

# GWI United Nation Representative Advocacy Report Geneva 2018

## GWI advocacy goals

1. 100% of United Nations Member States commit to policy, legislation, budget and infrastructure to facilitate transition of girls from primary to secondary school and ensure gender parity and gender equality throughout secondary education by 2030.
2. By 2030 100% of United Nations low income Member States have increased access to tertiary education for girls and women by 50%.
3. 100% of United Nations Member States commit to and implement policies for continuing education to empower women throughout the life course, within the formal and informal economies.
4. Influence the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.
5. All 17 SDGs will include girls' education targets.

**Please bear in mind these five overarching, long-term goals during any United Nations intervention that you make on behalf of GWI. Any intervention should advance these five goals.**

**NB1:** *Although these goals represent GWI's mission, UN Reps are also invited to promote GWI key messages on areas where especially relevant e.g. women in STEM, securing investment in women teachers, addressing barriers to girls' education such as child marriage.*

**NB2:** *Please try to fill out this report comprehensively and bear in mind that any Advocacy Report that is not submitted on the official GWI Advocacy Report Template will be sent back.*

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**Amy Paunila, Geneva GWI UN Rep, attended the Annual full-day discussion on the human rights of women Room XX 10:00-12:00**

Opening remarks

Ms. Kate Gilmore, United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights

Panelists

Mr. Basheerhamad Shadrach, Coordinator for Asia, Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI), World Wide Web Foundation (India)

Ms. Chenai Chair, Researcher & Communications and Evaluations Manager, Research ICT Africa (Zimbabwe)

Ms. Rokhaya Solange Ndir, Head of Digital Ecosystem Relations, Sonatel (Senegal)

Other statements

H.E. Ms. Eva Kjer Hansen, Minister for Fisheries and Equal Opportunities and Minister for Nordic Cooperation of Denmark

**Subject of meeting:**

Panel 2: Advancing women's rights in the economic sphere through access and participation in information and communication technologies (ICTs)

**Refers to SDG no 4.4**

By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg4>

5.b Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg5>

9.c Significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg9>

**Relevant treaties/conventions/resolutions:**

[Human Rights Council resolution 32/13](#) (1 July 2016), The promotion, protection and enjoyment of human rights on the internet

**What GWI resolution(s) does your attendance relate to? (i.e. Tolerance of Minority Groups (5), FGM (6), Human Trafficking (7), Child Marriage (8), etc.)**

The panel content particularly relates to the GWI focus area of Bullying and Cyberbullying, Resolution 1.

**Intervention by GWI rep: (what you did)**

My attendance was accompanied by tweets during the discussion, photos and this summary report.

**Personal observations:****Key points of interest:**

- The Alliance for Affordable Internet's research puts the gender digital divide at 13.4%, at least 1.8% higher than the ITU figure of 11.6%. The lower percentage of women online, the larger the digital gender gap will be.
- The IT University in Copenhagen, Denmark tripled the number female students in software development in two years simply by reshaping and rewording their advertising and information materials.
- According to a Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) report, Sub-Saharan Africa maintains the highest regional average female TEA (Female Entrepreneur Activity Rate) in the world (25.9%) It is more than necessary for women to be digitally literate to increase their performance.

**How this serves GWI members:**

1. Explain trends in development in this particular subject.

2. Explain why these trends and developments are relevant to GWI and NFAs.
3. Outline what needs to be done at international and national levels.

ICTs can provide more affordable and inclusive educational opportunities for girls – when school is not secure, when disability prevents classroom access, when distance or isolation prevents school attendance. In addition, further education by distance is often much more affordable than face-to-face options.

Access to essential health information and services can improve girls and women's health. Greater access to both education and health means more economic opportunities for girls and women.

Women should not be seen as mere users of ICTs but as active entrepreneurs and highly qualified workers in ICT field so they are a part of the ICT revolution - 'the fourth revolution'.

Women and girls need to be encouraged into the STEM sector by addressing career gender stereotypes, emphasising the wide range of roles available and ensuring working environments are safe.

Emerging technology such as big data and machine learning carry an inherent risk of replicating existing patterns of discrimination against women, if there are not well-thought out plans to enable greater economic participation.

An evolving area of technology is Artificial Intelligence (AI). There are many questions to be answered on the future impact of AI on employment in general, but most relevantly on women's employment and individual social groups; i.e. what is being automated? Investment must be made into research on how AI's potential benefits can be made more inclusive, as well as transparency around its use and policies.

A key point made during several of the presentations was the emphasis on eliminating bias within technology design by taking into account who will use it, who stands to benefit from it, and who it will harm.

### **Next steps:**

Advocating on specific benchmarks relating to policies and use of AI, education programmes including digital literacy for girls and women, affordable access to internet, cyber safety etc. would be measurable targets for GWI to advocate towards. E.g. A4AI advocates for the 1 for 2 target - 1GB of data monthly for less than 22% of monthly income should be benchmarked against the bottom 20 percentile of the population.

Emphasis on education/training, research and policy-making must be accompanied by infrastructural improvement, to ensure digital spaces are safe, affordable and accessible to all. The World Wide Web Foundation recommends the 'REACT' framework for advocacy; Rights, Education, Access, Content and Target, a 'holistic approach to ensure that women and girls are not merely online, but are able to exploit the power of the Internet for their socio-economic gains as well as for empowering themselves'.



*Figure 1 Ms Kate Gilmore presenting on Panel 2 HRC38*