

Canadian Federation of University Women - Oral Statement UNCSW61

The Canadian Federation of University Women joins concerned voices regarding accountability for global goals to end poverty, achieve gender equality and ensure decent work as part of the sustainable development agenda.

Having not achieved the Millennium Development Goals, UN member states have reset the clock to work towards achieving the targets, now known as the Sustainable Development Goals, by 2030. This is essentially a regressive move which adds 15 years to the original target date of gender parity and inadvertently, projects the situation onto a future generation. CFUW is concerned that member states are lagging in their efforts to achieve these targets, which we fear will further delay positive outcomes for women and girls.

This year's theme, *Women's Economic Empowerment and the Changing World of Work* is very timely given that women continue to be disadvantaged in the world of work. Women are more likely to work part-time, irregular and precarious jobs. They also do the majority of household and unpaid work. Worldwide, women earn an average of 24% less than their male counterparts.ⁱ Women hold only one in five leadership positions, and almost one in three businesses have no women at all in senior management positions.ⁱⁱ

We submit that when women have access to education, mentorship support, gender aware work environments, equal pay for equal work, they are better positioned to develop their skills in political and economic engagement, and have greater capacity to affect change in society.

Mentorship, is a key factor in supporting women in positions of power and ensuring women successfully navigate situations that would otherwise be untenable without support. The Canadian Federation of University Women believes UN member states should include mentorship as a fundamental pillar of education and skills training to bring more women into positions of economic empowerment and leadership.

With induced stresses such as rising global temperatures, extreme weather patterns, increasing migration, access to technology and changing gender roles, the global economy must adapt quickly. It is more important than ever to facilitate women's entrance into the changing world of work and support their contributions. We urge UN member states to recognize and designate women's economic empowerment as a central pillar of their economic action plans.

Over 8, 500 CFUW members are committed to monitoring the actions countries take to ensure progress in improving the status of women. We call on the United Nations Economic Council to hold all member states accountable for their role in the successful outcome for women and girls.

We are hopeful that our statement will speak to the hearts and minds of the power brokers that surround us. We look forward to working with other organizations on ways to affect change now, rather than pass an unreasonable debt load unto the next generation to be burdened with what we could have cleared up ourselves.

ⁱ Human Development Report 2015.

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