



Notes from the Field...

International Day of Education

Today, there are 130 million girls out of school, and 262 million total children out of school.

On December 3rd, the United Nations adopted a resolution that declared January 24th as the International Day of Education. The resolution was authored by Nigeria and 58 other states. On this day, the UN held an event where the importance of education for all was discussed. Having an official day for education along with an event helps promote SDG 4 and encourage countries to make education a priority. (Sustainable Development Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all).

"This day is the occasion to reaffirm fundamental principles. Firstly, education is a human right, a public good and a public responsibility. Secondly, education is the most powerful force in our hands to ensure significant improvements in health, to stimulate economic growth, to unlock the potential and innovation we need to build more resilient and sustainable societies. Lastly, we urgently need to call for collective

4 QUALITY EDUCATION



action for education at global level." - Audrey Azoulay, Director General, Message on the occasion of the International Day of Education

[Watch the event here](#)

NGO Committee on the Status of Women Focuses on Education

"Equal Access to Education for All: Gender, Disabilities, and Indigenous Peoples" was the focus of the January meeting of NGO CSW, featuring guest speakers who shared their experiences with education and educating others.

Amanda McRae, Women Enabled International, works to advance the rights of women and girls with disabilities around the world. They work with these women and girls by bringing them to the UN and making sure that they have the best experience possible. This requires a number of accommodations to ensure that these women truly have access to the UN. During events at the UN, it is important to consider providing simultaneous CART (closed captioning) and/or sign language interpretation. Using the proper language and terminology is also very important.

Dr. Linda J. Stillman, founder/chair of Young Global Leadership Foundation, mentors



aspiring young adults. She spoke about how education is a human right, referring to the resolution adopted on December 3rd, 2018 by the General Assembly, proclaiming January 24th as the International Day of Education. Dr. Michael Nizich, Director of the Entrepreneurship and Technology Innovation Center (ETIC), works to advance engineering education using the SDGs. NYIT was established in 1955 and has over 9000 students, represents 46 states and 100+ countries. They created a 6 week design competition, in which entries had to be based on the SDGs and they had to be working prototypes. The first project was about clean water and sanitation, where the students built a pond purification system. The second team created a phone app with a picture of the Earth where you can virtually pick up trash and track the differences you are making. The last group created a drone system that could go into remote regions to gather statistics on pollution and temperature. Mary Olushoga, AWP Network Agropreneur Project, and the AWP Network Dream Initiative, invests in African women entrepreneurs. Various African cities are failing people with disabilities; an example of this is one woman who tried to go to the bank and was unable to, as there were no ramps and the doors to the bank were too small to fit a wheelchair through. She started the movement #rampupnigeria. Nigeria has the highest number of women entrepreneurs, but most of them are survival entrepreneurs rather than innovative entrepreneurs. An example of survival entrepreneurship would be buying something at a certain price and then selling it for a, hopefully, higher price. Some of the challenges that women entrepreneurs face is the lack of access to financing, lack of mentorship and networking opportunities, and

lack of financial literacy. Some recommendations would be to create a platform connecting women across the continent to diversity networking platforms, increase networks of gender diverse teams, trainings to encourage investors to incorporate gender lens investing best practices, and increase the number of women on investment teams.

Panel Discussion with the Winners of the 2018 Human Rights Prize

On December 18th, the UN held an event with the winners of the 2018 Human Rights Prize. Activists from 4 different continents were honored for advancing human rights. They are winners of the 2018 Human Rights Prize awarded in December, continuing an honor that began in 1968, The winners are impressive for their courage and accomplishments.

Ms. Rebeca Gyumi is an activist for the rights of women and girls based in Tanzania. Her main focus is on education, and access to education for girls. The environment that these girls are in makes it hard for them to stay in school and study and unleash their potential. 2 out of 5 girls are married before their 18th birthday in Tanzania. Each year, almost 8000 girls are dropping out of school due to becoming pregnant. Ms Gyumi helped create and file a petition to raise the minimum age of marriage to 18, which ended up being successful. She spoke about the importance of young people getting involved in these issues in order to make a difference.

Ms. Asma Jahangir was a human rights lawyer in Pakistan. Asma's daughter, Munizae, spoke on her late mother's behalf. She decided to become a lawyer after fighting to prevent her father from being arrested and sent to jail. Ms. Jahangir was thrown into jail

at one point for defending a 13 year old rape victim. She defended another 12 year old boy who was accused of blasphemy. While defending him, she was threatened and many people wanted her dead, but she continued to defend him. Munizae stated that she always remembers her mother as being extremely dedicated to human rights.

Ms. Joênia Wapichana is an activist for the rights of indigenous communities in Brazil. In Brazil, the indigenous population and their culture is being attacked. It is important that people are aware and paying attention to this issue, because this population needs help. The president of Brazil has called for a review of the rights of the indigenous population and has proposed changes that would diminish their rights. In particular jeopardy are the rights for lands occupied by the the indigenous population. Luckily, there are many indigenous rights defenders located in Brazil who work very hard to make sure that this population can keep their rights.

Andrew Anderson works for Front Line Defenders, which is an Irish organization advocating and working for the protection of human rights defenders. There are so many human rights defenders who are being hurt, killed, and disappearing all over the world. Two thirds of the defenders who were killed were working on land rights, environmental rights, and indigenous rights. There are many defenders who are stuck in jails around the world today, and Anderson and his organization are working to help defenders in these situations.

[Watch the event here](#)

Women Professionals in the Music Industry

Change Begins Inside of us, said Jane Meryll, a musician and a Grammy Award Nominee. If we need to change the situation for women in the world we will need by changing the mind set or the cultural ideas that are biased against women.

The mission of Peru hosted an event under the title Women Professionals in the Music Industry to highlight the challenges women in music face. Despite the high number of women in the industry, very few make it to the top. The Guardian published an article indicating that

female composers are largely ignored by concert line-ups shows; from around 1400 concerts programmed in 2018-2019 across the globe, only 76 have included a work by a woman.

According to Neeta Regoowansi, representing women in the business side of the industry, women are struggling to be promoted to senior management of record labels and music technology platforms. This is also a result of the cultural idea of what women can and cannot do. Gender equality has been one of the issues that UN has been pushing to achieve through the Social Development Goals (SDGs) that were adapted in 2015. To find a solution to this problem, radical change in the social thinking is required; otherwise gender inequality will continue to be an issue for many years to come.

5 GENDER EQUALITY





Commission on Social Development

The Fifty-seventh session of Commission for Social Development (CSocD57) will take place from 11 to 21 February, at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The priority theme is “Addressing inequalities and challenges to social inclusion through fiscal, wage and social protection policies”. IASSW representatives in the United Nations will be attending and participating in the event. We are co-sponsoring a workshop with the International Council on Social Welfare and other groups on the importance of accountability in advancing social protection. A link is provided with the time and topics of discussion. For those who are interested in the event, you can watch some of the meeting online on the UN web TV; see the link below for that. The next newsletter will highlight the events of the Commission. In the meantime, watch for a survey from the Grassroots Task Force. This survey will ask for data about inequalities in local communities and efforts to reduce inequality. We hope to have IASSW members participate in the data sharing.

<http://webtv.un.org>

[Commission for Social Development
Schedule](#)

First Steps into the Era of Global Compact Implementation

In December 2018 the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) was adopted in Marrakesh, Morocco. This has been a two-year process, and it marks the first time that UN member states successfully negotiated an agreed set of commitments to help manage migration and safety. The Global Compact on Refugees was also adopted in Marrakech, which helps those who have been forced to flee their countries. Both Compacts were formally adopted by a

vote of the UN General Assembly in NY in the week of December 17th. Members of many NGOs and Civil Society attended the event and provided some insight as to what the next steps should be to help implement the compacts. Now that the documents have been adopted, civil society will have to take the role of advocating for the implementation and ratification of the documents by member states and UN agencies. Also, bringing light to some of the good practices to provide ideas and encourage state members to do the same. It was noted that some countries did not attend the event and others pulled out of the agreement afterwards. Members of the NGO Committee on Migration who attended the events in Marrakesh noted that member states only spoke about regular migration, no attention was given to irregular migration. Also, the issue of temporary migrant workers was not addressed leaving them victims to unfair treatment. These realities underscore the reluctance of the global community to truly ensure safe migration. Negative attitudes towards refugees and migrants is on the rise making the work of the civil society more challenging.

A Matter of Humanity

#HolocaustRemembrance

“The opposite of love is not hate, but indifference”, Ronald Lauder, president of the World Jewish Congress. Anti-Semitism seems to be on a rise across the world, we have to remember that silence is dangerous, we need to speak up and defend those who are different from us, humanity should always come first. Those are important messages from the event remembering victims of the Holocaust.

On January 27, 2005 the United Nations General Assembly declared January 27 to be



the “International Day in the Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust”. The 2019 theme was “Holocaust Remembrance: Demand and Defend Your Human Rights”. The United Nations Headquarters in New York held many events and activities to encourage youth to learn from the past lessons, help element discrimination and hatred, and protect democracy across the world. The permanent mission of Albania to the UN held an event titled “A matter of humanity: the rescue of Jews in Albania during the Holocaust”. During the event, we were reminded of many people who took on themselves to protect the Jews who were fleeing Europe. This was also a reminder that heroes are normal people who decide to act with kindness and love towards those who need help regardless of religion, ethnicity, and nationality. Majlinda, an Albanian citizen whose family was recognized as “Righteous Among the Nations” for their rescue of a Jewish family in Albania, spoke. She shared her family's experience and talked about the Albanian people’s hospitality towards their guests which was the main force behind the support they provided to the Jewish people. The International Day in the Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust is a reminder of those who perished as well as those who survived violence and a call for building peace around the world.

[Watch the event here](#)

Social Work Day at the United Nations April 1, 2018

Just announced! Social Work Day at the United Nations at UN Headquarters in New York will be Monday, April 1. There will be a student conference and faculty roundtable on Sunday afternoon, March 31. On line registration will be March 4. Watch for more news.





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