

Study Guide

UN-Women

Letter from EB:

Dear delegates,
The Executive Board of UN-Women welcome you to the 3rd CHMUN conference. For many of you it is the first ever MUN conference in your career, and we strongly encourage you to go through the study guide that has been prepared for you which will give you basic idea about the discussions in the committee.

We are excited to be part of the executive board of esteemed committee, and have been given the responsibility to come up

with innovative and practical resolutions for women empowerment.

We will be discussing "Strengthening Women's Position Socially, Economically and Politically" as our agenda for UN-Women.

It is up to the delegates of this esteemed council to step up and provide solutions for this problem and lead the world towards a better future.

We look forward to an engaging debate filled with comprehensive solutions, that will enrich our perspectives with a hopeful future.

Regards,
Executive Board,
UN-Women,
CHMUN'19

Introduction to committee:

UN Women is the [United Nations](#) entity dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. A global champion for women and girls, UN Women was established to accelerate progress on meeting their needs worldwide.

UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality,

and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to ensure that the standards are effectively implemented and truly benefit women and girls worldwide. It works globally to make the vision of the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) a reality for women and girls and stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on four strategic priorities:

- Women [lead, participate in and benefit equally](#) from governance systems
- Women have [income security, decent work and economic autonomy](#)
- All women and girls live

a life free [from all forms of violence](#)

- Women and girls contribute to and have greater influence in [building sustainable peace and resilience](#), and benefit equally from the prevention of natural disasters and conflicts and [humanitarian action](#)

UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality, and in all deliberations and agreements linked to the 2030 Agenda. The entity works to position gender equality as fundamental to the Sustainable Development Goals, and a more inclusive world.

Introduction to agenda:

Gender equality is not only a basic human right, but its achievement has enormous socio-economic ramifications. Empowering women fuels thriving economies, spurring productivity and growth. Yet gender inequalities remain deeply entrenched in every society. Women lack access to decent work and face occupational segregation and gender wage gaps. They are too often denied access to basic education and health care. Women in all parts of the world suffer violence and discrimination. They are under-represented in political and economic decision-making processes.

Over many decades, the United Nations has made significant progress in advancing gender equality, including through landmark agreements such as the [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#) and the [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women](#) (CEDAW).

Working for the empowerment and rights of women and girls globally, UN Women's main roles are:

- To [support inter-governmental bodies](#), such as the [Commission on the Status of Women](#), in their formulation of policies, global standards and norms.
- To help Member States

implement these standards, standing ready to provide suitable technical and financial support to those countries that request it, and to forge effective partnerships with civil society.

- To lead and coordinate the UN system's work on gender equality, as well as promote accountability, including through regular monitoring of system-wide progress.

History of the status of women:

Since Adam and Eve, women have been disgraced in

many ways such as the rights and even making their own decisions. To start with, in a family, woman had no authority. A woman could not divorce her husband even if she was very unhappy with him. Since she did not have right of divorce. Their duty at home was just cooking meal, cleaning the house, taking care of children and many things like these. Besides, the daughters of a man could not receive inheritance just because they were women. Secondly, like in family, in business area women were not dominant. They were used in the work areas like agriculture or handcraft just to benefit from their physical power. They were not

different from slaves. They were allowed to use their minds.

The main centers of scholarship have been the United States and Britain, where [second-wave feminist](#) historians, influenced by the new approaches promoted by [social history](#), led the way. As activists in [women's liberation](#), discussing and analyzing the oppression and inequalities they experienced as women, they believed it imperative to learn about the lives of their fore mothers—and found very little scholarship in print. History was written mainly by men and about men's activities in the public sphere especially in Africa—war, politics, diplomacy and

administration. Women are usually excluded and, when mentioned, are usually portrayed in sex-stereotypical roles such as wives, mothers, daughters, and mistresses. The study of history is value-laden in regard to what is considered historically "worthy." [1]

Other aspects of this area of study is the differences in women's lives caused by race, economic status, social status, and various other aspects. In earlier times, women were exploited through every possible means by the society. They suffered a lot of criticism, lacked freedom and stood nowhere next to men. They were even deprived of the basic birthrights of a human

being. It took a lot of effort and courage for them to mark an impression of "women power" and make a significant place in society. Poetesses such as Charlotte Bronte inspired women by quoting, "I am no bird and no net ensnares me, I am a free human being with an independent will." Through this she tried to convey that women are no longer to be treated as birds in the cage, instead they should be given equal liberty and opportunities as men. Such supportive sections of society led to the developments that are responsible for the improved status of women in today's society of society

Current situation:

Today, the status of women is at a high level not only in family but also in business area when compared to the past. People realized the value of the human life especially after World War I and World War II. They learned to defend their rights. This realization also woke women up and stimulated them to insist on their rights. With the guarantee of the laws which were made in that time, women gained the rights they deserved in both family and business space. Primarily, now women are dominant as much as men.

They become equal to men in every area thanks to Universal Declaration of Human Rights. They began to have rights to receive inheritance, divorce or express themselves liberally. Secondly, looking at business life, we see profile of working, producing woman today. They also gained dignity in business area. Women upgrade themselves by studying. Today it is possible to see women in every field. They showed they could think like men.

The improvement in the status of women in the society can be analyzed in the light of the major changes that have taken place in areas such as

legislations, education, economic and employment sector, political participation and awareness of their rights on the part of women, etc.

Following are some changes:

2.1 Women in the field of education

The effects of women's education on development constitute a significant area of research

within

international development.

An increase in the amount of women's education in regions tends to correlate with high levels of development. Some of the effects are related to economic development.

Women's education

increases the income of women and leads to growth in GDP. Other effects are related to social development. Educating girls leads to a number of social benefits, including many related to women's empowerment. Recent research in human development has established a strong link between women's education and international development. In particular, researchers seek to determine what factors explain differences in rates of development. Women's education is one of the major explanatory variables behind the rates of social and economic development. According to notable

economist Lawrence

Summers "investment in the education of girls may well be the highest-return investment available in the developing world."

2.2 Women in economic and employment fields

In both villages and cities, there has been a remarkable increase in the number of women going out of the four walls of the household and becoming workers. In the "employment market", they are giving tough competition to menfolk. In some fields the number of women employs is steadily increasing. For example, women working as teachers, doctors, nurses, advocates, bank employees, clerks,

typists, telephone operators, receptionist, personal assistants and so on. Since 1991, though in a smaller number, women are getting recruited into armed force, air force and naval force also.[1]In order to give protection to the economic interests and rights of the womenfolk the government has undertaken various socio-economic legislations, which cover areas such as right to property or inheritance, equal wages, working conditions, maternity benefits and job security.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) recently reported facts about women in education fields in Texas in the including the following:

2.2.1 Women represent three-fourths (75.6 percent) of the 493,440 public education employees.

2.2.2 Women represent one-fourth (25.5 percent) of public education employees.

2.2.3 Women represent 1.4 percent of superintendents; 9.1 percent of assistant superintendents; 6 percent of principals; and 9 percent of assistant principals.

2.2.4 More than half (56.5 percent) of the female teachers in public schools worked in early childhood and elementary schools. [2]

2.3 Women in political field
Every country deserves to have the best possible leader and that means that women have to be given a chance to compete. If

they're never allowed to compete in the electoral process then the countries are really robbing themselves of a great deal of talent" says Madeleine K. Albright, Chairman of NDI[3]. It is believed that equitable participation of women in politics and government is essential to build and sustain democracy.

Comprising over 50 percent of the world's population, women continue to be under-represented as voters, political leaders and elected officials. Democracy cannot truly deliver for all of its citizens if half of the population remains underrepresented in the political arena. Women's

participation in mainstream political activity has important implications for the broader arena of governance in any country. Governance relates to a set of rules, institutions, and values that are involved in the management of state and society. Governance institutions and processes include political parties, parliaments, government and their interactions with society. Although governance is a generic term which could mean good government or management, the governance values, types of government, the nature of political processes, the political parties and organizations, which/whose

interests are represented and protected, and the extent of power that the masses have to challenge the state or in suggesting alternatives in methods of governance etc.

2.4 Women given equal rights

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948, enshrines "the equal rights of men and women", and addressed both the equality and equity issues. In 1979, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) for legal implementation of the Declaration of elimination of discrimination against sex.

Described as an international bill of rights for women, it came into force on 3 September 1981. The Convention defines discrimination against women in the following terms, "Any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field." It also establishes an agenda of action for putting an end to sex-based

discrimination for which states ratifying the Convention are required to enshrine gender equality into their domestic legislation, repeal all discriminatory provisions in their laws, and enact new provisions to guard against discrimination against women. They must also establish tribunals and public institutions to guarantee women effective protection against discrimination, and take steps to eliminate all forms of discrimination practiced against women by individuals, organizations, and enterprises.

2.5 Women in the field of sports

Female participation in

sports rose dramatically in the twentieth century, especially in the last quarter, reflecting changes in modern societies that emphasized gender parity. Although the level of participation and performance still varies greatly by country and by sport, women's sports have broad acceptance throughout the world, and in a few instances, such as figure skating, rival or exceed their male counterparts in popularity. The main purpose of participation of women was to bring equality between the sexes in educational institutions. Today there are more females participating in

athletics than ever before. As of the 2007-2008 school year, females made up 41% of the participants in college athletics. In 1971-1972 there were 294,015 females participating in high school athletics and in 2007-2008 there were over three million females participating, meaning there has been a 940% increase in female participation in high school athletics. In 1971-1972 there were 29,972 females participating in college athletics and in 2007-2008 there were 166,728 females participating, that is a 456% increase in female participation in college athletics. Increased participation in sports has had direct effects on other

areas of women's lives. These effects can be seen in women's education and employment later on in life; a recent study found that the changes set in motion by participation of women explained about 20 percent of the increase in women's education and about 40 percent of the rise in employment for 25-to-34-year-old women. This is not to say that all women who are successful later on in life played sports, but it is saying that women who did participate in athletics received benefits in their education and employment later on in life.

Past actions by UN:

A number of key agreements guide governments and advocates in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women.

The [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women](#) (CEDAW), adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly, is often described as an international bill of rights for women. It defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end it. Countries that have ratified or acceded to the Convention are legally bound to put its provisions into practice. They must submit national reports at least every four years on

measures to comply with treaty obligations.

The [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#) was the outcome of the 1995 [Fourth World Conference on Women](#) in Beijing. World leaders committed to measures in [twelve critical areas of concern](#), to be implemented in cooperation with the UN system, regional and international financial institutions, other relevant regional and international institutions, non-governmental organizations, and women and men at large.

Other key documents include the [agreed conclusions](#) of the Commission on the Status of Women.

Intergovernmental bodies of the United Nations, including the [General Assembly](#), the [Security Council](#) and the [Economic and Social Council](#) (ECOSOC) regularly adopt resolutions dedicated to gender equality issues. UN Women supports these bodies by providing expert advice, information and policy recommendations on gender equality issues, often through reports of the UN Secretary-General, and by supporting Member States in all aspects of their work, including in negotiation of resolutions.

Conclusion:

It is largely held that women all over the world have been

made to suffer discrimination and deprivation of various kinds since the beginning of time that they have all along been denied even such basic rights as access to literacy and property. This global concern has steadily grown through the past few decades and has resulted in efforts to bring women into the mainstream of life, mainly through socio-economic activities aimed at empowering them and thus restoring equality between the sexes. Real empowerment of women, however, lies in helping them unfold the spiritual aspect of their personality, build up their character and manifest their purity and motherhood.

It is these that make up the character of the ideal Indian woman; earning capacity and public status are secondary. All women are parts of the same infinite divine Power, and hence divine. Fully realizing the importance and urgency of the uplift of women, if we are to save our cultural traditions and spiritual values and counter the negative trends that are now affecting our body politic. SHGs too organize cultural and value-orientation programs and other meetings on their own for their all-round development. Recently, one such conference was attended by 1700 members. Empowerment is complete

only when a given community takes full control of its own development and the implementing agency, much like a catalytic agent, remains in the background after initiating the process of change. This is exactly what the Ashrama does: once the machinery it has set up is in working order, it hands over the management of affairs to the grass-root organization or SHG, and itself remains in the background to provide motivation and guidance from time to time. As Swami Vivekananda said, „Our duty is to put the chemicals together, the crystallization will come through God's laws. Let us put ideas into their heads, and they will do the rest

Questions to keep in mind:

Are women still lacking behind?

Why were women not treated equally right from the ancient times?

What are the obstacles that oppose women empowerment?

Bibliography:

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