations and attitudes by gender. One

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illustration is the idea that girls and women perform more domestic tasks like cooking and cleaning while boys and men perform more work outside the home. Inequality is sometimes a clear result of gender roles.

Gender stereotyping

Gender stereotyping is assigning persons based on their gender-specific traits, qualities, and roles. Gender stereotypes can be harmful (i.e., males can't change diapers, women are lousy drivers) or positive (i.e., men are stronger, women are better caregivers). When gender stereotypes restrict a person's options in life, such as their course of study and career, they become damaging. When assumptions about a person's handicap, race, or socioeconomic standing are included, they combine stereotypes about their gender.

Gender blindness

Gender blindness is the disregard for the fact that gender-specific social, cultural, economic, and political circumstances and backgrounds determine the duties and obligations of men/boys and women/girls. Gender-blind projects, programs, policies, and attitudes perpetuate the status quo and do not take into consideration these various roles and unique requirements. They also do not contribute to changing the unequal structure of gender relations.

Gender effect

Gender effect is a phrase used to describe the knowledge that investing in females has profound consequences on the girls, numerous benefits for society, and serves as a catalyst for sustainable development. In an essay for UNICEF's State of the World's Children 2011, the head of the Nike Foundation claimed that when a girl in the developing world receives seven or more years of schooling, she marries four years later. The future earnings of girls increase by 10–20% with each additional year of primary education. According to studies from 2003, women and girls who earn money invest 90% of it back into their families, compared to men and boys who only contribute 30–40%. Additionally, studies have demonstrated a positive relationship between mothers' educational attainment and their children's health, showing true gender effect.

Timeline of Key Events

19th Century: Woman Suffrage

Woman suffrage means the right of women to vote in national or local elections by law. Women were long excluded from voting rights since ancient civilizations. The question of women's voting rights finally arose in the 19th century, especially in the United States and the United Kingdom. In Great Britain,

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the action for women's suffrage started with Mary Wollstonecraft's book, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792). Intellectuals such as John Stuart Mill also took up this claim and the Reform Bill was signed. Further efforts led to the Representation of the People Act where women over 30 were granted equal voting rights, followed by acts to lower the voting age to be equal to men.

June 26, 1945: UN Charter

The UN Charter outlines the rights and duties of the Member States and establishes the United Nations' organs and procedures. Overall, it attempts to be a center for harmonizing the actions of all nations that signed the UN Charter; during this process, the UN also focused on gender equality and women's rights in their Charter. The UN has supported women's rights since the Organization's founding Charter. "To achieve international co-operation ... in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion" is one of the goals of the UN stated in Article 1 of its Charter.

June 21, 1946: Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)

The primary intergovernmental organization in the world devoted solely to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment is the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). In accordance with ECOSOC decision 11(II) of June 21, 1946, it became a functioning commission of the council. The CSW plays a crucial and big role in advancing women's rights, capturing the realities of women's lives around the globe, and establishing international norms for gender equality and women's empowerment.

December 10, 1949: Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a key document in the development of human rights is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). It is widely acknowledged as having inspired and paved the way for the adoption of more than 70 human rights treaties, which are still in use today on a permanent basis at both the global and regional levels. It was written by representatives with diverse legal and cultural backgrounds from all regions of the world. The UN General Assembly enacted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10, 1948, incorporating gender equality into international human rights law. The foundational document in the history of human rights recognized that "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights" and that "everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, ... birth or another status."

June 10, 1963: Equal Pay Act of 1963

The Equal Pay Act of 1963 was enforced to protect the rights of both men and women so that they

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would not receive discrimination in wages, based on sex. According to this law, men and women must be paid the same when performing the same work. Same work refers to actions requiring an equal amount of skill, effort, and responsibility, and under the same working conditions. Under this law, people are also obligated to report violations that happen that go against the principle of equal pay.

September 4 – 15, 1995: Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing Conference on Women)

The Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China, was the most significant of the four conferences on women held between 1975 and 1995 because it built on the political agreements made at the three previous conferences and compiled five decades' worth of legal developments to ensure that women and men are treated equally in the law and in practice. An important turning point for the global agenda for gender equality was marked by the meeting. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was a plan for women's empowerment that was unanimously endorsed by 189 nations and is today regarded as the most important global policy statement on gender equality. Ultimately, the United Nations' four world conferences on women helped to put the issue of gender equality at the top of the international agenda in the final quarter of the 20th century. The summits brought the world together behind a set of shared goals and a practical action plan for the empowerment of women everywhere.

July 2010: Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

The United Nations General Assembly approved the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women on December 18, 1979. On September 3, 1981, the twenty-first nation approved it, and it went into effect as a global agreement. By the Convention's tenth anniversary in 1989, approximately one hundred countries had consented to abide by its rules. The United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, an organization founded in 1946 to monitor the position of women and advance women's rights, spent more than 30 years working toward the creation of the Convention. The work of the Commission has been essential in exposing all the ways in which women are not treated equally to men. The Convention plays a significant role in putting the female half of humankind at the forefront of human rights concerns among international human rights treaties. The spirit of the Convention is anchored in the objectives of the United Nations, which include reaffirming faith in fundamental human rights, the worth and dignity of each individual, and the equality of men and women in terms of their rights. The definition of equality and methods for achieving it are outlined in the current document. By accomplishing this, the Convention creates a global bill of rights for women as well as a plan of action for nations to ensure the fulfillment of those rights.

July 2010: UN Women

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The United Nations organization devoted to empowering women and promoting gender equality is called UN Women. UN Women, a global advocate for women and girls, was founded to hasten the process of addressing their needs on a global scale.

UN Women works with governments and civil society to develop the laws, policies, programs, and services necessary to guarantee that the standards are effectively implemented and truly benefit women and girls throughout the world. UN Women supports the UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality. It works internationally to bring the Sustainable Development Goals' vision of a better world for women and girls to life and supports women's equal involvement in all facets of society.

January 1, 2016: 17 Sustainable Development Goals

On January 1, 2016, the 17 Sustainable development goals were established by the United Nations. Sustainable Development Goal 5 states “Achieve equality and empower all women and girls. This goal aims to eliminate all forms of discrimination, violence, and harmful practices and instead, guarantee fair payment, effective participation, and access to health facilities and rights. A few components that the goal addresses to be subject to change and maintenance are law and legislation, gender-based violence, sexual reproductive rights, economic equality, and political representation.

Position of Key Member Nations and Other Bodies

United States

Due in major part to the COVID-19 pandemic, there are currently 3.7 million fewer women working than there were in February 2020, undoing more than 30 years of advancement in women's labor force participation. Even more female workers have cut back on hours. Many others have handled unstable employment situations and added caregiving duties, endangering their financial stability and that of their families and exposing the weakness of our caregiving infrastructure. The consequent wealth and income discrepancies between the sexes have only become larger and worsened as a result of COVID-19. While women's representation in statewide elective executive offices decreased between 2004 and 2015, it grew in state legislatures, the U.S. Senate, and the House of Representatives. The percentage of women who registered to vote was lower in the 2010/2012 elections than in the 1998/2000 elections, but the percentage of women who cast ballots rose throughout this time, indicating both progress and a lack of it in this area.

United Kingdom

In the UK, the first woman entered parliament 100 years after the first woman was granted the right to vote. Over those 100 years, a lot of progress has been done, and there are now a lot more women participating in politics both in the UK and around the world. Although women are still underrepresented in

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politics at all levels in 2018, over the past 100 years, significant advancements have been made in the legal system toward achieving representational equality in the UK and its nations. These historic regulation changes and their effect on women's representation are cause for celebration. But in order to make the process fair, rules still need to be changed, and outdated regulations might still prevent women from advancing. However, the working circumstances for women in politics have improved in the UK, both at the national and local levels of government. But it has taken longer to bring about a cultural shift, and patriarchal practices are still deeply rooted in the UK's political structures.

Russia

Women's political engagement in post-Soviet Russia continues to be a significant challenge more than fifteen years after the fall of the Soviet Union. Insights into gender relations and equality in current Russian society are crucial from the clearly unequal political representation and involvement of women and men in the Russian Federation, which also shows that this issue is still very much in need of resolution. Since 1991, women's participation in political decision-making has decreased and has remained at low levels. This trend has severe ramifications for Russian political culture and the larger society, and it has to be prominently addressed in national policy. The Russian Federation's current gender relations, like those in the other post-socialist nations of Central and Eastern Europe, have developed as a result of an odd confluence of events, reflecting a contradictory history of empowerment and repression and setting post-socialist transition nations apart from both established democracies and nations transitioning to democracy in other contexts.

China

Despite China's emphasis on boosting female political engagement and representation, there are now 42 more women deputies in the People's Congress than there were in 1994 when they were ranked 12th globally. This does not necessarily imply a fall in women's political engagement, nor does it necessarily imply a decline in the proportion of female representatives in the NPCC, but it does indicate that progress is being made more slowly than in many other nations. In recent years, rather than closing, the gender gap between women's participation in various political power structures in China and other nations has expanded. Numerous studies and books contend that Chinese women do not participate in politics to the same extent as women do in many other nations. However, there are many Chinese women who have left their mark on the Chinese political scene, and there are also many organizations that constantly attempt to convey women's views and problems to the government, proposing solutions in the process.

France

In French politics, women have traditionally been underrepresented. French women have only had the right to vote and the ability to hold the public office since 1944, much later than in many other nations.

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For 50 years, there were very few women in elected positions in France. Women made for 5% of the National Assembly deputies in 1945. Although women made up 53% of the electorate in 1996, they still made up only 6% of députés. Following the legislative elections in 1997, women now make up about 11% of deputies but only 5.9% of senators. This level is lower than that of all other European countries; not only this, but women are much less represented at the local level. Only 8% of French majors were female just before the most recent municipal elections, compared to 2.3 % in 1977, and the majority of them were in villages with fewer than 700 residents.

India

According to research from the World Bank Group, India has “one of the lowest female labor participation rates in the world.”⁷ Despite the fact that women account for approximately 48 percent of the Indian population, less than one-third of the women population (15 years or older) are estimated to be participating in the labor force. The main causes are suspected to be high female child mortality rates and relatively low literacy rates. In fact, over 239,000 girls are estimated to die before reaching 5, and 35 percent of women are estimated to be illiterate. Such barriers have kept India’s women from entering the labor workforce. Female entrepreneurship is also very limited, as a number of structural barriers remain that keep women from opening their own businesses. One biggest barrier is the difficulty to access credit which hinders women’s ability to gather money to finance a new business. Gender wage disparity also is a chronic issue in India as seen in research on wage earnings for regular salaried employees. The results show that males get paid up to 63% more than their female counterparts.⁸ Women's political participation also remains stagnant, as can be seen in the drop in the number of women ministers from 23.1 percent in 2019 and 9.1 percent in 2021⁹. Politics is still considered a social sphere for men, and women are often discouraged to participate in politics.

Kuwait

Many of Kuwait’s laws still treat women as dependents of men. The constitution of Kuwait, although highlighting the principle of equality and non-discrimination based on race, origin, and language, it does not mention gender specifically. It was only in 2005 that women in Kuwait were allowed to vote and run for public office. Although this was a milestone in women's rights in Kuwait, not many women

⁷ World Bank Group. “Working for Women in India.” World Bank. World Bank Group, September 13, 2021. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2019/03/08/working-for-women-in-india>.

⁸ “Women and Work in India: Trends and Analysis.” India Briefing News, April 18, 2022. <https://www.india-briefing.com/news/women-and-work-in-india-trends-and-analysis-24758.html/>.

⁹ (www.dw.com), Deutsche Welle. “Why Are There Few Women in Indian Politics?: DW: 11.03.2022.” DW.COM. Accessed July 16, 2022. <https://www.dw.com/en/why-are-there-few-women-in-indian-politics/a-61098984>.

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stepped up to take the roles and their contributions remained limited¹⁰. However, Kuwait is actively taking measures to support gender equality and empower women. The World Bank Kuwait Country Engagement Framework was approved by the Kuwaiti government, supporting efforts to increase women's opportunities in the labor force. Another key policy called Vision 2035, or New Kuwait aims to increase women's engagement in the labor market with equal opportunities with men¹¹. Nonetheless, obstacles still remain those keep women from integrating fully into society such as occupational segregation.

Sweden

Sweden has been a strong advocate for gender equality. In fact, the Swedish government calls itself the “feminist government,” stressing its dedication to promoting gender equality. Swiss has a high women participation rate in politics, as can be seen in the number of women in their national parliaments. Whereas the EU average is women covering 33% of the national parliament, Swedish parliaments are occupied by women by 47%. In an effort to enhance gender equality, the Swedish government set up a Gender Mainstreaming in Government Agencies Programme to monitor all aspects of the process. Sweden also makes effort to maintain gender equality within the workplace by not only promoting equal policies but strengthening legal structures that prohibit sexual harassment, discrimination, or unequal treatment. As a result, Sweden has ranked 5th or higher in the annual global gender gap research conducted by the World Economic Forum since 2006. Although this is a remarkable accomplishment, pay gaps do not cease to exist. Women's average monthly pay still remains 90% of men's¹². Moreover, women are less subject to full-time employment than men due to childcare and family care.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is seeing a significant rise in female labor force participation rates. In fact, Saudi Arabia has reported that women now take up 35 % of the workforce, the highest rate in the kingdom's history. After Saudi Arabia allowed women to drive, live alone, work outside of home, and travel without the permission of a male guardian in 2018, more and more Saudi women have been participating in the labor market. The country's Wusool Programme has also helped at least 51,000 women secure a job¹³.

¹⁰ Gbenga Owoye. (2021) [Women's engagement in participatory politics of Kogi State, Nigeria](#). *African Identities* 0:0, pages 1-13.

¹¹ “Kuwait Taking Promising Steps towards Women's Empowerment & Gender Equality.” World Bank Blogs. Accessed July 16, 2022. <https://blogs.worldbank.org/arabvoices/kuwait-taking-promising-steps-towards-womens-empowerment-gender-equality>.

¹² Si. “Sweden and Gender Equality.” [sweden.se](https://sweden.se/life/equality/gender-equality), July 15, 2022. <https://sweden.se/life/equality/gender-equality>.

¹³ Nihal, Mariam. “Saudi Arabia: Women in Work Has 'Doubled' to over 35% of Labour Force.” The National. The National, May 18, 2022. <https://www.thenationalnews.com/gulf-news/saudi-arabia/2022/05/18/saudi-arabia-women-in-work-has-double-d-to-over-35-of-labour-force/>.

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However, in 2020, although the average salary in the private sector saw a steady increase, the average female salary saw a decline. The Saudi market yet remains male-dominated, with gender segregation and a lack of legal frameworks. Women in Saudi Arabia are still under the influence of Islamic Family Law¹⁴ and other religious backgrounds, often unable to be independent of their male guardians.

Singapore

Singapore is seeing an increase in women joining workplaces. IN fact, the female employment rate has risen to 57.7 percent in 2020, a high percentage compared to other OECD countries¹⁵. The number of women among professionals, managers, executives, and technicians has also increased in the last decade to 45.6 %, showing a 4.5% increase. Moreover, Singapore has made effort to tackle causes that discourage women to continue their careers after giving birth, by providing governmental support for caregiving needs such as services and grants. However, other researchers also reveal that 71% of women surveyed agree that gender inequality exists within workplaces¹⁶, showing the importance of continuous and unceasing effort to achieve gender equality.

Suggested Solutions

One of the key strategies for increasing women's empowerment is education. As aforementioned, one of the core causes of gender inequality in workplaces and political institutions is the prolific belief that economic pursuits and politics is a male-centric activities. This gender role keeps women from thinking about participating in economic activities or politics, and at the same time, it convinces people that women are not suited to such activities and are less capable than men. Gender stereotypes that characterize men and women and proceed to generalize them also play a role in convincing people that gender inequality is a natural phenomenon. However, unlike prior beliefs that men are pillars of a democratic society, the OECD claims that democratic societies are developed as a result of education for gender equality. This means that democracy could not have come to represent what it does, if not for efforts to acknowledge that people are equal regardless of gender, religion, race, or ethnicity. This process of education for gender quality was done

¹⁴ “The Status of Women in Saudi Arabia - Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung.” Rosa, November 5, 2021.

<https://www.rosalux.de/en/news/id/45316/the-status-of-women-in-saudi-arabia>.

¹⁵ Chew Hui Min @ChewHuiMinCNA, Chew Hui Min, and Bookmark Bookmark Share WhatsApp Telegram Face. “Employment Rate for Singapore Women Rose in Past Decade, Share among Pmets Also up: MOM.” CNA. Accessed July 16, 2022.

<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/singapore/employment-rate-singapore-women-rose-past-decade-share-among-pmet-ministry-manpower-2430196>.

¹⁶ Sunil, Written by Priya. “71% Of Women Surveyed in Singapore Agree Gender Inequality Exists at the Workplace.” Remnant. Accessed July 16, 2022.

<https://www.humanresourcesonline.net/71-of-women-surveyed-in-singapore-agree-gender-inequality-exists-at-the-workplace>.

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by enabling both men and women to participate in social, political, and civic activities. This activity should be continued in regions where there are still deeply rooted gender roles and stereotypes, for adults as well as young children. Through receiving continuous and constant reminders that all are equally qualified and capable of jumping into the workforce and political institutions, people could slowly shift from the social norms and proceed to create a new norm with different values. However, there needs to be more thought on what kind of education will be provided, and how the education would be executed. There may be a need for different approaches based on generation, ethnicity, or religion. If it seems necessary to differentiate education contents based on the subject of the program, then it would also be necessary to think about what entity would be best suitable to design such programs. Educational campaigns also need funding to be carried out. The source of resources would also be a question for the committee to answer. Through new educational content regarding gender equality education, the global society could motivate people to take enthusiastic action toward gender equality and contribute to women's increased civic engagement and political participation in contemporary society.

Education aimed to change social norms is not the only time for education women need to be integrated into the workforce and into political institutions. In many corners of the world, women are open to fewer educational opportunities than men. Lack of knowledge and the consequential relatively weaker working capabilities is another core cause of little women's participation. Helping women and especially girls to receive the same level of education as their brothers do would be one of the most effective methods to empower them and to prove that women are as capable as men if given the same level of education. Education would also help women realize that their economic pursuits and political representation are not only a method of making money or seeking self-actualization but also their inherent rights.

Another important point to consider when encouraging women to participate in economic and political interactions is to eliminate factors that keep women from entering the field. One big reason women hesitate to enter a male-dominated workforce is due to the discrimination or harassment they face, without any legal frameworks that may protect them. This is especially prevalent in less economically developed countries or countries with strong religious beliefs. As women do not feel safe within the workspace, they would rather not participate in those communities and stay safe. Therefore, the committee could think about ways to encourage member states to come up with effective mechanisms that would help create safe working conditions for women so that more would be employed. Safety is especially important in political institutions so that women could freely talk and come up with ideas or opinions. This would help address the needs people have, especially those from groups that used to be underrepresented. The committee would, in turn, have to think of ways to encourage member states and at the same time, adhere to ECOSOC's mandates.

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The global community also needs to think of methods to lessen the gender gap in employment and participation. Even states that have a relatively high ranking in gender equality indexes are not completely without gender gaps. Especially in the labor market, women are often paid less than their male counterparts. Moreover, many are forced to retire from work due to pregnancy and birth-giving. The inevitably having to leave their jobs in such situations keep companies from giving women a full-time job offer, the same pay as males, a chance to resume their careers after they give birth, or even employing them in the first place. The committee can think of ways for states to make sure that such discrimination does not happen within companies or communities through legislation. However, the greatest cause for such discrimination is the belief that only women have to shoulder the burden of giving birth and raising children. Although biological capabilities only enable women to have reproductive power, women should not be considered the only people who need to shoulder the burden. Pregnancy, birth, and nurturing are joint responsibilities of both women and men. Moreover, it is a very important function for society as a whole, as it is what keeps organizations and civilization alive. Thus, women and anything related to reproductive capacity and nurturing should not be the reason for the disadvantages. In order to strengthen this perception, communities must create an atmosphere where everyone is convinced that having children is not a problem and would not be a disturbance in pursuing one's career. Past efforts include designating mandatory parental leave systems, enlarging the parental leave benefits to men as well, and providing subsidies for parents.

For societies that have a significantly small number of women in the workplace or in political spheres, women may need more help than in other parts of the world. Thus, the state may have to take a more active stance in solving the problem. Past examples of such actions include setting quotas for women or requiring at least a certain number of minority groups. This method was used in the past, not to work as reverse discrimination against the other gender or majority group, but only to offer opportunities to small entities that do not have enough power to stimulate change on their own. This method is still being used in some parts of the world. However, this method would always raise concerns about the possibility of reverse discrimination, in what cases the policy would be enacted, and when to decide on the withdrawal of the policy.

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