

Current observations on poverty among women

Empowerment both spiritual and economic environment

DEFINITION OF POVERTY

The UN definition of poverty is insecurity, powerlessness and exclusion of individuals, households and communities. It means susceptibility to violence, and it often implies living on marginal or fragile environments, without access, to clean water or sanitation. (UN website)

1) POVERTY/EDUCATION/ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

- Introduction Recommendation 1995

In order to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development, women and men must participate fully and equally in the formulation of macroeconomic and social policies and strategies for the eradication of poverty. The eradication of poverty cannot be accomplished through anti-poverty programmes alone but will require democratic participation and changes in economic structures in order to ensure access for all women to resources, opportunities and public services. Poverty has various manifestations, including lack of income and productive resources sufficient to ensure a sustainable livelihood; hunger and malnutrition; ill health; limited or lack of access to education and other basic services; increasing morbidity and mortality from illness; homelessness and inadequate housing; unsafe environments; and social discrimination and exclusion. (Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 1995)

- Present Situation 2024 (Challenges-Gaps-Achievements)

By 2023, it is estimated that the number of girls and young women out of school globally will rise to 129 million.

Globally in 2022, 32.1% of women aged 15 to 24 were neither students, employees, nor interns, compared to 15.4% of young men.

The statistics 2005 to 2022 of women and men aged 15 to 24 are neither students, employees, nor trainees. The poorer the region, the more there is a gap between out-of-school women and out-of-school men.

Challenges- Despite gains in providing access to quality education, girls are still more likely than boys to remain excluded from education. CSW68 recognizes that among the barriers to girls' equal enjoyment of their right to education there are specific barriers that girls face, such as the feminization of poverty, child labour undertaken by girls, gender stereotypes, negative social norms and other challenges (26 - CSW68 Agreed conclusions).

Restructure and target the allocation of public expenditures to promote women's economic opportunities and equal access to productive resources and to address the basic social, educational and health needs of women, particularly those living in poverty;

Data from approximately 100 countries show that the proportion of total government spending on essential services (education, health and social protection) is approximately 50%, with an average of 60% amongst advanced economies and 40% amongst emerging market and developing economies. While this indicator trends slightly upward for both groups over the past two decades, the gap between them remains stable at approximately 20 percentage points. (SG SDG Progress Report 2024.)

- Recommendations

Investment in quality education is crucial in empowering women and girls to overcome poverty.

1 . Since the commission expresses concern about unequal pace of social economic development and access to education within and among countries, the structural, systemic barriers undermine women's and girls ability to securely access equitable and quality education. Also they need to be equipped with the knowledge, awareness and skills for their social and women's economic empowerment.

2. The Commission reaffirms that the commitment needs to continue to increase investments in inclusive, affordable and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities. This includes early childhood education, youth and adult literacy programmes and initiatives, digital education, cultural education, education for sustainable development, digital technologies for education, skills enhancement, affordable higher education and vocational training.

This is essential to help women and girls overcome poverty and vulnerability.

3. We have now experienced nearly three tough years of accelerating inflation and four desperate years since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, with stagnant progress on headline poverty and increasing levels of deep poverty and destitution even before then.

Session of CSW68 22nd of March 2024 - Agreed conclusions

2) POVERTY/ENVIRONMENT

- Introduction Recommendation 1995

In 1995, States concluded that they must include a gender perspective in the development and implementation of environmental policies, recognizing the specific challenges women face and their crucial role in natural resource management. There was a need to provide women with access to specific training and education on environmental issues to increase their active participation and decision-making in these areas. States had to support women-led environmental initiatives, including conservation, sustainable agriculture, and natural resource management projects, recognizing their significant contribution to achieving environmental sustainability.

Ensuring women's equitable access to natural resources, including land, water, and biodiversity, is essential to enable them to manage these resources sustainably. States proposed to promote greater participation of women in decision-making processes in environmental sectors, ensuring that their voices are heard and considered at all stages of policy planning and implementation. These actions aimed to strengthen the role of women in

promoting environmental sustainability and climate change adaptation, recognizing that women bring essential knowledge and unique perspectives to these fields.

- Present Situation 2024 (Challenges-Gaps-Achievements)

The Commission recognizes that global challenges, and emergencies, including those related to health, energy, and food security, natural disasters, geopolitical tensions and wars often disproportionately affect women and girls. These have pushed people, in particular women and girls, further behind and into extreme poverty.

It is deeply concerned that water scarcity and disruptions to supply induced by, inter alia, climate change, environment degradation and disasters disproportionately affect women, and girls, with women walking long distances or waiting hours in queues to obtain water. This restricts their time for other activities, such as education and leisure, or for women earning a livelihood.

Concerns remain that all women and girls are often disproportionately affected by the adverse impacts of climate change, environmental degradation, biodiversity loss, extreme weather events and natural disasters. Other environmental issues, reiterates deep concern over challenges posed by climate change to the achievement of sustainable development and poverty eradication.

It recalls the adoption of the second gender action plan by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at its twenty-fifth session.

From the Mediterranean Sea to the Arctic Circle, entire ecosystems are collapsing and this affects the supply of safe drinking water, contributing to poor air quality, threatening food security, decreasing the resilience of communities and wiping out cultural practices. These crises exacerbate existing inequalities and most seriously affect the human rights of those already in marginalized situations.

The right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment has been recognized by international and regional bodies. The UN Human Rights Council recognized this right through a resolution in October 2021, and the UN General Assembly followed in July 2022.

Migration:

The Commission recognizes that global challenges and emergencies, natural disasters, geopolitical tensions and wars cause loss of homes and migration. These disproportionately affects women and girls and pushing them further behind and into extreme poverty.

- Recommendations :

Address the challenges posed by the impact of climate change and strengthen the full, equal, and meaningful participation, representation and leadership of women at all levels of decision making in climate and environmental action.

Promote the integration of a gender perspective into environmental and climate change policies.

In addition, provide national gender equality mechanisms and entities responsible for climate change, environmental and disaster risk management and reduction policies.

Provide adequate human and financial resources to ensure that a gender perspective is integrated into the design, implementation and evaluation of relevant policies, programmes, and projects.

3) POVERTY/ACCOUNTABILITY OF EVERY INDIVIDUAL AND GOVERNANCE

- Introduction Recommendation 1995

Promote people-centred sustainable development, including sustained economic growth, through the provision of basic education, life-long education, literacy and training, and primary health care for girls and women; (27. Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 1995)

Eradication of poverty based on sustained economic growth, social development, environmental protection and social justice requires the involvement of women in economic and social development, equal opportunities and the full and equal participation of women and men as agents and beneficiaries of people-centred sustainable development; (16. Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 1995)

The implementation of the Platform for Action requires commitment from Governments and the international community. By making national and international commitments for action, including those made at the Conference, Governments and the international community recognize the need to take priority action for the empowerment and advancement of women. (21. Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 1995)

- Present Situation 2024 (Challenges-Gaps-Achievements)

The Commission affirms the Governments have the primary responsibility for the follow-up to and review of the 2030 Agenda at the national, regional and global levels with regard to progress made.

The Commission acknowledges the important role played by regional conventions, instruments, and initiatives and their follow-up mechanisms in their respective regions and

countries, in the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls by addressing and strengthening institutions and financing with gender perspectives.

The objectives outlined aim to address the specific needs of women in poverty by reviewing macroeconomic policies, revising laws for equal rights, providing access to financial mechanisms, and conducting gender-focused research on poverty. These objectives are monitored at the EU level through indicators related to poverty levels and economic inactivity among women and men. However, the current indicators only measure monetary poverty and fail to account for material deprivation and social exclusion. There is a need to update and expand the indicator set to include in-work poverty and other factors affecting poverty levels, such as unemployment, welfare system effectiveness, gender gaps in pensions, and incidence of low wages.

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- Recommendations

Everyone, especially leaders working in community, business or government locally or internationally, need to prioritise the sharing of agreed moral behaviour and values. Cooperation and spiritual principles ensure that harmony, peace and unity prevail. Divisive political structures need to be more democratic, with everyone being consulted and their views heard and respected, embedded in all areas of society.