

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)

Background Guide Topic:

Developing a Cohesive System to Promote Gender Parity



Director's Note

Dear Delegates,

It is with sincere pleasure to welcome you to the Japan Metropolitan Model United Nations World Conference on Women! My name is Shiori Kurokawa and I will serve as the director of the Advanced committee for the duration of this conference.

As a highschool delegate I understand that this conference is rather a challenging one, with aspiring delegates from all around the world. During the conference there may be times when you may feel overwhelmed by their expertise; however, I can assure you that they feel the same way about you. Even after four years of MUN experience, I still feel pressured at big conferences, and that hasn't changed since my first one, which was Global Classrooms International Model United Nations 2019. I can still recall the feeling of tension in the large conference room, and I would say that I was rather nervous than excited. In spite of that, I reminded myself that it was all about experience—what's the whole point of participating if I don't have fun, right? With all the courage I had, I started talking to people during mini breaks, making as many friends as possible. By lunch I already had a group of new friends. These newly made friends were the key to a successful conference. As we cooperated with each other, my delegation succeeded in delivering speeches, writing resolutions, and eventually receiving Honorable Mention! If I hadn't challenged myself to socialize and interact with others, I wouldn't have been able to achieve this reward. Thus, although as scary as it may sound, I strongly suggest that you break the ice, make friends and get out there to have some fun!

Over the course of two days this committee will be debating on the topic of women's justice and empowerment, which I assume all of us are somewhat familiar with. Nevertheless, I am eager to see your active participation and deep understanding of this issue, as well as some heated debates amongst delegates. Although our committee is held online, we are all looking forward to seeing you! Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Shiori Kurokawa

Director of The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
Senzoku Gakuen Model United Nations Club



Japan Metropolitan Model United Nations
Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the World Conference on Women at Japan Metropolitan Model United Nations 2023! My name is Yuri Ikeda and I am beyond pleased to be your director for this March conference.

Despite recent advancement of technology and complication of the transitive society, our world remains far from progressed regarding women empowerment. Women and girls are often being denied justice, protection, and support, facing barriers in their careers and daily lives. We cannot afford to wait another few centuries for women to gain equal rights as men; in order to break down such an unjust environment surrounding women, nations must work jointly to develop international measures, while at the same time focusing on women's conditions and evaluating effective methods to achieve gender parity within each nation.

Through this conference, I hope delegates will envision and discuss with each other solutions and plans to develop a sustainable system to support women over the world, and will further acquire problem-solving skills and negotiation skills, which are essential in this untransparent and globalized world.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or inquires about the conference or this background guide. I look forward to seeing you in March!

Sincerely,

Yuri Ikeda

Director of The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
Senzoku Gakuen Model United Nations Club
Japan Metropolitan Model United Nation



Introduction of the Committee

The first World Conference on Women was held in Mexico in 1975, marking the first major international conference dedicated to formulating a plan of action to address issues women face around the globe. Among the many objectives identified in the World Plan of Action was that necessary resources should be dedicated to ensure the participation of women in political life, as well as a call to eliminate violations of human rights committed against women. This includes violations such as rape, prostitution, child marriage, forced marriage, and marriage as a commercial transaction.¹ The conference itself was not without controversy and challenges. Delegates from different global regions attended the sessions with widely different worldviews. In addition to divergent levels of conservatism into what constituted women's rights, there were disparities along cultural lines between "First World" and "Third World" nations. So-called "Third World" nations perceived their counterparts as having overlooked post-colonial issues

¹ UN General Assembly, World Conference of the International Women's Year, 15 December 1975, A/RES/3520

that underlie many gender questions.² In addition, women from socialist countries present at Mexico City were keen to stress capitalistic exploitation as a cause of women's suffering and frame their emancipation through the lens of grassroots activism.³ For their part, the United States and other Western countries feared the instrumental politicization of women's issues for anti-Western purposes.⁴ Many of the prevailing geopolitical tensions were represented in the issue of gender equality. Nevertheless, the conference marked a major step towards global action against gender discrimination and the problems women faced, establishing the United Nations Decade for Women, and later holding the second and third World Conferences on Women in Copenhagen in 1980 and Nairobi in 1985. In 1995, the Fourth World Conference on Women was held in Beijing with more than 50,000 participants, making it the largest conference in the history of the United Nations. The conference drew 5,000 delegates from 189

² Valladares, G., 2020. The 1975 Mexico City World Conference on Women | Origins. [online]

³ Bonfiglioli, Chiara. (2016). The first UN world conference on women (1975) as a cold war encounter: Recovering anti-imperialist, non-aligned and socialist genealogies.

⁴ Ghodsee, Kristen (2014), "Research note: The historiographical challenges of exploring Second World – Third World alliances in the international women's movement", *Global Social Policy*, 14 (2): 244-264



countries in order to create the Platform for Action (PFA); the central document that catalogued the actions to eliminate discrimination against women. The PFA is considered an improvement on previous efforts to put action into writing, making strong statements on human rights and recognizing that women share decision-making power at every level of society. The Beijing Conference was seen as an ambitious project, drawing resistance from conservative nations who were alerted to the possibility that international law would interfere with the domestic policies of their nations.⁵ Despite reactionary resistance, the conference was able to secure an agreement to advance human rights in twelve critical areas. For the purposes of our conference committee, the following summary will focus on primary areas of concern, although delegates are encouraged to read the entire PFA.

The platform lists lack of income, health services, education, and housing as causes and effects of poverty, contributing to the lack of participation in political decision

making.⁶ Further strategic suggestions featured in the PFA include revising administrative practices to give women access to economic resources, full participation of women in educational policy and decision-making – including career education programs – and the promotion of cooperation within households between the genders. Also included are provisions related to the right to reproductive health, control over sexuality, and the removal of structures hostile to women. Women must also participate to the same extent in business-related policy making, and in institutions, trade relations, and industry.⁸ Since the Beijing Conference, the PLA has been assessed by the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) every five years. Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals stands as a commitment to the agenda. In addition, since Beijing, newer forms of gender-based discrimination has been identified, including intimate partner violence in 2019,⁷ and the absence of consent in rape cases. While the past 25 years have witnessed positive changes in women's rights,

⁵ Roberts, Barbara. "The Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women." *The Canadian Journal of Sociology / Cahiers Canadiens de Sociologie* 21, no. 2 (1996): 237–44

⁶ Cook, Rebecca J. "Effectiveness of the Beijing Conference Advancing International Law Regarding Women." *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting (American Society of International Law)* 91 (1997): 310–17.

⁷ Dubravka Šimonovic, Intimate partner violence against women is an essential factor in the determination of child custody, say women's rights experts. OHCHR May, 2019.



persistent and systemic problems continue to manifest in the normalized cultures around the world.⁸ Despite the best efforts of the United Nations and millions around the world, significant work remains unfinished.

Key Terms

Gender Quotas

Political gender quotas are measures taken by governments or parties designed to accelerate women's representation in the legislature. International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) categorizes gender quota into three main types: reserved seats, legal candidate quotas, and political party quotas.⁹ Reserved seats are legal quotas mandated in a country's constitution or law that allocate a certain number or percentage of parliamentary seats for women;¹⁰ In this case, the seats are reserved for women and other groups are ineligible to contest. On the other hand, the latter two clearly indicate a minimum for the proportion of women in chambers. The difference between the two is

⁸ Shreeves, Rosamund. *Women's Rights: 25-Year Review of the Beijing Platform for Action*. European Parliament, 2021. Print.

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<https://www.idea.int/data-tools/data/gender-quotas/quotas#what>

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https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp1314/ElectoralQuotas#_Toc372193117

that while legal candidate quotas are specified in national constitution, laws, or in the inner-party laws, political party quotas have no legal responsibility, adopted voluntarily by political parties. Countries have adopted some kind of gender quotas as of, and there exist various successful cases over the past few decades that resulted in the increase of women's presence in politics. UN Women estimates that out of 27 countries that have achieved 40 percent or more women in parliament, over two-thirds of them have applied certain types of gender quotas.¹¹ However, not all countries agree to the implementation of gender quotas, arguing that quotas are against the perception of equality under law and liberal democracy.

Femicide

Femicide is the deliberate murder of women. The word 'femicide' is an umbrella term for deeds such as intimate femicide, honor killing, dowry related femicide, and non-intimate femicide.¹² Considering together the definition of intentional homicide provided in the The International

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https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/leadership-and-political-participation/facts-and-figures#_edn10

¹² "Femicide." World Health Organization (WHO), 2012. Accessed 26 December 2022.



Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) suggests defining Femicide with the following characteristics:¹³

- i. the killing of a woman by another person (objective criterion);
- ii. the intent of the perpetrator to kill or seriously injure the victim (subjective criterion);
- iii. the unlawfulness of the killing (legal criterion);
- iv. the gender-related motivation of the killing

Intimate femicide

Intimate femicide is murder carried out by a present or former husband or boyfriend. A study conducted by the World Health Organization and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine showed that more than 35 percent of worldwide murders of women are reportedly committed by an intimate partner.¹⁴

Dowry related femicide

A prominent cultural practice in India, dowry is the amount of assets a woman's parents give to a partner they see fit for their

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https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/statistics/Statistical_framework_femicide_2022.pdf

¹⁴ Stöckl H et al. The global prevalence of intimate partner homicide: a systematic review. (Forthcoming.)

daughter.¹⁵ Dowry related femicide often involves newly-wed women being murdered by in-laws on account of dowry-associated disputes. According to India's National Crime Records Bureau¹⁶ (2016), approximately 7,600 deaths were reported. However, it is difficult to find exact numbers as many go unreported.

Honor killing

Honor killing¹⁷ is the murder of a woman or girl by male family members, typically justified by claiming that the victim has brought dishonor upon the family. Victims of honor killings are alleged to have engaged in "sexually immoral" actions, which can vary from an open conversation with unrelated men to having sex outside of marriage, that of which includes rape or sexual assault. A woman can be targeted for honor killings with the mere suspicion that she has damaged the family name. The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights estimates

¹⁵ "DOWRY | English meaning - Cambridge Dictionary." Cambridge Dictionary, 21 December 2022, Accessed 26 December 2022.

¹⁶ "National Crime Records Bureau, India - NCRB | Data and Statistics - knoema.com." Knoema, 2006, Accessed 26 December 2022.

¹⁷ "honor killing | sociology - Britannica." 8 Dec. 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/honor-killing>. Accessed 27 Dec. 2022.



that as many as 5,000 women are victims of honor killing annually.¹⁸

Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)

Considered basic human rights, Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) are a combination of sexual health, sexual rights, reproductive health and reproductive rights. The 1994 International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo, Egypt is considered to be the origin of the modern SRHR movement.¹⁹

Current Situation

Women and Poverty: Focal Point on Education and Economy

Women and girls are more likely to be the victims of poverty. UN Women estimates that 388 million women and girls will live under extreme poverty in 2022, compared to 372 million men and boys; in a high-damage scenario, this number could reach 446

million.²⁰ Few of the factors of feminization of poverty are:

- lack of access to education and job training
- lack of economic opportunities and autonomy such as economic resources, including credit, land ownership and inheritance
- gender wage gap/ female underrepresentation in high-wage occupations
- women's disproportionate responsibility for unpaid work

It should be noted that the situation women face differs considerably from county to country. Although women experience a higher rate of poverty in almost all ethnicities, 83.7% of the world's extremely poor women and girls are concentrated in Sub-Saharan Africa and Central and Southern Asia. The regional female poverty rate as of November 2022 were found to be the following: 41.2 percent in the Sub-Saharan Africa, 34.0 percent in Oceania, 30.4 percent in Latin America and

¹⁸ "Gender-Related Killings of Women and Girls - OHCHR."

https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Women/WRGS/OnePagers/Gender_motivated_killings.pdf. Accessed 27 Dec. 2022.

¹⁹ "SRHR (セクシュアル・リプロダクティブ・ヘルス&ライツ)とは." <https://srhr.jp/srhr/>. Accessed 27 Dec. 2022.

²⁰ *Poverty deepens for women and girls, according to latest projections (2022) UN Women Data Hub.* (Accessed: December 24, 2022).



the Caribbean, 22.6 percent in Northern Africa and Western Asia, 20.7 percent in Central and Southern Asia, and 14.0 in Europe and Northern America.

However, poverty is not an insurmountable issue, since it is estimated that 150 million women and girls will be out of poverty by 2030 with government intervention and effective policies, including investments in economics, enhancement of the educational system, and protection of women.

There exists a reciprocal influence between poverty and education; to put it differently, ensurement of quality education is indispensable to break the negative cycle of poverty. Today, 49 percent of countries have achieved gender parity in primary education; with regard to upper-secondary education, the number plunges to 24 percent. In the world, 15 million girls of primary-school age will never even get the chance to learn to read or write in primary school. The causes of gender disparity – such as social norms, child marriage, gender-based violence, and household responsibilities – vary from country to country. Nevertheless, poverty is a major barrier that segregates children from education. Despite the fact that the number of out-of-school children at primary and lower secondary levels has nearly halved since 1995, 32 million girls of primary age are still out of school. In terms

of gender gap, while two-thirds of all the countries have achieved equal primary school enrollment rate, completion rate remains lower for girls, particularly in low-income countries.²¹ Girls are more than twice as likely to be unable to attend school than boys, as there are 5.5 million more out-of-school girls currently.

Women’s economic empowerment is also vital to realizing women’s rights and gender parity in the workplace is a paramount issue that requires prompt attention and measurements. While 94% of men aged 25-54 were part of the global workforce in 2018, only 63% of women were, a rate which has changed very little over the past 20 years. Furthermore, women make up a disproportionate percentage of workers in the informal sector, such as street vendors, domestic workers, subsistence farmers, and seasonal agricultural workers. Working in this informal, or “gray economy”, it is impossible to receive social benefits such as pension, health insurance or paid sick leave. UN Women indicates that 80% of the world’s 67 million domestic workers are women, with 90% of them lacking economic protection. Because of this, COVID-19 has also disproportionately affected women,

²¹ *Poverty deepens for women and girls, according to latest projections (2022) UN Women Data Hub.* (Accessed: December 24, 2022).



pushing 47 million women and girls into extreme poverty. Women often face lack of access to social protection or safety nets, since they make up a large portion of informal workers and smallholder producers that have been hit the hardest by the economic fallout of the COVID-19. The pandemic is even said to have reversed the progress made towards gender equality in the last several decades.

Furthermore, gender pay gaps exist all over the world, including most of the developed countries. The International Labor Organization (ILO) indicated in September 2022 that on average, women globally are paid about 20 percent less than men.²² The wage gap was approximately 37% in 2019 and the income gap remained close at 51%.²³

Women in Power and Decision-Making

Women remain severely underrepresented in politics and leadership positions in every region of the world. As of August 2022, 13 countries had a woman Head of State and 26 percent of all national parliamentarians were female, indicating a lack of equity in the number of men and women in national governments. Although this proportion rose from 15.3 percent in 1995, at the current rate

of progress, it is estimated that it will take another 140 years for women to be represented equally in positions of power and leadership in the workplace, and at least 40 years to achieve equal representation in national parliaments. In fact, only three countries - Rwanda, Cuba, and United Arab Emirates - have achieved more than 50% women in the chamber so far.²⁴

There is a persistent lack of women in leadership positions, with women representing just 27% of all manager posts.²⁵

The average of G20 countries and guest countries stands below 30 percent, and none of the countries with available data reaches the SDG target of 50 percent of women in senior and middle management positions. Even though most countries have made progress in increasing the proportion of women in managerial positions over the years, there are few countries where the rate has decreased, such as France, which experienced an 11% decline from 2010 to 2019.

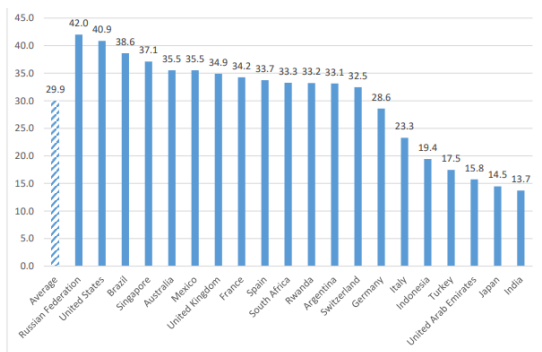
²² *International Equal Pay Day*. United Nations. United Nations. (Accessed: December 24, 2022)

²³ *Here's what we know about the 1 million women and children who have already fled Ukraine* (no date) World Economic Forum. (Accessed: December 24, 2022).

²⁴ *263 million children and youth are out of school* (2017) UNESCO UIS. (Accessed: December 24, 2022).

²⁵ *International Equal Pay Day* (no date) United Nations. United Nations. (Accessed: December 24, 2022).





Source: ILOSTAT

Women and Health / Sexual Exploitation of Women

Access to healthcare and education in regard to healthcare still remains a major obstacle, especially in less privileged areas around the world. 190 million women of reproductive age (15 to 49) worldwide who wanted to avoid pregnancy did not use any contraceptive method in 2019.²⁶

Access to healthcare and the participation of women in the economy are intrinsically interlinked, with substantial evidence to back this up. Increasing access to things such as family planning helps girls flourish in their education, resulting in more women in the workplace. Furthermore, by preventing unwanted pregnancies, it supports women's labor force participation.

Child marriage also remains to be a serious issue in developing countries. Since 1995,

²⁶ *Contraceptive Use by Method 2019. United Nations.* United Nations. (Accessed 13 February 2023.)

the rate of child marriage has declined from one in four to one in five. However, 650 million women alive in the world today are married before their 18th birthday.²⁷

Case Studies

Subtopic I: Women Economic Barriers: Ukraine

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has caused a pernicious damage to the economy of Ukraine, as the Ukrainian central bank announced that its economy will shrink by almost 32% by the end of 2022.²⁸ Nearly five million jobs have been lost in Ukraine according to ILO, and as of July 2022, 61 percent of the registered unemployed in Ukraine are women. With regard to its history of women's empowerment, Ukraine has made considerable efforts to narrow gender gaps over the past few years. Ever since the Maidan Revolution, or the Revolution of Dignity, which took place in 2014 and resulted in the victory of citizens over an authoritarian regime supported by the Kremlin,²⁹ women in Ukraine have

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²⁸ Ljunggren, D. (2022) *Ukraine economy to shrink by almost 32% in 2022 - central bank*, Reuters. Thomson Reuters. (Accessed: December 24, 2022).

²⁹ Onyshko, Olha. "Women of Maidan": when women's unity overcame a regime backed by Kremlin." *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 24 March 2017, <https://www.ukrweekly.com/uwwp/women-of-maidan-when-womens-unity-overcame-a-regime-backed-by-kremlin/>. Accessed 24 December 2022.



become increasingly engaged politically, economically, and socially. Yet, there exists a persistent gender gap within the nation, as represented in its 22% gender pay gap and 32% pension gap.³⁰ The outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine war greatly hindered the country's past efforts, worsening women's positions in society and economics. The invasion proves how women are more vulnerable to and disproportionately affected by humanitarian crises.

Subtopic II: Women in Politics: Rwanda

Rwanda, a country that holds the highest proportion of women in politics today, showed unprecedented advance in women's representation in politics since the late 20th century. This was mainly due to Rwandan Genocide in 1994, which resulted in the deaths of more than 800,000 people within 100 days.³¹ After the tragedy, the population of Rwanda became 70 percent female, inevitably positioning women as heads of households, as economic providers and as major actors in society, further pushing women to get more actively involved in

³⁰ *Here's what we know about the 1 million women and children who have already fled Ukraine* (no date) *World Economic Forum*. (Accessed: December 24, 2022).

³¹ Jennie E. Burnet, "Gender Balance and the Meanings of Women in Governance in Post-Genocide Rwanda," (2008) *African Affairs* 107.428 : 361-386.

politics and legislation. President Paul Kagame, who served as a president of Rwanda after the genocide, had contributed greatly in this process, passing a constitution in 2003 that mandated 30 percent of parliamentary seats to be reserved for women. Thanks to the efforts, women held 48% of the parliament in 2003, which rose to 56% in 2008 election,³² marking Rwanda as the first nation in the world to have a legislature with a female majority. The proportion further reached 63.8 percent in 2015, then slightly slumped 61.25 percent in 2021; nevertheless, Rwanda continues to be the country with the highest number of female parliamentarians in today's world. Rwanda's commitment to the promotion of gender equality has also been reflected in its development of institutional machinery, as the government established four essential institutions, which are the The Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF), the Gender Monitoring Office (GMO), the National Women's Council (NWC) and the Rwanda Women Parliamentary Forum (FFRP). These institutions work in collaboration while focusing on the individual purpose and commission.

³² "Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments (%) - Rwanda | Data." World Bank Data, 2021, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SG.GEN.PARL.ZS?locations=RW>. Accessed 24 December 2022.



Subtopic III: Ban on Women

Education: Afghanistan

In December 2022, the Taliban officially instituted a total ban on the education of Afghanistan females, closing universities to women and banning girls from attending elementary school. Ever since the Taliban seized power in August 2021, women in Afghanistan faced various clamp downs on their rights and were eradicated from public and professional jobs. Promptly after the takeover, Taliban closed all schools in the country, which reopened eventually except for girls. Although the Taliban originally promised to open school to both girls and boys after the new Afghan year in March, they prevented girls from returning to school, ordering shut down of girls schools once again.³³ The Taliban's decision on education of women have shown great upheavals and contradictions over the past few months; the former minister of higher education Abdul Baqi Haqqani once allowed women to attend universities under strict conditions and segregation, yet, Nida Mohammad Nadim, who replaced Haqqani

³³ Popalzai, Ehsan, and Ivana Kottasová. "Taliban suspend university education for women in Afghanistan." CNN, 20 December 2022, (Accessed 24 December 2022.)

in October 2022, expressed his opposition to women receiving an education.³⁴

Subtopic IV: Women's Sexual Safety: Women in India

Formed in 2006, the Gulabi Gang is a group of women who fight for their rights in Banda, India.³⁵ The city, being one of the poorest 200 districts in India, faces a long history of patriarchy, abuse and corruption.³⁶ Low-caste women are vulnerable of violent crimes, and 90% of India's rape victims are Dalit women, who are at the lowest of India's caste system.³⁷ The "gang" members, who all wear a pink sari (a traditional Indian garment) that signify womanhood and their understated strength, learn to use a lathi (a traditional Indian stick) in self defense.³⁸ There have been cases of the gang storming into police stations, particularly when

³⁴ Hadid, Diaa. "Taliban begins to enforce education ban, leaving Afghan women with tears and anger." NPR, 21 December 2022, Accessed 24 December 2022.

³⁵ Subrahmanyam, Sanjay. "Banda | India | Britannica." Encyclopedia Britannica, 28 December 2022, Accessed 30 December 2022.

³⁶ Biswas, Soutik. "BBC NEWS | World | South Asia | India's 'pink' vigilante women." BBC News, 26 November 2007, Accessed 24 December 2022.

³⁷ Nagaraj, Anuradha. "India's low-caste women raped to keep them 'in their place.'" Reuters, 24 November 2020, Accessed 24 December 2022.

³⁸ GULABI GANG :: Women Empowerment India. Accessed December 2022.



officers refused to register complaints of abuse against women, as well as cases of attacks towards men that have abused their wives.³⁹ Despite the argument of whether or not the gang is justifiable, Sampat Pal Devi, leader of the Gulabi Gang, was named as one of the 10 most influential women in the world by *The Guardian* newspaper in 2011.

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Past Actions

Legislation and International Organizations

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, or UN Women, is a United Nations organization committed to gender equality and the empowerment of women.⁴¹ UN Women was established in June 2010 to meet the needs of women and girls around the world. It coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality.

³⁹Saner, Emine. "Sampat Pal Devi | Women." *The Guardian*, 7 March 2011, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/mar/08/sampat-pal-devi-100-women>. Accessed 24 December 2022.

⁴⁰Walters, Ashley. "Sampat Pal's Gulabi Gang fights for gender revolution in India." *CBC*, 25 January 2015, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/sampat-pal-s-gulabi-gang-fights-for-gender-revolution-in-india-1.2926690>. Accessed 24 December 2022.

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Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly, is the most widely ratified fundamental human rights treaty today that assesses the women's right to equality. The Convention codifies not only rights of women, but also responsibilities of the states towards fulfilling the agenda, as the States parties are expected to submit a national report at least every four years, indicating the measures they have taken. The convention divides the current concerns regarding female rights into three categories: civil rights, legal status, and cultural/social aspect of discrimination. In terms of civil rights, since CEDAW remains to be the only international treaty apart from declarations and documents that guarantees the reproductive rights of women, the convention demands for more maternity protection. The legal rights issue is discussed in a wide range of fields, expressing criticism of discriminatory policies. Cultural factors focus on "stereotypes, customs and norms which give rise to the multitude of legal, political and economic constraints on the advancement of women".

UN Women and UN Global Compact have established The Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs), which offers "guidance



to business on how to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment in the workplace, marketplace and community.” The central achievement of the WEPs is that it has put forward the idea that companies and businesses have a responsibility for women’s social advancement and also a large influence on its promotion. Over 1,000 CEOs from around the world have signed this principle and agreed to carry out necessary measures that include “equal pay for work of equal value, gender-responsive supply chain practices and zero tolerance against sexual harassment in the workplace.”

Joint Programme on Empowering Adolescent Girls and Young Women through Education is a collaborative project by UNESCO, UN Women and UNFPA. With collective commitment of the three UN agencies, the programme approaches issues regarding girl’s education and empowerment from different spectrums, further aiming at the achievement of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, a first legally binded international compact on the right to education, prohibits any kind of discrimination in the education sector, including the basis of sex. Signatories are required to execute legal and policy

measures for the ensurement of equal access to and high quality of education.

Questions to Consider

While the conference’s main target is to develop a “cohesive” measurements to tackle gender disparity, since the current situation regarding gender parity greatly differs from one country to another, it is suggested that you consider how your country can make contributions for the empowerment of women, based on the country’s current economic situation, women’s social positions, traditions, and cultural norms. Here are questions which should be addressed in working papers or resolutions:

- What can nations do to tackle the feminization of poverty?
- What kind of legislation should be implemented by countries to improve gender equality in the workplace / the working condition of women?
- How can governments elevate the education level of women, particularly in developing countries?



- How can current gender parity laws be enforced more effectively?
- WWWWhat measures should be implemented to increase the representation of women in politics/leadership positions?

Guidelines for Position Papers

Position papers must clearly articulate the current situation of your country, briefly explain the past actions it has taken, and further denote possible solutions. Papers may also include international resolutions and strategies to combat the issue discussed in your committee; however, the main focus **must** be on your country. When developing your position papers, please focus on information that directly relates to the topic. General information about your country, such as its geographical location, major cities, or major trade exports, should not be included to lengthen your report. Remember that delegates and chairs do not have a lot of time during the conference to read the position papers. If you want to successfully press the case of your country, you want your position papers to get to the point quickly and persuasively.

Closing Remarks

Please keep in mind that gender inequality is a complex issue that cannot be solved simply by focusing on one aspect of society; since the status of women deeply relates with each nation's history, culture, religion, and traditional norms, tackling gender gap requires multidimensional measures, and is something that cannot be achieved overnight. Thus, it is important for countries to consider the sustainability and feasibility of its measurements or current legislation.

The fifth goal of the Sustainable Development Goals is stated as the development of gender equality. The problems facing our planet are complex and multifaceted, as the SDG's make clear in their 17 goals, with some 241 indicators. What has been clearly established is the relationship between goals - making direct progress in meeting one goal will indirectly move us closer to achieving all 17.

While the challenges facing the progress towards equality between the genders seem at times to be innumerable and insurmountable, by implementing gradual and realistic policies targeted at specific issues, we can achieve a better and more equitable world. Our committee during the 2023 Japan Metropolitan Model United



Nations is designed to pull three important issues into sharp focus. We are looking forward to delegates bringing novel and accurately represented solutions and objections so that we might better illuminate the path forward for our generation.

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263 million children and youth are out of school (2017) *UNESCO UIS*. (Accessed: December 24, 2022).

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