



UN Women

Hello, delegates, and thank you for attending Mission Viejo High School's 33rd annual Model United Nations conference. My name is Brendan McGillicuddy and I am a senior in my fourth year of the MUN program. This year, I look forward to being your head chair of the UN Women ECOSOC committee. I am an AP student, CSF member, National Honor Society Secretary, Make A Wish Club member, and leader of a community service club here at Mission Viejo High. In my free time, I love going out and seeing movies with my friends, taking apart and rebuilding electronics, writing and performing music for piano and synthesizer, and playing PC games. In this committee, we will discuss two topics: Women's political empowerment and access to justice, and the engagement of young boys in gender equality issues. The focus of this committee will be to discuss resolutions that establish and preserve equality and prosperity around the world.

Hello delegates, my name is Ethan Sparks and I will be your vice chair for the Mission Viejo High School MUN UN Women's counsel 2017. This will be my third year participating in MUN after two years in Intermediate School as a Freshman. I'm involved in Mission Viejo's Cross Country team and several other programs and am currently all Freshman year honors on the path to AP classes. I love to run, read, and go scuba-diving. I also love to travel with my family and have gone to places such as Vietnam, Costa Rica, Peru, Tanzania, Italy and other countries. I love studying United States history and going to the beach. I am excited to be your Vice-Chair and look forward to a great conference as you all progress on the issues of the United Nations Women's Committee.

Feel free to email us with any questions at mvhsmun_women@gmail.com

Position papers are due via email on December 15th, 2017.

Topic 1: Women's Political Empowerment and Access to Justice

I. Background:

All over the world, women encounter restriction in politics and leadership, from the local to national level. Although most developed countries in the world provide women with equal opportunities in advancement and leadership, the same cannot be said for most of the developing and under-developed world. In such discriminatory countries, women are often barred from basic education, setting them up for a life of dependency and political inactivity. The gender equality gap is worst in areas such as the Middle East and Africa, where both cultural and religious customs have traditionally prevented women from seeking lives and leadership roles of their own. These same traditional customs also account for much of the violence and abuse toward women in these countries. Even in places where women have the right to vote, they are still vastly underrepresented in the voting population.



In addition to their restriction from leadership roles, women in restrictive countries often lack access to equal justice. Due to their lower social status, women who are denied a proper education cannot participate in the legal system the same way that men can, and without a complete understanding of human rights under the law, they have no way to defend themselves from unfair practices. In essence, the lack of education for women in such countries leads to a slippery slope to human rights abuses.

II. United Nations Involvement:

In 2000, the UN Development Group drafted the Millennium Development Goals. The Millennium Development Goals are a set of eight specific goals that range from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and providing universal primary education. These goals were drafted in the year 2000 with the purpose of completing them by the target year 2015. These eight goals “form a blueprint agreed to by all the world’s countries and all the world’s leading development institutions.” One of the eight goals was the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women around the world. Before the 2015 deadline, the UN was successful in establishing equality in primary, secondary, and tertiary education in all developing nations around the world. In addition, this endeavor led to a 6% increase of women in the paid workforce, increasing to 41% from just 35% in 1990. The world has also seen a 100% increase in the amount of women in parliaments since 1990 as a result of this goal. Still, despite these groundbreaking achievements and active involvement from the United Nations, access to fair and equal justice is still out of reach for most women in developing countries as a result of cultural customs and traditional stereotypes of women.

III. Possible Solutions:

As delegates to the UN Women committee, you will be responsible for generating solutions to the problems that have been holding back women around the world, and ensuring the future prosperity of their respective nations. When discussing ways to increase the involvement and participation of women in leadership positions, one possibility to suggest is to work off models already in place in the developing world as a result of UN programs. For example, in India, where poorer villages have begun to incorporate women into their political councils, the amount of progress made regarding access to clean water has increased drastically. Another possible solution regarding women’s role in politics may be to include political education as a necessary part of all secondary or tertiary curriculums in the developing world, so women will be able to understand how political protocols operate, at least on a basic level. Finally, when discussing access to justice, delegates may choose to explore the effect of education on a woman’s ability to receive fair treatment under the law, and how they can demand justice for themselves without disregarding the established customs of their cultures.



IV. Bloc Positions:

Asian Bloc: Asia is home to the world's fastest growing economies and fastest developing infrastructures, and women have played a large role in this. While not leading the world in female equality, most Asian nations have prioritized removing equality barriers and are working to improve the roles of women in society.

Latin Bloc: Latin nations vary widely in their efforts to provide women with social equality and access to justice, and this seems to correspond directly to a nation's level of infrastructural development. Formerly European colonized nations in South America are currently leading the historically native nations in this aspect.

European Bloc: The European Bloc has spent much of its efforts on assisting developing and undeveloped nations (specifically those in Africa and Latin America) with female empowerment. European (including North American) nations currently lead the world in female equality and access to justice, but there is always more progress that can be made.

African Bloc: Africa (especially sub-Saharan Africa) is the least developed part of the world, and its countries are nearly incapable of making progress for women without external intervention. Despite this, some nations, such as South Africa, Mozambique, and Rwanda actually have a very high proportion of women in state-level leadership.

Middle-eastern Bloc: Another heavily undeveloped part of the world, the Middle East has been slow to modernize as a result of frequent conflict, terrorism, and distrust in the west. Due to their cultural history and widespread adoption of Sharia Law, the Middle East is one of the worst places in the world for female equality, civil rights, and access to justice.

V. Guiding Questions:

1. How can the UN institute change in countries where mistreatment of women is a product of their cultural history?
2. Does more educational change need to be made in places where equal education for both boys and girls is already provided? If so, to what degree?
3. If the UN does promote equality for women around the world, how can it ensure that these standards are respected and not ignored immediately after establishment?
4. In places where women's political voices are almost completely suppressed, how can the UN Women committee begin to give them leadership roles in society?

Works Cited:

“What We Do: Leadership and Political Participation.” *UN Women*

“Facts and Figures: Leadership and Political Participation.” *UN Women*



“CEDAW: General Discussion on Women and Access to Justice.” *WILPF*, wilpf.org

“United Nations Millennium Development Goals.” *United Nations*, United Nations

Topic 2: Engaging Boys and Young Men in Gender Equality:

I. Background

Engaging boys and young men in gender equality is a very important part of developing a sense of equality in the world's society today. While steps have been made, this aspect of improving gender equality has largely been ignored despite the fact that it is a key factor in improving gender equality conditions. This topic is crucial because without the engagement, sympathy, and support of the both sexes, the issue of equal gender rights becomes a very one-sided issue. Furthermore, engaging the youth is critical in the work towards a brighter future. Educating the future generation is essential to i While this may be a large issue, efforts that have been taken so far have been small and non-global in scope. It is obvious that engaging boys and young men in gender equality needs to take a larger priority in the international community. Some men in our modern day act as the lead position in the traditional family unit and studies have shown that in many countries and in this case, the United States have more male leaders in the workforce. Only 24% of CEO's in the United States are women. The issue of gender equality can be solved at a much faster rate with the mass support of both genders with awareness made more relatable in both groups of people.

II. United Nations Involvement

The United Nations has worked all over the world in an effort to involve boys and young men in understanding gender equality. For example, in Cambodia United Nations leaders have taught men whom volunteered to present in high-schools about gender-inequality and other issues relating to the topic. A few campaigns have been made by the UN Women's group such as the HeForShe campaign in Zimbabwe. In addition, through the other campaigns more than 10,000 young men have been reached on the topic of gender-equality. Also, The United Nations Women Committee has trained about 3,000 local leaders in Rwanda to combat gender-based violence through teaching young men and boys how to institute gender-equality and teaching young girls how to combat gender-equality and self-defense. Furthermore, the United Nations Women committee has participated in the MenEngage Global event in Delhi, India. In a past United Nations resolution, named “Policy Approaches to Engaging Men and Boys in Achieving gender equality and Health Equity” made in 2010 states that countries should “mainstream” men into gender and health policy along with support from the World Health Organization (WHO.) The UN Women has also worked with several groups or ngo's on the topic of Engaging Men and Boys in Gender Equality such as the HeForShe campaign, the MenEngage Alliance, The Rwanda Men's



Resource Centre, and The Streetwise Project among other organizations in places such as Fiji, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and Turkey.

III. Possible Solutions

The focus of this committee is for all of you, as delegates, to create detailed, creative solutions to the topic presented representing the opinion of your selected country. One path of solution is to use non-profit organizations as a form to engage the young male demographic in gender equality. Another idea is to have check-ups made by the United Nations sent to volunteers to observe the general sentiment about women's rights. In addition, the incorporation of groups to raise awareness for the issues surrounding gender inequality and violence should be a keystone factor in the issue of engaging young boys and men in gender equality. It is also important to keep in mind, that in many societies, the issue of a separation of genders in roles in work and working towards breaking the barriers of gender-based roles can lead to more empathy from the male gender to the opposite sex. Therefore, cultural barriers may be some of the most difficult obstacles to overcome in this committee, and should be thoroughly discussed. Overall, delegates in this committee should work towards creating insightful policies that would work towards engaging men in gender equality at a region by region, or state by state level, as not to develop a blanket solution.

IV. Guiding Questions

1. What resources do the United Nations have in engaging young boys in gender-equality?
2. Should countries not participating in this movement be punished or goaded? If so, to what level?
3. How can you effectively measure how a country progresses in gender equality issues without corruption?
4. How should gender-equality awareness be spread across other countries of varying levels of development?

Works Cited:

“Engaging Boys and Young Men in Gender Equality.” *UN Women* , United Nations ,
2017.

“Engaging Men and Boys: A Brief Summary of UNBFA Experience and Lessons
Learned.” *United Nations Population Fund*, Jan. 2013, pp. 1–55.



“Engaging Men.” *UN Women* , United Nations , 2017.

“ILO.” *Gender Inequality and Women in the US Labor Force*, International Labour
Organization , 23 Nov. 2011.