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**UNESCO
IN ACTION
FOR
GENDER
EQUALITY**

2020
2021

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Table of contents

Message of the Director-General	5
Key Facts and Figures	6

Highlights: A selection of 15 UNESCO good practices with concrete examples of implementation that contributed to gender equality in education, the sciences, culture and communication and have had impact on people's lives.

Highlight 1 Advancing gender equality in education	12	Highlight 8 Women safeguarding cultural and natural heritage	32
Highlight 2 Creating safe and inclusive learning environments for girls and young women	14	Highlight 9 Addressing existing and emerging societal challenges to gender equality	36
Highlight 3 Enhancing participation of women and girls in STEM	18	Highlight 10 Engaging men and boys for gender equality: tackling harmful gender norms and stereotypes	40
Creative Resilience: a window to responses to the COVID-19 pandemic through art by women of science	20	Highlight 11 Promoting gender equality in and through the media	44
Highlight 4 Expanding horizons for women in science	22	Highlight 12 Strengthening the safety of women journalists	48
Highlight 5 Mainstreaming gender equality in the water sector	24	Highlight 13 UNESCO In Action for gender equality in Africa	50
Highlight 6 Empowering women to manage natural resources	26	Highlight 14 UNESCO In Action for gender equality in Small Island Developing States	52
Women and leadership in ocean science – UN Ocean Decade	28	Highlight 15 Addressing the challenge of gender equality during a pandemic	54
Highlight 7 Reducing gender inequalities in the creative sectors	30		
Fitting in the broader picture: The United Nations, UNESCO and Gender Equality	58		
Generation Equality Forum 2021 - Beijing + 25	60		
In conclusion	64		



Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO with a student from Bastos public school, member of the UNESCO Associated Schools network, during a mission in Cameroon, February 2022
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Message of the Director-General

Over the last 15 years, UNESCO has committed the Organization to ensuring that gender equality is mainstreamed into all aspects, and at every level of its mandate. It was in 2007 that UNESCO Member States unanimously decided to make gender equality a Global Priority for the Organization.

Since then, UNESCO has spared no effort with this priority in mind, achieving success in several fields. However, this progress is now threatened due to the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is for this reason – as you will observe it in the following pages – that UNESCO has made a special effort to prevent girls and women from becoming victims of this unprecedented crisis.

Therefore, in the field of education, we must combat the risk of increased school drop-out rates for girls, with all the ensuing consequences: early and forced marriages and pregnancies, gender-based violence, and the narrowing of long-term prospects, as we know that, once girls have stopped going to school, they will not return to the same extent as boys. This was highlighted in a report published by UNESCO on the occasion of the International Day of the Girl in October 2021 showing that in some regions girls are twice as likely not to return to school.

This is the reason why the Global Education Coalition with its more than 200 partners in more than 100 countries, is promoting girls' learning continuity and their return to school.

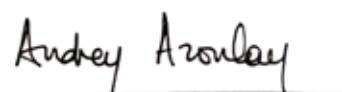
It is also necessary to address the gender inequalities that persist in the fields of science and technology. The two UNESCO normative instruments, on Open Science and the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence, which have just been adopted at its General Conference, in November 2021, aim to ensure that these aspects are taken into account – in order that

science is as open to women as it is to men, and that Artificial Intelligence serves and does not disserve gender equality.

One other important challenge, at the heart of public policy, is the capacity to measure inequality between men and women. Measurement, evaluation, and knowledge are decisive, if effective public policies are to be put in place. This is the reason why UNESCO has put particular emphasis on knowledge, by collecting, often for the first time, equivalent and comparable data for men and women, on subjects as diverse as digital skills, STEM education for girls, or gender bias in Artificial Intelligence.

Through the following pages, you can measure what the notion of a Global Priority means in UNESCO, in other words, for every project, every programme, every action that UNESCO undertakes, gender equality must be part of the equation. It is by putting the full spectrum of UNESCO's mandate at the service of this cause that we can achieve sustainable and tangible results; and it is the reason why gender equality was reaffirmed as one of the two UNESCO Global Priorities for the next eight years.

This publication, showing what has been accomplished even in times of a severe global pandemic, forges the way forward for our ambitions for the years to come, to continue, spanning a unique mandate, working towards this ideal of justice and dignity, because it is above all in minds, that prejudices and stereotypes can be deconstructed, and the defences of gender equality can be built.



Key Facts and Figures

EDUCATION

With the support of UNESCO:

- ▶ **The Gender in Education Network in Asia-Pacific** (GENIA) provides technical support, resources, capacity building and tools to strengthen national approaches to gender equality in education with 33 focal points in 31 countries in the region. Among the results, gender equality is now mainstreamed in textbooks in Viet Nam and the Philippines.
- ▶ Despite significant progress over the last decades, three quarters of children who are likely never to go to primary school are girls. **The Gender at the Centre Initiative**, launched in 2019 during the G7 summit in Biarritz, France, supported the full integration of gender equality aspects into the development of Education Sector Analyses in Sierra Leone and Nigeria.

75% of children who are likely never to go to primary school are girls



NATURAL SCIENCES

With the support of UNESCO:

- ▶ **The Unlocking the Potential of Girls in STEM mentorship programme** in Kenya has benefited a total of 161 schools, over 2,000 secondary school girls, and 600 boys. Based on its success, the Government of Kenya has established model STEM girls' and boys' schools-102 in total-in all 47 counties in the country.

- ▶ **The Our Rights, Our Lives, Our Future (03) Programme**, including both girls and boys, since its inception in 2018, has reached over 28 million learners in 2021 in primary and secondary school in over 30 African countries with life-skills, HIV and sexuality education, helping to keep girls in school.
- ▶ **The Empowering Adolescent Girls and Young Women through Education** project has enabled over 12,600 out-of-school girls and young women to gain access to non-formal basic education including on literacy, vocational training, and reproductive health issues in Mali, Nepal and Tanzania. In Tanzania, community radios reached more than one million people across four districts through programmes broadcast on gender equality and women's empowerment.
- ▶ **The Indigenous Girls' Right to Education - Bright Girls, Brighter Future** project in Viet Nam since its launch in October 2020, has trained 583 female and 759 male teachers in project schools on gender-responsive school counselling. The Vietnamese Ministry of Education plans to open the initiative to all 40,000 teachers in Vietnam.
- ▶ In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the **#Learning Never Stops** campaign has reached over 400 million people since its launch in the course of 2020, with the engagement of partners in UNESCO's Global Education Coalition.

- ▶ **The L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Awards** since 1998, have recognized 122 outstanding women scientists. Five of them have received the Nobel Prize. Over 23 years, it has supported more than 3,600 women researchers in around 120 countries. In 2020 and 2021, L'Oréal-UNESCO Awards for Women in Science recognized 10 women researchers for pioneering work in environmental and life, and in 2020 the International Rising Talents was granted to 15 promising young

women scientists at the doctoral or post-doctoral level, they encourage international scientific cooperation and the development of cross-cultural networks.

- **The Organization for Women in Science for the Developing World** (OWSD), a UNESCO programme unit, Ph.D fellowships' programme, funded by Sweden since 1998, has enabled over 400 women scientists from the poorest countries to prepare their Ph.Ds. in STEM subjects. In 2020 and 2021, 54 PhD fellowships were awarded by OWSD and 53 fellows were graduated with their PhDs.
- **The World Academy of Sciences (TWAS), for the advancement of science in developing countries** a programme unit of UNESCO, in 2021, elected 46% new women Academy fellows up from 34% in 2020.
- **The UNESCO Science Report, 2021**, cites that in 2018, globally, women accounted for 33% of scientific researchers, (up from 28% in 2013); 28% of engineers; 40% of computer scientists; and 22% of AI professionals.
- **The World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP) Water and Gender Toolkit on Sex-disaggregated Water Data**, (2019), is a unique tool comprised of 105 indicators, 10 topics, and 364 questions for the collection of gendered data. In Argentina, the WWAP Gender Toolkit, for example, has inspired, in less than one year, national water institutions to include gender considerations in their plans and programmes.

SOCIAL AND HUMAN SCIENCES

With the support of UNESCO:

- **UNESCO's Master Class Series** has trained more than 5500 young women and men across the world since November 2019. In November 2020, over 300 individuals from over 80 countries actively participated in the Master Class "Youth against Gender-Based Violence" which focused solely on gender equality issues, including violence against women, and harmful stereotypes of masculinity, using an intersectional approach.
- An estimated 1000 **women and girls with disabilities from marginalized areas in Zimbabwe** were empowered to become self-advocates for their rights, in collaboration with the UN Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Spotlight Initiative.
- **The film 'Listen to Her'** with Indian Bollywood star producer and actor Nandita Das aimed to encourage, and to challenge the taboo, surrounding the reporting of domestic violence, amplified during the COVID-19

► **The International Geosciences Programme** aims to advance international research in the earth sciences, especially in developing countries. It is actively promoting women earth scientists. In 2021, women geoscientists make up 43% of all IGCP project leaders, compared to 19% in 2015.

In 2021, women geoscientists make up 43% of all IGCP project leaders, compared to 19% in 2015.



- **The Man and Biosphere Programme** with 727 biosphere reserves in 131 countries, with the support of Guerlain and partners will train 50 women from 2020 to 2025 in beekeeping and entrepreneurship. The "Women for Bees" programme aims to build around 2500 hives in 25 biosphere reserves around the world by 2025.
- **The Global Ocean Science Report 2020** gender analysis showed that 39% of marine researchers are women compared with 33% for the natural sciences in general.

pandemic, received 362,544 views. It was publicized by the actor's YouTube Channel with 152,000 subscribers and also received substantial coverage in print media.

- **The Caribbean Sheroes Initiative** has brought together twelve Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Jamaica who have been working on advocating for gender justice for decades to form a network of Gender Equality Champions. In the Caribbean sub-region, at least one in three women has been a victim of domestic violence.

In the Caribbean sub-region, at least one in three women has been a victim of domestic violence.

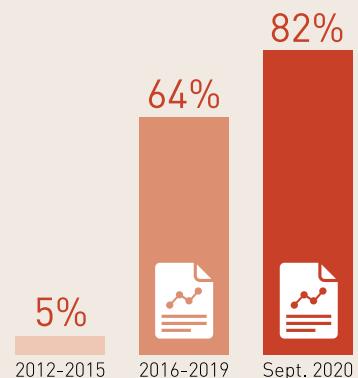


CULTURE

With the support of UNESCO:

- **UNESCO's Policy Monitoring Platform** features 180 policies and measures implemented by Member States to promote gender equality in the culture sector over the last four years.
- Forms for periodic reporting under the **UNESCO 2003 Convention** for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage were revised in 2019 and since 2020 encourage State Parties to provide gender disaggregated data and information on how they ensure gender inclusiveness in safeguarding measures.

- The percentage of submitted quadrennial reports that monitor progress on policies and measures promoting gender equality implemented by Parties to the **UNESCO 2005 Convention** on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions reached 82% in September, 2020, up from 64% for the period 2016-2019, and 5% for the period 2012-2015.¹



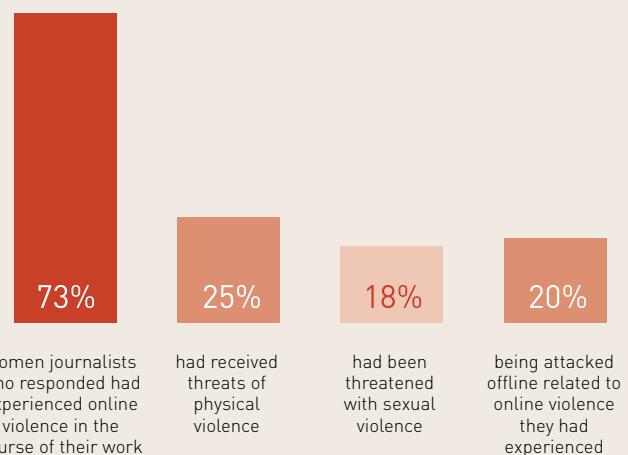
¹ Source: *Gender & creativity: progress on the precipice, special edition of the 2005 Convention Global Report series* (2021).

COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

With the support of UNESCO:

- By 2021, close to 100 women leaders of youth organizations received training on how to integrate **Media and Information Literacy** in their organizations' operations;
- UNESCO's **International Programme for Development of Communication** (IPDC), in 2020, strengthened the capacity of female journalists in East Africa to report on the COVID-19 pandemic². Over 280 female journalists enrolled and completed on-line training in new techniques on health reporting, and Wikimedia training in Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, Tanzania and Uganda.
- The **Enhancing a Gender Responsive Film Sector in the Maghreb-Mashreq Region** project (2017-2020) rolled out an advocacy campaign for the promotion of gender equality within the film industry and reached over 2 million people, and the social media campaign **#Women Creating Image** reached over one million people.

- Among the key findings of the **UNESCO's 2020 Global Survey on Online Violence against Women Journalists** were:



² In collaboration with Africa Women in Media (AWIM)

- ▶ Through the project, **Promoting Safety of Women Journalists**³, from 2019 to 2021, around 155 women journalists and 64 media managers have been trained in four target countries: India, Mali, Senegal, and Sri Lanka.
- ▶ In Africa, since 2014, **UNESCO YouthMobile** has partnered with the private sector including with SAP

3 Supported by the Swedish Postcode Foundation

in the organization of the yearly **Africa Code Week** event. In 2020, through thousands of short workshops and training, 10 million young girls and boys were reached and more than 80 000 teachers, in more than 40 African countries, with a female participation rate of around 46%.

UNESCO SECRETARIAT

As of June 2021:

- ▶ With women comprising 55% of the Professional and Director (P/D) category staff in the UNESCO Secretariat (UN average 46%), and 44% of women at Director level and above, UNESCO is one of the leading UN agencies in the field of gender parity.
- ▶ The percentage of women at the P-5 level has improved significantly from January 2020, with an increase of eight percentage points, from 31% to 39%.
- ▶ Women make up the majority of staff in the Secretariat (55%), accounting for 60% of the General Service (GS) staff, 51% of National Professional Officers (NPO), 53% of Professional staff (P), and 44% of posts at Director level and above.

55% of the Professional and Director (P/D) category staff in the UNESCO Secretariat are women.



AFGHANISTAN

- ▶ Beginning in 2006, with the support of partners including Sweden, Japan, Norway, Denmark, UN agencies and civil society organizations throughout the country, UNESCO led the largest literacy programme in Afghan history, reaching in 2021 1,242,000 learners, including 800,000 women and girls.
- ▶ In 2020, there were 1,741 women media workers in Afghanistan, including 1,139 women journalists. From September 2020 - February 2021, almost one in five women journalists left the profession, due to ongoing violence and threats.
- ▶ With the change to the Taliban regime in August 2021, over 15 years of intensive effort by UNESCO and the international community to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women in Afghanistan has come under attack.

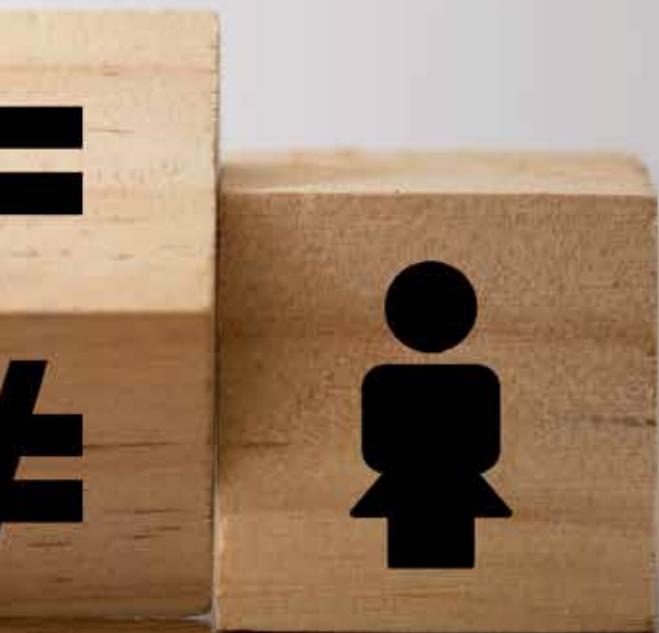
Almost 20% of women journalists left the profession, due to ongoing violence and threats.





HIGHLIGHTS

A selection of 15 UNESCO good practices with concrete examples of implementation that contributed to gender equality in education, the sciences, culture and communication and have had impact on people's lives.



Advancing gender equality in education

1

UNESCO, as the United Nations' specialized agency for education, is leading, monitoring and coordinating the Education 2030 Agenda, in particular Sustainable Development Goal 4 of the UN 2030 Agenda, to 'ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.' While educating both girls and boys is pivotal to gender equality, more girls than boys do not complete their education especially in the developing world, and in some settings, boys are failing to engage in education.

132 million girls worldwide are out of school. Two thirds of the 750 million adults without basic literacy skills are women. Just 1% of the poorest girls in low-income countries will complete secondary school.⁴

To specifically tackle gender equality in education, The *UNESCO Strategy for gender equality in and through education (2019-2025)* focuses on gender-equal system-wide transformation, and supports targeted action for girls' and women's empowerment through education, across three priority areas:

- better data, particularly sex-disaggregated data;
- better laws, policies and planning;
- better practices - teachers using gender-responsive pedagogical practices and textbooks.

The Strategy also promotes safe physical and psychosocial learning environments, free from School-Related Gender-Based Violence, addressing educational loss and school drop-out as a result of early and unintended pregnancy, early marriage, and child labour.



The 2020 Gender Report of the Global Education Monitoring Report entitled *A new generation: 25 years of efforts for gender equality in education* took

stock of the progress made in gender equality in education since the 1995 Beijing Conference on Women. Among its 15 key findings are that, globally, girls' learning outcomes are improving faster than boys', but new gender gaps are developing in digital literacy skills and a majority of illiterate adults are still women.



UNESCO's 'Her Education, Our Future' initiative and media campaign launched in 2019 aims to accelerate action for girls' and women's education by leveraging political and financial

commitments. A fact sheet on girls' education was published in 2021 showing progress on, and the latest facts on gender equality in education. For example, girls' enrolment rates in primary and secondary have almost doubled in low-income countries over the past 25 years.



UNESCO's interactive atlas of girls' and women's right to education, *Her Atlas* aims to monitor and inform on the status of national constitutions, legislation and regulations related to girls' and women's education rights. To date, the Atlas references 196 countries, covering 12 indicators, for example, the legal framework protecting the education rights of pregnant or parenting girls.

In recognition of UNESCO's UN leadership in all aspects of education, the international community turned to UNESCO to address the educational crisis during the COVID pandemic, with a particular focus on gender equality and keeping girls in school.

Just

1%

of the poorest
girls in low-income
countries will complete
secondary school.



In Action

Advancing gender equality in education

Very few countries systematically integrate gender equality in planning their education systems. Member States continue to request UNESCO's assistance to translate global strategies for gender equality in education into national policies, planning, and training, to reduce inequalities and improve the performance of their education systems.

The **Gender at the Centre Initiative (GCI)** aims to support gender-responsive education sector planning in ministries in eight African countries - Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone. UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning (UNESCO-IIEP) as the technical lead⁵ works to strengthen existing skills and structures, and targets support to sectoral analyses and plans, and appropriate tools for planning, programming, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation. Specifically, UNESCO-IIEP has assisted the eight countries in efforts to produce better data relating to both school and non-school factors influencing gender equality, and capacity development on gender responsive education planning in 2020-

5 Launched at the G7 Summit in France in 2019, the Gender at the Centre Initiative is run by an alliance of partners bringing together the ministries of education of the eight countries, a CSO consortium, G7 donors, and multilateral agencies. Coordinated by the UN Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), other partners include the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), the African Union's International Centre for Girls' and Women's Education in Africa (AU/CIEFFA), UNICEF as well the African Network Campaign on Education for All (ANCEFA), Plan International, and the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE).

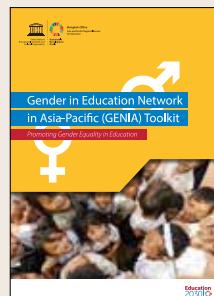
2021 for both Francophone and Anglophone countries. Beneficiaries from capacity building from 16 Francophone countries including 38 Ministry of Education managers, with 58% women, perfected their skills to integrate gender into all stages of education planning. Knowledge generation activities included the production of methodological guides, research on gender norms and the gender dimensions in education of forcibly displaced populations.

In 2020, the GCI supported the integration of gender considerations into the development of two Education Sector Analyses (ESA), in Sierra Leone and Nigeria. The analyses focus on the overall political and legal context for gender equality, specific education programmes and policies, and the factors that promote or hinder gender equality, including gender norms and dynamics. The ESAs also take into account the issue of the Covid-19 health crisis and the security crisis affecting several states in Nigeria.

These two experiences in Sierra Leone and Nigeria have led the GCI team to refine its methodological work and the production of practical tools for planners in the GCI countries and beyond.

The **Gender in Education Network in Asia-Pacific (GENIA)** is a network of Gender Focal Points (GFP) within Ministries of Education in Asia and the Pacific region. With 33 focal points in 31 countries in the region, and facilitated by UNESCO, GENIA responds to planning needs to integrate gender equality into national educational plans by providing

technical support, resources, capacity-building and tools to strengthen national approaches to gender equality in education.



The **Gender in Education Network in Asia-Pacific (GENIA) Toolkit: Promoting Gender Equality in Education**, the first of its kind, consists of 25 individual tools to address key concepts in gender equality. Following a 2020 training needs survey of GENIA members, UNESCO developed a training package and over three months in 2020, 16 gender focal points from 13 countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Iran, Laos, Myanmar, Nauru, Nepal, Pakistan, Thailand, Tonga, Viet Nam) underwent an intensive course to mainstream gender and advance gender-responsiveness in education planning, policy-making, content and teacher development.

Thanks to the GENIA network, textbook reform now mainstreams gender in Viet Nam and the Philippines. Gender parity in primary, lower secondary and upper secondary enrolment in many countries in the region has been achieved.

The GCI and the GENIA network have proved to be a good practice to integrate gender equality dimensions into educational planning and to facilitate cross-country cooperation and learning.

Creating safe and inclusive learning environments for girls and young women

2

The provision of 'child, disability and gender-sensitive' education facilities and 'safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all' (SDG 4, Target 4.a), remains a challenge in many countries. UNESCO is supporting strengthened links between education, health and protection to advance access to safe, inclusive and health-promoting learning environments, and to build knowledge and skills to promote gender equality through education.

Early pregnancy and childbirth are the leading cause of death for girls aged 15-19 worldwide. And yet, approximately 16 million girls in this age bracket, and 2.5 million girls under 16 years give birth each year in developing regions.⁶



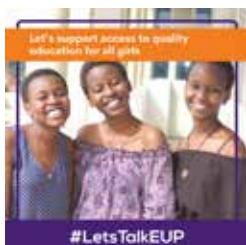
Our Rights, Our Lives, Our Future – 33 African countries

Our Rights, Our Lives, Our Future (O³) programme supports the delivery of good quality comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) that empowers adolescents and young people and builds agency, while developing the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and competencies required to prevent HIV, reduce early and unintended pregnancy (EUP), and eliminate gender-based violence (GBV).

The O³ programme, started in 2018, is run in partnership with ministries of education across 33 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.⁷ It is the largest CSE programme in Africa in terms of geographic coverage, with a budget exceeding 45 million USD, and generous support from the governments of France, Ireland, Norway and Sweden and the Packard Foundation.

The programme aims to:

- Secure and sustain strong political commitment and support for young Africans' access to CSE;
- Support the delivery of accurate, rights-based and good quality CSE programmes that promote safe behaviour and gender equality;
- Ensure that schools and community environments are safer, healthier and inclusive for all young people;
- Strengthen the evidence base on CSE and safer school environments.



Within the O³ programme, UNESCO partnered with UNFPA, SAfAIDS and Save the Children Sweden to implement a social and behaviour change campaign on EUP called 'Let's Talk!', across 13 countries in East and Southern Africa from 2019 to 2021. The campaign used a multi- and trans-media approach supported by community activism and advocacy adapted to different audiences. Country level launches and

⁷ Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

**Early pregnancy
and childbirth
are the leading cause
of death for girls aged**

15-19

worldwide.



media practitioners' trainings to increase the visibility of EUP issues were key elements of the campaign.

In 2020, messages were adjusted to respond to disruptions caused by COVID-19 through a 'Let's Talk at Home!' campaign. Six webinars were held, and a six-episode radio mini-drama series aired on national radio stations in the campaign focus countries entitled "Say it Louder" sparking conversations about reducing EUP. In early 2021, a 13-part radio drama series, developed and adapted to local contexts was aired on national radio and community radios across the focus countries, reaching over 1.5 million listeners in each country.

UNESCO also initiated Our Rights, Our Lives, Our Future ^{PLUS} (O3 ^{PLUS}), from 2021 to 2025 which builds on and extends the current O³ programme focusing on higher and tertiary education students in eight⁸ countries in the Southern African Development Community. Working closely with relevant regional structures, national ministries, teacher training institutions, and key partners, O3 ^{PLUS} will support innovation in access to CSE and sexual and reproductive health services for students while advocating for policy and practice changes

to make campuses safe and inclusive learning environments. Over 250,000 tertiary education students will be reached with sexuality education through O3 ^{PLUS}.

Results and Impact

Our Rights, Our Lives, Our Future (O3) Programme has reached so far:

- ▶ Over 28 million learners in primary and secondary school with CSE in over 30 African countries;
- ▶ Over 50 million young people in and out of school through traditional and social media platforms;
- ▶ Over 27 million parents and community members with efforts to keep girls in school.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the O3 programme has reached with context-appropriate messages:

- ▶ 417,310 people, and engaged 283 participants in interactive webinar sessions in 2020;
- ▶ At least 18 million listeners through the mini-drama series "Say it Louder" on topics such as EUP, child marriage and mental health.

⁸ Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.



77.1%
of ethnic minority
women in rural areas
in Viet Nam are
self-employed or
unpaid family workers
in agriculture.

→ Indigenous girls' right to education - Bright girls, brighter future - Viet Nam

The “We are ABLE” Project on Promoting Gender Equality and Girls’ Education in the Ethnic Minorities Areas of Viet Nam⁹, from 2018 to 2021, aimed to improve access and retention of ethnic minority children, especially girls in lower secondary schools, and to improve the employment opportunities among ethnic minority women and girls. Implemented in 24 schools in three provinces, the project addressed out-of-school children, school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV), child sexual abuse in schools and communities, and limited employment opportunities for ethnic minority girls and women.

Project actions included: in-kind scholarships for lower secondary school girls from ethnic minority groups; raising awareness on the importance of education; providing training on school counselling work; organizing dialogues and meetings between parents, family members and students; career orientation programmes; and training courses for community members to enhance knowledge and skills on income-generation and job opportunities.

77.1% of ethnic minority women in rural areas in Viet Nam are self-employed or unpaid family workers in agriculture.

Results and Impact

- ▶ UNESCO designed a course for teachers on gender-responsive school counselling. The training was re-designed for online delivery¹⁰ (due to COVID-19 disruption) and each of the 24 project schools was supplied with a computer. Since October 2020, 583 female and 759 male teachers have been trained in project schools; a further 6,500 teachers beyond the project schools are expected to benefit from the online course in 2021;
- ▶ Reading corners and student core groups were set up to attract students to counselling sessions;
- ▶ In October and November 2020, training sessions at schools boosted students' self-confidence and communication skills, and tackled SRGBV. Beneficiaries included 151 female and 133 male students. In December, school-wide awareness raising events were led by the student core groups and parent-teacher meetings raised awareness on SRGBV reaching 1,641 female and 1,497 male parents;
- ▶ The Ministry of Education has agreed to open up the training to all 40,000 teachers in Viet Nam;
- ▶ A survey involving over 2700 students, parents, teachers and school managers, and 120 business entities, collected feedback on the career orientation programme in the lower secondary schools, to inform future training needs and create links between schools and local businesses.

⁹ A project in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) and the Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs (CEMA) under UNESCO's Malala Fund for Girls' Right to Education. It is funded by a partnership between UNESCO and CJ Group, a Korean private sector company.

¹⁰ In collaboration with the Ha Noi Open University



→ Empowering Adolescent Girls and Young Women through Education -Tanzania, Nepal, Mali



The Joint Programme on Empowering Adolescent Girls and Young Women through Education¹¹ (2016-2021,) implemented in Tanzania, Nepal and Mali focused on four inter-connected areas of action: quality education, health and well-being; enabling environments and building the evidence base. It aimed to ensure that beneficiaries engage in a full cycle of quality education, acquire relevant knowledge and skills, and are supported in their transition into adulthood and the labour market.

Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) aimed to link and enhance health and education outcomes to prevent Early and Unexpected Pregnancy and early school dropout. Policy advocacy, curriculum development, legislative change, community engagement and support to school management to improve the quality of education aimed to create enabling learning environments, while data collection and documenting evidence built a knowledge base for future action.

Results and Impact

The Joint Programme reached an estimated 2 million people, including in and out-of-school adolescent girls and young women, boys and young men, teachers, policymakers and community members.

Through the Programme:

- ▶ Over 12,600 out-of-school girls and young women gained access to non-formal basic education including literacy, vocational training, and reproductive health issues in Tanzania, Nepal and Mali.
- ▶ Over 5,600 teachers, school administrators, and non-formal education facilitators have received training to support girls' increased access to, among others, CSE and School-related Gender-based Violence issues in the three countries.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, through the Joint Programme:

- ▶ Awareness-raising campaigns on girls' health and education reached over 240,000 people in Tanzania, Nepal and Mali.

¹¹ A partnership between UNESCO, UN Women and UNFPA, supported with USD 15 million from the Republic of Korea through the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA).

Enhancing participation of women and girls in STEM

A Fourth Industrial Revolution based on digital technologies including Artificial Intelligence is underway. Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), underpinned by digital skills are imperative to develop solutions to challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and food and water security. Too few girls pursue STEM studies depriving humanity of their talents and compromising their future job opportunities. Barriers include gendered expectations and stereotypes, belief that STEM is a male domain, limited female role models in STEM fields and discrimination and harassment in the workplace. However, questions remain and further answers needed as to why girls are less attracted than boys to STEM studies.

Engineering, manufacturing, construction, and information and communication technology (ICT) programmes are highly male-dominated: globally, the percentage of girls and women studying engineering, manufacturing and construction or ICT in higher education is below 25% in over two-thirds of countries.

Enhancing knowledge on girls and women in STEM

UNESCO has produced a number of knowledge products in order to understand the nature of the barriers and levers to enhance Girls' and women's participation in STEM.



In 2020, UNESCO published *STEM education for girls and women: Breaking Barriers and Exploring Gender Inequality in Asia (2020)* which presents captivating case studies across eight countries in the region, covering the participation and interest of girls in STEM, STEM careers for girls and women and the experiences of women working in STEM.

In addition, UNESCO-UNEVOC¹² International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), *Boosting gender equality in science and technology-A challenge for TVET programmes and careers*, presented the extensive evidence of accelerating demand for STEM-related

12 UNESCO's global platform of TVET institutions, the UNEVOC Network.



traditional and emerging technology specialist roles and the need to attract more girls into STEM-related TVET careers.

UNESCO has also established a partnership with the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) to undertake thematic analyses of data from the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), covering over 65 countries and education systems. This has included a recent policy brief, *Female science and mathematics teachers: Better than they think?* on female science and mathematics teachers' self-efficacy teaching STEM, the first in a series to be released in 2022.

The 2020 studies built on previous ground breaking global UNESCO publications. *'Cracking the Code: Girls' and women's education in science, technology, engineering and mathematics'* (2017) which was the first to present a clear analysis of factors influencing girls' and women's



[...] the percentage of girls and women studying engineering, manufacturing and construction or ICT in higher education is below

25%

in over two-thirds of countries worldwide.



In Action

Enhancing participation of women and girls in STEM

Unlocking the Potential of Girls in STEM – lessons from a Kenyan experience

In Kenya, UNESCO, in partnership with the Government of Kenya (GoK), together with government and private sector partners, implemented a STEM mentorship programme, targeting secondary school average performing students, in particular from rural areas. It ran from 2014 to 2019, but was extended using remote learning methods during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-2021.



The one-week intensive scientific camps of excellence consisted of mentorship talks by STEM role models; exposure to learning environments in universities and TVET institutions; and partnership with the private sector facilitating on-site visits to industry to familiarize students with real-life applications of STEM. At the end of each camp, students are asked to identify a concrete societal problem, and to conceptualize a STEM-oriented solution. In addition, awareness was raised among science teachers on gender responsive pedagogy. Coding and robotics were also introduced to the programme through collaboration with Microsoft.

A total of 161 schools and over 2,000 secondary school girls, and 600 boys benefitted from the UNESCO STEM mentorship programme in Kenya.

During the COVID-19 pandemic school closures, UNESCO designed a digital STEM Mentorship Programme, aired by the National Broadcasting Station and

38 community radio stations. Nationally, during the three months of its airing in 2020, over 12 million listeners, mainly students, were reached. In 2021, community radio reached another 10 million listeners. An online platform, the UNESCO Ask a STEM Mentor Platform was established, with the national telephone service provider, Safaricom.

In July 2021, on the excellent national examination results of the beneficiaries of the programme from Mbooni Girls' High School, the School's Board of Directors requested UNESCO to extend the mentorship programme to all the girls in the school. UNESCO women STEM role models responded and mentored another 931 female students.

Other STEM mentorship activities included the virtual Hackathon camps that linked 150 female Kenyan, Rwandan and Canadian High School students.

In April 2021, UNESCO published An Assessment Report on the Impact of the STEM Mentorship Programme, covering the years 2014 to 2019. The majority of the students who transited to tertiary institutions confirmed that the programme influenced their performance in, and subsequent choice of STEM programmes. The students still in school stated that the programme helped them change their attitudes and performance in STEM subjects which was confirmed by teachers' responses to the Assessment survey.

Thanks to the success of the programme, and to support its activities, the Government of Kenya established a budget for STEM activities and model STEM girls' and boys' schools (102 in total) in all 47 counties in the country. The programme is held up as a model by the Kenyan Ministry of Education when approached by partners and donors with proposals to advance gender equality in STEM education in the country.

participation, achievement and progression in STEM studies. The 2019 UNESCO publication '*I'd blush if I could*' also shared strategies to close gender divides in digital skills through education and highlighted an "ICT gender equality paradox", whereby countries with the highest levels of gender equality also have the lowest proportions of women pursuing studies and careers in STEM and visa-versa. Its recommendations also contributed to changes by tech companies of the gendering of AI technology.

Teachers, role models and mentors

To enhance teacher capacity in gender-responsive STEM education, UNESCO held three regional training courses for over 20 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, reaching 200 teacher trainers, teachers and school administrators. The training is now being rolled out at national levels in five countries and being adapted to a hybrid e-learning format that will be launched in 2022 in order to scale up the dissemination of the courses.

Creative Resilience: a window to responses to the COVID-19 pandemic through art by women of science

Creative Resilience is an exhibition created by UNESCO with 54 women specialized in STEM fields from around the world, showcasing artistic expression inspired by the fight against, and reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic¹³. Women have been on the frontlines of the world's response to the pandemic and have been disproportionately subjected to its consequences. Yet they remain less visible than men as actors fighting the pandemic. The exhibition seeks to give a voice and visibility to STEM women, to their unique scientific perspectives, personal journey, creation and resilience throughout the pandemic.

The exhibition featured more than 100 artistic works related to the COVID-19 pandemic by women of science selected from 31 countries¹⁴. Women neuroscientists, microbiologists,

doctors, nurses, medical students, researchers, science communicators, engineers, and mathematicians of all ages depict a world animated by cells, test tubes and medical equipment. They are STEM women who used their artistic talents combined with their expertise in the fields of science, health, science communication and technology to provide a testimony to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Through painting, photography, digital drawing, block print, sculpture, crocheting or film, they gave witness to how the global health pandemic has transformed the way we interact and how we are slowly emerging from it into new, transformed societies.

Organized as a hybrid exhibition with virtual and physical displays, the exhibition was presented in November 2021 for the first time, on the occasion of the 41st Session of the UNESCO General Conference and the 75th anniversary of the founding of UNESCO, as part of the exhibition "Transformations", a celebration showcasing the impact of UNESCO in transforming peoples' lives. Creative Resilience has also been featured at the Dubai World Expo on 11 February

2022¹⁵, under the theme 'Connecting Minds, Creating the Future', as one of the innovative global exhibitions documenting transformations through an unprecedented global health crisis.

By combining science and art, the exhibition aims to contribute to UNESCO's commitment to promoting women in science, and to fostering innovative ways to reduce gender inequalities in the natural sciences.



13 The Creative Resilience exhibition is a joint initiative of UNESCO's Division for Gender Equality and Natural Sciences Sector.

14 Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Czechia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Latvia, Malaysia, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Moldova, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Slovakia, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America.

15 International Day of Women and Girls in Science



Gabriela Miño Castro,
Ecuador, 'One day at a time'

**Najma Ahmed, Somalia,
'We can fight Corona'**

**Sukanya Hasan,
Bangladesh,
'Don't let your mask
harm animals'**

**Radhika Patnala,
India, 'Paranoia'**



Expanding horizons for women in science

4

Taking stock

The 7th UNESCO Science Report *The race against time for smarter development* was published in June 2021. Chapter 3, *To be smart, the digital revolution will need to be inclusive* highlighted the acute shortage of skills in fields driving the digital Fourth Industrial Revolution, anchored in artificial intelligence, computer science and engineering. Women remain a minority in these fields at university and in the workforce, negatively affecting their future employability and depriving humanity of their talents.

In 2018, globally, women accounted for 33% of scientific researchers, (up from 28% in 2013); 28% of engineers; 40% of computer scientists; and 22% of AI professionals. Although women have more or less achieved parity at university level, the gender gap significantly widens as women pursue their careers in science and technology.¹⁶

The 2nd UNESCO Engineering Report, *Engineering for Sustainable Development (2021)* argued that the participation of women and the diversity of thought in innovation and engineering is critical to sustainable development. New and mobile technologies are increasingly empowering women entrepreneurs.

In 2021, UNESCO published *Challenges and Opportunities for Women Tech Entrepreneurs in Africa: a Survey*. A total

of 459 women tech entrepreneurs from Benin, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Ghana, Madagascar, Morocco, Mozambique, Senegal, South Africa and Tunisia were interviewed. Results showed that for 67% of them, access to finance is the biggest obstacle.

Gender equality is taken into account in Article 24 of the UNESCO Recommendation on Science and Scientific Researchers (2017), as well as in the UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science, adopted by UNESCO Member States in November 2021.

UNESCO awards, promotes, and supports, women scientists throughout their careers

- Since 1998, the L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Awards have recognized 122 outstanding women scientists. Five of them have received the Nobel Prize. Over 23 years, it has supported more than 3,900 women researchers from more than 100 countries around the world. The 2022 edition has nominated five women researchers in the category of life sciences and the environment. The 2021 edition honoured five women researchers in mathematics, astrophysics, chemistry and computer science. The 2020 edition recognized five women for the excellence of their research in the life sciences. Since 2000, every year the International Rising Talents programme has rewarded the achievements of

15 young women scientists at the doctoral or post-doctoral level, among around 250 national and regional fellows¹⁷ who are in the early stages of their scientific careers. The FWIS awards and fellowships recognize and support both established and young aspiring women scientists through finance, training opportunities and far-reaching visibility campaigns. The beneficiaries are powerful role models to encourage girls into scientific careers. The online FWIS Community Platform activated in 2021, further assists in networking, monitoring and exchanges between women scientist across disciplines, career stages and regions.

UNESCO science hub, Trieste, Italy

- The International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), a UNESCO Institute, is focusing on increasing the participation of young women physicists and mathematicians at the Centre. From 2001 to 2020, 21,500 women scientists (22% of total) have benefitted from courses at ICTP. In 2020, 27% of visitors were women, showing a slight increase.
- The World Academy of Sciences, for the advancement of science in developing countries (TWAS) a programme unit of UNESCO, in

¹⁷ The L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science National and Regional Young Talents Programmes are implemented by L'Oréal subsidiaries around the world with the support of UNESCO National Commissions and UNESCO Field Offices.

2021, elected 46% new women Academy fellows up from 34% in 2020. TWAS and the Islamic Development Bank through the Postdoctoral Fellowship Programme for Women for the Year 2021 are partnering to support the participation of women in science.

- Gender in Science, Innovation, Technology and Engineering (GenderInSITE),¹⁸ a programmatic arm of TWAS, promotes and advocates for women in SITE, and aims to show how applying a gender lens to SITE leads to more effective sustainable development outcomes. A GenderInSite publication *Gender Dimensions of Digital Technologies*, (2021) focusing on Africa and Latin America, recommends that internet access target poor rural women, that training needs be contextualized and that the gig economy guarantee equal working conditions and pay for women.
- The Organization for Women in Science for the Developing World (OWSD), a UNESCO programme unit, provides research training, career development and networking opportunities for women scientists throughout the developing world at different stages in their careers. The OWSD PhD fellowships programme, funded by Sweden since 1998, has enabled nearly 500 women scientists from the least developed countries to prepare their PhDs, with more than 340 graduates in STEM subjects. OWSD has a membership of over 7700. OWSD also has an early career prize scheme, funded by the Elsevier Foundation, to award and highlight the achievements of five outstanding women scientists per year from countries that are lagging behind in scientific and technological resources.



Globally, women account for 33% of scientific researchers, (up from 28% in 2013); 28% of engineers; 40% of computer scientists; and 22% of AI professionals.



In Action

UNESCO expanding horizons for women in science



Argentinian mathematician, Alicia Dickenstein has benefitted from more than one of UNESCO's actions to promote women in science. She is the recipient of the 2021 L'Oréal-UNESCO International Award For Women in Science, for her «*outstanding contributions at the forefront of mathematical innovation by leveraging algebraic geometry in the field of molecular biology*». She has long-standing and valued connections to UNESCO's International Centre for Theoretical Physics (since 1987), is an ICTP Simons Associate, and is recipient of the 2015 TWAS Award targeting scientists from developing countries in recognition of her outstanding contribution 'to the understanding of discriminants.»

Alicia Dickenstein is Professor of Mathematics at the University of Buenos Aires.



The OWSD Early Career Fellowships for Women Scientists programme, launched in 2018, facilitates access to resources for young women scientists in developing countries. It is sponsored by Canada's International Development Research Centre.

Dr. Mavis Owureku-Asare (right in photo), a young Ghanaian food scientist, was awarded the OWSD Early Career Fellowship in 2019 to look into the possibility of scaling up drying of tomatoes in Ghana, a staple food in the country, thereby significantly reducing food waste. She is passionate about the benefits that the improved processing technologies can bring to small- and medium-sized enterprises along the tomato value chain, particularly for women entrepreneurs. By creating links between food research and industry, she hopes to enhance food security both in Ghana and around Africa.

Mainstreaming gender equality in the water sector

In many lower- and middle-income countries, lack of access to water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities particularly affects the educational and income-generating outcomes for girls and women. Accelerated climate change and its water-related impacts on WASH, health, food production and enterprise, fueling migration, is disproportionately affecting women around the world.

In 2021, to mark the 25th anniversary of the 1995 Beijing Conference on Women (Beijing+25), UNESCO's World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP), published with partners, *Taking stock of progress towards gender equality in the water domain: where do we stand 25 years after the Beijing Declaration?* It revealed that the water domain is characterized by deep and persistent gender inequalities.

Less than 17% of the water sector's total workforce is composed of women despite their critical role and knowledge in the management of water resources.

WWAP has launched a global Call for Action (CfA) to "Accelerate the Achievement of Gender Equality in the Water Domain", and a Position Paper with key recommendations. The CfA, developed with a multi-stakeholder coalition, calls upon leaders and key decision-makers to ensure urgent implementation of gender-transformative strategies in the water sector. The call addresses all levels of government and other stakeholders to ensure urgent implementation of gender-transformative strategies and policies in the water sector, improve gender-equal financing, and collect sex-disaggregated water data. The Initiative was officially launched during the 2021 World Water Week in Sweden with the support of 11 Member States¹⁹ targeting the 2030 Agenda completion date. Milestones for measuring progress on the CfA roadmap include the UN Conference on the Mid-term review of the Water Action Decade in

2023, and the end of the International Water Decade in 2028.

WWAP has developed a Capacity Development Programme for the period 2020-2021: 'Water, gender and climate: better data for better adaptation strategies' to strengthen capacity of water authorities to understand how gender-related data can inform and improve water policies and planning. Central to the training is the 2019 WWAP Water and Gender Toolkit on Sex-disaggregated Water Data. The 2020-2021 cycle of the training programme covers West Africa, Latin America and Caribbean, Central America, and Pacific Small Island Developing States.

The 2019 World Water Assessment Programme's Water and Gender Toolkit on Sex-disaggregated Water Data, is a unique tool comprised of 105 indicators, 10 topics, and 364 questions to advance the participation of women in managing the world's freshwater.

¹⁹ Argentina, Costa Rica, Indonesia, Italy, The Republic of Korea, Mexico, The Netherlands, Nigeria, Slovenia, Spain, Tajikistan

Less than

17%

of the water sector's total workforce is composed of women despite their critical role and knowledge in the management of water resources.



In Action

Applying gender indicators to water resources management in Argentina

UNESCO's World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP) has worked with the Argentinian water authorities²⁰ on their request in 2020, to apply WWAP water and gender indicators to assess national participation of women in science and technology and Integrated Water Resources Management. The assessment mobilized primary and secondary data including: enrolled graduate students in water resources management; presence and role of women as staff members in the national water offices for policy and management; gender integration in water utilities; and the in-depth analysis of the inclusion of a gender perspective into the international, regional and national water and environment policy over the last 25 years.

Although the study highlighted the difficulties for women to forge a career in the Argentinian water sector compared to men, it catalysed advances for gender equality in this area.

In less than one year, national institutions related to water started to include gender considerations into their plans and programmes. In addition, the Ministry

of Infrastructure established a gender network with gender focal points for the different technical offices and institutions under its mandate.

Through the gender disaggregation of water data, the project contributed to making gender inequalities more evident, and to influencing institutional policies and actions in the water sector.



Within the framework of this collaboration, UNESCO WWAP published the research paper: *'Methodological approach for applying the WWAP Gender and Water Indicators: An example from Argentina'*.

This publication offers an overview of the methodological approach used for assessing the participation of women in science, management and technology related to water resources, using the UNESCO WWAP Toolkit to collect sex-disaggregated water data and gender and water indicators.

This methodology represents a best practice for the advancement of gender equality in water sectors worldwide.

²⁰ National Institute of Water (INA) of Argentina, and the Argentinian National Office of Hydraulic Infrastructure

Empowering women to manage natural resources

Natural ecosystems, biodiversity and earth resources on which life depends are facing serious threat of degradation and even depletion due to unsustainable use by humans. Scientists agree that the sixth massive extinction²¹ of biological species caused by human activity is underway and together with climate change threaten the future viability of our planet as a home for both men and women.

UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme

established by UNESCO in 1971 as an intergovernmental scientific programme, combines the natural and social sciences with a view to safeguarding ecosystems, conserving biodiversity, and promoting innovative and gender equality approaches to sustainable development, at the same time improving human livelihoods. The Programme, through its World Network of Biosphere Reserves, designates sites around the world that demonstrate, test, and share interdisciplinary best practices. In

²¹ A mass extinction event is when species vanish much faster than they are replaced. This is usually defined as about 75% of the world's species being lost in a 'short' amount of geological time - less than 2.8 million years. Scientists recognize five previous mass extinctions in geological records the last one occurring 65 million years ago when dinosaurs became extinct.

2021, the MAB Programme celebrated its 50th anniversary and numbers 727 biosphere reserves in 131 countries, including 22 transboundary sites covering more than 5% of the Earth's surface.

The Mwali Biosphere (Comores), designated in 2020, is home to rich biodiversity of recognized regional and global significance with high rates of ecosystem diversity and endemism. Women hold a vast amount of traditional knowledge about the therapeutic applications of medicinal plants as well as culinary and artistic uses of biodiversity. Their role is pivotal in efforts to conserve biodiversity.

The UNESCO International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme (IGGP) has two pillars:

- The International Geoscience Programme (IGCP);
- UNESCO Global Geoparks (UGGps).

The IGCP aims to advance international research in the earth sciences through collaborative projects that benefit society, in particular through North-South and South-South cooperation. The Programme is actively promoting women earth scientists.

In 2021, women geoscientists make 43% of all IGCP project leaders, compared to 19% in 2015.

UNESCO Global Geoparks are sites and landscapes of significant international geological heritage which are managed through a local bottom-up approach, with the objective of sustainable development. They aim to protect and conserve geological heritage, to educate as well as to provide income-generating activities for local people, in particular for women.

Under the **Latin American and Caribbean Geopark Network (LACGN)**, uniting six²² UNESCO Global Geoparks, a working group, Genero GeollAC was established to promote the role of women in the management of UNESCO Global Geoparks in the region. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, a series of webinars and online communication campaigns, including through social media were organized in 2021. The aim is to promote the involvement of women in small scale enterprises through women's cooperatives, the promotion of women in science, research, education and the training of women as geo-guides. The group is working on a Strategic Plan for gender equality in UNESCO Global Geoparks in the LAC region, an inspiration for other geopark networks around the world.

²² Río Coco (Nicaragua); Comarca Minera (Mexico); Grutas del Palacio (Uruguay); Araripe (Brazil); Kütralkura (Chile) y Colca y Volcanes de Andagua (Peru)

In 2021,
women geoscientists
make

43%

of all International Geoscience
Programme project leaders,
compared to 19% in 2015.



→ In Action

Empowering women to manage natural resources

UNESCO and the company Guerlain²³ have launched a five-year (2020–2025) state-of-the-art female beekeeping entrepreneurship programme, 'Women for Bees' implemented by UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme. In the context of the programme, the training centre, *Observatoire Français d'Apidologie (OFA)* in the south of France, will train around 50 women from biosphere reserves around the world on the theoretical and practical basis of beekeeping. This includes the running of a professional apiary to become professional beekeeper-entrepreneurs, and members of an international network of female beekeepers, at the same time increasing their income-earning potential.

It is the intention that by 2025, around 2,500 hives will have been built within 25 UNESCO biosphere reserves around the globe.

The programme has actor, film-maker and humanitarian, women's rights and

environmental activist, Angelina Jolie, as Godmother, helping to promote its twin objectives of women's empowerment and biodiversity conservation. Beekeeping can generate income for disadvantaged landless rural populations, and improve food security in areas where agricultural production is low. The programme also aims to raise awareness on the importance of bees as pollinators both for agriculture and biodiversity conservation.

Participants from Bulgaria, Cambodia, China, Ethiopia, France, Italy, Russia, Rwanda, and Slovenia will benefit during the first two years of the programme. The first seven women graduates successfully completed their 30-day training, in June and July 2021 at OFA's Domaine de la Sainte-Baume in Provence, France. On 21 July, UNESCO and Guerlain organized an online press conference and graduation ceremony with the participation of Angelina Jolie, as well as representatives from UNESCO and Guerlain.



→ In Action

Empowering women in geoparks



Qeshm UNESCO Global Geopark in Iran, boasts a local women's cooperative running the Star Valley visitor centre where they sell their traditional handicrafts, run the local café and provide catering to one of the many geopark guesthouses.

Lesvos Geopark in Greece collaborates closely with women's agrotourism cooperatives and local organic food producers to cater for geopark events, and to offer its visitors the opportunity to display and buy local food products such as pasta and preserves. Thus, geopark visitors experience not only the rich landscape of the area, and sites of high geological, ecological and aesthetic value, but also the culture, tradition, and products of this unique heritage of the Earth.

²³ LVMH is Guerlain's holding company.

Women and leadership in ocean science - UN Ocean Decade

The ocean, covering 71% of the Earth's surface, regulates our climate and provides food and a myriad of services to humanity. Marine and coastal areas are home to rich biodiversity, with an estimated 3 billion people depending on it for their livelihoods. However, women are under-represented at all levels in the scientific study and management of the ocean, particularly in technical fields and leadership roles.



workforce, infrastructure, equipment, funding, investments, publications, data flow and exchange policies in ocean science. As well as national strategies, the GOSR monitors our capacity to understand the ocean and seize new opportunities. The gender analysis in the GOSR2020 showed that globally, 39% of marine researchers are women compared with 33% for science in general. The global average percentage of female marine researchers has remained stable since the last analysis in 2017 in contrast to the percentage of women researchers in science, since 2015, up from 28% to 33%.

The GOSR points to the structural gender inequalities in ocean science: barriers to access to education and the gender blindness of ocean policies hindering access and the participation of women in ocean science, technology, and governance. Initiatives identified by the GOSR to increase participation of women in ocean science include: education and training in ocean technology and observations; measures to promote ocean literacy; gender equality in ocean science conferences, panels and workshops; and expanded collection of sex-disaggregated data to measure progress.

IOC-UNESCO coordinates the implementation of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2029). 'The Ocean Decade' aims to strengthen the international cooperation needed to develop the *Science We Need for the Ocean We Want*. As women are key to achieving this objective, IOC-UNESCO with partners including the Canadian Government and the World Maritime University (WMU), aims to enhance women's participation in ocean science at all levels, by mainstreaming gender equality throughout the decade actions, by developing and disseminating best practices, and by establishing communities supporting women and their careers in ocean science.

In 2020 and 2021, IOC-UNESCO co-organized multiple online events, on

the occasion of international days such as the International Day of Women and Girls in Science on the 11 February and the International Women's Day (IWD) on the 8 March to identify both barriers and measures to advance women's participation in ocean science, with special focus on leadership roles. Mentoring programmes, the co-creation of ocean science management plans, networking, role models and communication are among the measures identified.



Future IOC-led Ocean Decade activities focusing on women's leadership and empowerment will complement, among other initiatives, The Ocean Decade programme 'Empowering Women for the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development' led by the WMU. In particular, in cooperation with its 'Early Career Ocean Professionals' initiative, training workshops introducing best practices on how organizations and institutions can advance equal participation of women and men in ocean science, will be organized in 2022. IOC/UNESCO will continue to track the participation of women in ocean science through its Global Ocean Science Reports.



39%

of marine researchers
are women compared
with 33% for science
in general



Reducing gender inequalities in the creative sectors

7

Gender equality is a pre-requisite for the full expression of cultural diversity and for equal opportunities in artistic and cultural work for all.

Through its global and thematic reports, the UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions has tracked and highlighted the glaring gender inequality in the cultural and creative industries (CCIs). Women, compared to men, are greatly under-represented in key creative and decision-making roles. In the CCIs, they have less access to public funding, and in general receive less pay. Stereotypical portrayals of women in film, television, digital media and advertising, and threats to women artists online are fueling self-censorship and suppressing freedom of artistic expression in digital spaces.

Qualitative and quantitative data and information on innovative transformative practices on gender equality is lacking globally in the culture sector, hindering the establishment of appropriate policies and measures at the national level and the production of globally comparable data. The Monitoring Framework of the 2005 Convention includes indicators on gender equality, and additionally, UNESCO builds capacity in countries party to the 2005 Convention on participatory policy monitoring on

gender equality. For example, Colombia has elaborated a targeted study to map the status of women in the publishing and audio-visual sectors, and Indonesia has elaborated a first study on the participation of women in the film industry.

The share of the 2005 Convention periodic reports from state parties including information on policies and measures to promote gender equality has peaked at 82% for the 2020 reporting cycle, compared to 64% for the 2016-2019 period and 5% for the 2011-2015 period.

Today, the 2005 Convention's Policy Monitoring Platform¹ contains 257 policies and measures that governments have implemented and 44 measures reported by civil society organizations to promote gender equality in the CCIs.

UNESCO also supports legislative and institutional reform, to address the persistent inequalities in the CCIs through the implementation of the 2005 Convention and the 1980 Recommendation concerning the Status of the Artist. In Peru, as an example, in 2021, UNESCO supported a gender approach to the elaboration of a new law on the status of the artist and to its post-COVID recovery plan for the creative sector.

¹ <https://en.unesco.org/creativity/policy-monitoring-platform>

In 2021, UNESCO published '*Gender & Creativity: Progress on the Precipice*' that reported on the persistent gender inequalities in the creative sectors, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. It called for new commitments and transformative actions and for governments to apply a gender perspective in their cultural policy responses to COVID-19 pandemic set to have long-lasting, regressive effects on gender equality in the CCIs. It highlighted innovative measures and programmes from around the world that can serve as models for policymakers.

The COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown measures had an unprecedented impact on the cultural and creative industries (CCIs): in 2020 there was a USD 750 billion contraction in the Gross Value Added (GVA) generated globally by the CCIs relative to 2019. Job losses in the CCIs were estimated at more than 10 million worldwide, which has had a significant impact on women, who make up the majority of those working on short, temporary or insecure contracts in the CCIs.²

The work of the 2005 Convention is re-shaping cultural policies with the integration of a gender equality perspective by bridging the global data gap, building global advocacy, putting

² Source: *Cultural and Creative Industries in the Face of COVID-19: an economic impact Outlook*, June 2021



The 2005 Convention's Policy Monitoring Platform contains 44 measures to promote gender equality in CCIs

gender equality on the cultural policy agenda, and fostering local initiatives for gender equality in the creative sector.

UNESCO also promotes open debate on gender equality and women creators in the culture sector through actions and campaigns such as the ResiliArt movement, initially launched in April 2020 as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Nineteen out of 275 debates³ stressed women's role in the creative sector and the negative effects of the pandemic on their participation in the CCIs. The #La Voix des Résilientes campaign gave voice to ten women artists from Senegal and Mali during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- ▶ Worldwide, 250 million fewer women than men use the Internet, and women still represent only 21% of performers in electronic music festivals in Europe and North America;
- ▶ In Uruguay, women occupy 25% of managerial positions in public and private cultural organizations, 24% in Montenegro and only 3% in Mali;
- ▶ In Indonesia, a recent study shows that while female professionals are advancing in the film industry as a whole, they are still largely under-represented in creative decision-making roles, representing only 20% of scriptwriters, 19% of producers and 7% of directors.⁴

³ Global (3), Europe (1), Colombia (2), South America (1), Africa (1), Gambia (1), Algeria (1), Morocco (1), West Asia (1), Peru (3), Palestine (1), Mongolia (1), West Africa (2).

⁴ Source: *Gender & Creativity: Progress on the Precipice*, UNESCO, 2021

In Action

Reducing gender inequalities in creative sectors

To address the barriers to women's participation in the evolving and expanding digital creative sector and to bridge the gender digital gap, UNESCO launched the 'UNESCO I Sabrina Ho initiative « You Are Next: Empowering Creative Women »'. The initiative supported four projects from 2018 to 2021 in Mexico, Senegal, Tajikistan and Palestine benefitting around 200 mainly women, between the ages of 18 to 40, working in the creative industries.



In Palestine, the Women Audio Visual Education (WAVE) project ran from February 2019 to January 2021. A technology-based training programme developed by Ayyam Al Masrah of Theatre Day Productions, it intersects digital animation, drama and storytelling to build the entrepreneurial, creative and technical skills of young Palestinian women from the Gaza strip.

WAVE trained 42 women in technical and entrepreneurship skills, who learnt to create short videos with their smartphones, work with communities and turn improvisation, character analysis and development into new digital content. The Theatre Day Productions designed a five-year strategic plan for the introduction of digital audiovisual curriculum in a Palestinian university. Three trainees found a paid job after obtaining audio-visual skills from WAVE, one trainee got a scholarship to study filming, and campaigns featuring trainees work reached 1,275 audience members. Beneficiaries overwhelmingly

considered that the project had positive impacts on skills development, networking, mentoring, confidence building and women's empowerment.

Meet two beneficiaries:

Maryam Sa'ady-Awwad, (21) *'Having a larger female presence in the digital creative industry is crucial. Women have a role to play in every issue faced by a community, which means we need women's eyes to cover them..... During a module on interview techniques, I realised that an artistic interview requires a right place and a right light. When I re-watched the documentary films I produced before this course, I notice that all the interviews should have been edited more.'*

Aya Al Matrabiee, (20) *'A couple years ago, I tried to create a group of young photographers. I could not find any girls. Today, the situation is better, and it is because we, women together, are acting to change it..... Since the training, I believe that enormous possibilities belong to the digital creativity industry. When I watch films or see photographs now, I notice how the light and sound was used by a creator. I ask myself - if I were the creator, what would I change about the light and sound?'*

Capacity building and mentoring schemes for women in the creative sectors remained a focus of UNESCO's work despite the COVID-19 pandemic. The UNESCO/Nara Residency for Young African Female Filmmakers chose ten young African women under the age of 35 years from Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Burkina Faso and Senegal to participate in a two-week immersive residency in Nara, Japan, to develop a short documentary film and provide access to global market and audiences.

Women safeguarding cultural and natural heritage

8

Women's role in safeguarding built and living cultural heritage, and natural heritage has largely remained unrecognized.

On **UNESCO's World Heritage List**, to date, only two sites are directly related to the history and lives of women: the Tombs of Buganda Kings at Kasubi, Uganda; and the Flemish Béguinages, in Belgium. In 2019, the Operational Guidelines of the World Heritage Convention were updated to ensure a gender-balanced approach. Translating gender equality into action, UNESCO has implemented diverse programmes to spotlight, train and promote women heritage professionals.



Safeguarding Yemen's heritage by advancing gender equality

Yemen has unique cultural heritage, but due to the country's ongoing war, environmental degradation and economic collapse, three of its World Heritage sites are classified endangered: the Old City of Sanaa and its great mosque; the Historic Town of Zabid; and the walled Old City of Shibam.



UNESCO and the EU launched the 'Cash for Work: Promoting Livelihood Opportunities for Urban Youth in Yemen', combining both temporary work opportunities and capacity building, to address safeguarding cultural heritage, and to advance gender equality and youth employment



in the country. The society in Yemen is deeply conservative with restrictive social norms with respect to the roles of women. UNESCO has implemented a bold gender transformative project to rehabilitate cultural heritage by hiring women, mostly recent university graduates, in supervisory roles as architects, engineers or in administration to ensure that the work culture is inclusive of women.

Despite prevalent social norms where most unskilled and semi-skilled workers are young men, through a pilot experiment in the Historic Town of Zabid, two training programmes in carpentry and in the maintenance of interior limestone decorations had women as 71% of participants. Trained

women-only teams are rehabilitating ten historic houses in Zabid paving the way to scale up interventions by women-only teams.

As of 31 August 2021, the project had employed around 3,000 Yemeni women and men, carried out rehabilitation activities in more than 160 historic buildings, and surveyed 16,000 historic buildings through extensive community-led damage assessment. Additionally, the project has revived the creative industries sector in Yemen through capacity building on cultural management and funding opportunities, supporting 460 young cultural operators, more than half of whom are women. The goal is to provide

long-term income opportunities for around 4,000 young people.

Harbia Al Himiary (37) with 15 years of experience, is the first woman architect - engineer to lead a team as part of the UNESCO rehabilitation project saving the intricate stone carvings and architectural heritage of the Old City of Sanaa in Yemen. In a challenging security and materials supply context, she manages a team of 24, has designed and facilitated capacity building opportunities for women, and has helped train 211 engineers, carpenters and specialists, about half of whom are women. She is deeply proud of her work to conserve Yemen's architectural heritage while at the same time expanding opportunities for Yemeni women.

“

UNESCO has provided various opportunities to step up my career, and to learn from my peers involved in safeguarding the World Heritage Sites.



→ **Spotlight on women site managers in action to safeguard cultural and natural World Heritage**

To celebrate International Women's Day 2021, UNESCO shone the light on women World Heritage site managers working to protect, promote and enhance cultural and natural properties⁵. Tania Zaven, Regional Director of north Mount Lebanon/Byblos in Lebanon and site manager of the cultural World Heritage city Byblos, one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world, oversaw the protection, and the continuity of on-site and online activities during the challenging COVID-19 pandemic and the very difficult economic situation in the country in 2020 and 2021.



The Caribbean island of the Commonwealth of Dominica boasts the striking Morne Trois Pitons National Park World Heritage (WH) site. This WH site covers 9% of the island's surface comprising five live volcanoes, tropical forest, natural lakes, rivers and waterfalls. Jacqueline André, Head of the National Parks Forestry, Wildlife and Parks Division recounts how she is working to safeguard this exceptional natural heritage.



“Since I was young, I was fascinated by nature. My school was located within a botanical garden, and I wanted to learn everything about the environment, the ecosystem, and how they all functioned. I began longing to be part of a system that helped to conserve the beauty that surrounded me.

I was a park volunteer when the former director encouraged me to apply for

a paid position. I was lucky to have received so much encouragement in the earlier years of my conservation career. I ended up pursuing a forestry diploma in Trinidad and Tobago, and became one of the first women to be trained in this field. I moved up steadily in the system, and at times, my male colleagues felt a little 'left out.' But I always focused on growing my expertise and improving myself to reach the level of the career I aspired. I just kept falling in love with nature.

UNESCO has provided various opportunities to step up my career, and to learn from my peers involved in safeguarding the World Heritage Sites. For example, Martinique has innovative communications strategies to involve the public in conservation efforts.

Jamaica empowers communities to actively participate in site management. I always come home feeling that we need to do more of that in Dominica.

I encourage the young staff, especially women, to contribute to our shared fight for nature. We need the next generation to take on this role and be the leaders”.

⁵ Source: World Heritage Review: People Protecting World Heritage (2021)



Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) can incorporate gendered roles as part of its practice. The 2003 Convention on the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage encourages States Parties to foster their ICH to advance gender equality while recognizing that communities pass on their gender value systems through ICH. By challenging gender roles, especially where the dignity and wellbeing of those involved could compromise human rights, countries can safeguard ICH in a more sustainable way.

Out of over 450 elements on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, there are only 24 elements related to women, and seven in need of urgent safeguarding.

In the framework of the 2003 Convention, a survey in 2020 revealed the gender dimensions of the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on women's employment related to living heritage. For example, in Botswana, earthenware pottery-making is practiced by women, who transmit this living heritage to daughters and granddaughters. During the COVID-19

pandemic, while they could continue to practice their pottery craft at home, they could not distribute or sell their products due to restrictions on movement. Working in the informal economy, they were not eligible for government support.

→ **Safeguarding the female chants of Taroudant in Morocco**

From 2017 to 2020, a UNESCO project⁶ contributed to safeguarding the female chants of Taroudant, a city situated in the south-west of the High Atlas mountains. Practiced by women's music groups during social events, these chants enliven gatherings, and convey values shared among communities in the region. The project established an inventory of the practice, created new groups of women trained both in the craft as well as the preservation of traditions, purchased the necessary equipment to perform the tradition, and developed audiovisual products to contribute to its revitalization.

⁶ Financed by the UNESCO Intangible Heritage Fund



UNESCO's Memory of the World (MoW) Programme facilitates the preservation, access and awareness of significant world documentary heritage. In 2020, UNESCO undertook the *Gender Equality Baseline Study of Memory of the World in Asia-Pacific* and reviewed all the MoW international and regional inscriptions from the Asia-Pacific region with a gender lens. Only four items among the total 155 were found to highlight gender equality issues or promote empowerment of women. UNESCO then launched the "Women in History – Telling HERstory through Memory of the World" project with an online information platform. The project encourages over 100 memory institutions in the Asia-Pacific region to identify and share their documentary heritage collections that highlight women's achievements. The online platform was launched on International Women's Day 2021. The platform is being enriched continuously. Mongolia has started to research, identify and digitalize documentary heritage collections to contribute to 'HERstories'.

Addressing existing and emerging societal challenges to gender equality

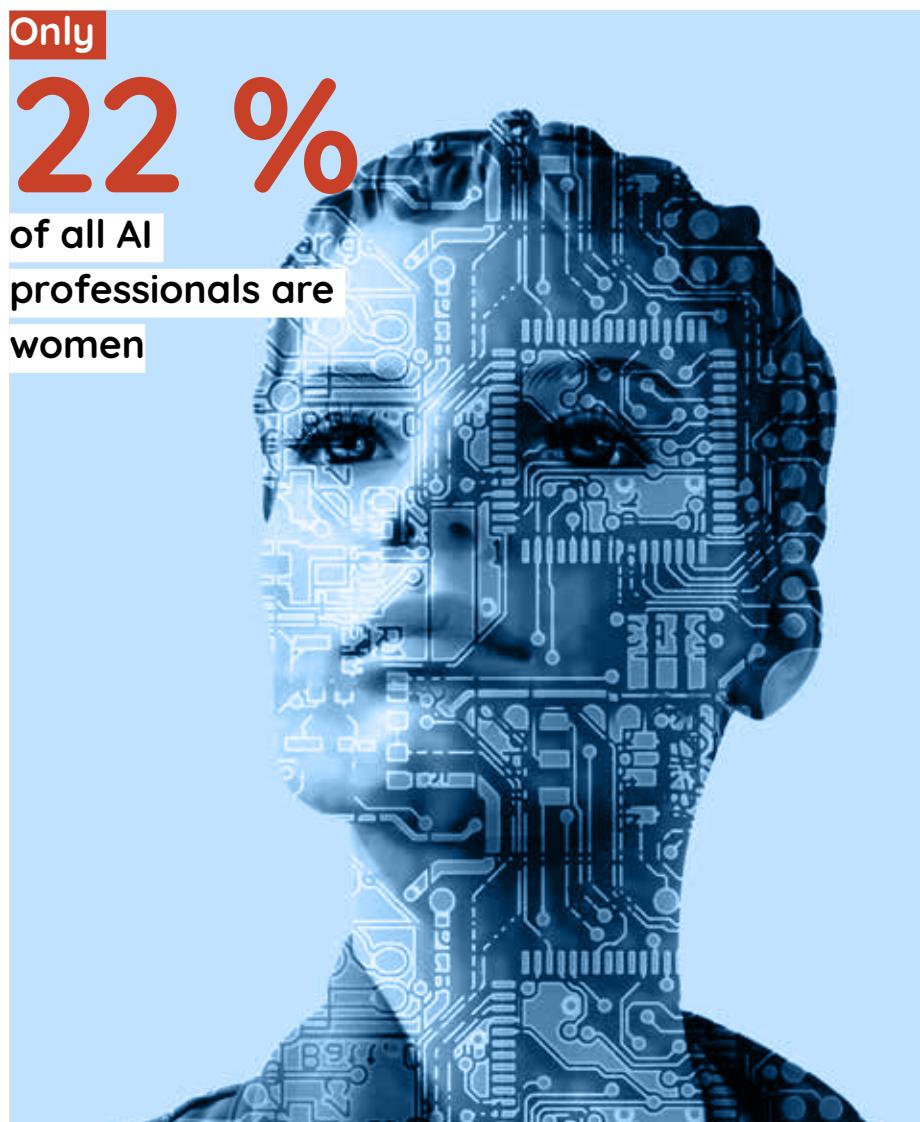
Gender equality concerns all aspects of our complex, multi-dimensional and evolving societies. Societal challenges to gender equality include persistent and harmful gender stereotypes, conscious and unconscious gender bias, the prevalence of gender-based violence (GBV) and discrimination in areas such as science, technology and sport.

Gender equality and Artificial Intelligence (AI)⁷

Artificial Intelligence is positively augmenting or replacing human efforts to tackle humanity's complex challenges. AI integrates the biases and stereotypes of the data sets and algorithms of which it is composed, and of the people who build and operate it. Because only 22 % of all AI professionals are women, unintended and/or intended gender biases and stereotyping are being reproduced in AI technologies. For example, submissive virtual personal assistants such as Siri or Alexa are "female" by default showing how AI can reinforce and spread gender bias in our societies.⁸

⁷ Artificial intelligence (AI) involves using computers to classify, analyze, and draw predictions from large data sets, using a set of rules called algorithms. AI can identify patterns, make predictions, recommend actions, and figure out what to do in unfamiliar situations, learning from new data.

⁸ Source: *I'd Blush if I could*. UNESCO 2019.



The Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence, adopted by UNESCO Member States in November 2021, aims to reap the benefits of AI, but also to promote gender equality. The dedicated gender equality chapter of the Recommendation urges the mainstreaming of gender and diversity considerations into all stages of the AI life cycle. This includes in national digital policies, plans, and budgets; in learning and training; and by increasing support for girls' and women's participation in STEM and ICTs through financial, educational and employment opportunities. In addition, it recommends the equal representation of women on digital and AI companies' top management, boards and research teams; as well as eliminating gender stereotyping and discriminatory biases in AI systems from databases to algorithms.

As a good practice of UNESCO's normative work, the Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence lays the foundation for the ethical use of AI, in particular with regard to gender equality, and women's participation.

UNESCO is addressing the underrepresentation of women in the field of Artificial Intelligence. For International Women's Day, on 8 March 2021, UNESCO, the World

Economic Forum and Twitter, co-organized a virtual event with over 60,000 participants for the promotion of gender equality and women's leadership in AI. UNESCO is currently working with the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), the OECD and the Oxford Internet Institute (OII) to study the impact of AI on women in the labour market around the world: automation, re-skilling and up-skilling, effects on recruitment, promotions and leadership. The initial findings are expected to be available by mid-December 2021.

In addition, UNESCO promotes gender equality through its programme on bioethics⁹ in the field of assisted reproductive technologies and parenthood, and through its programme on the ethics of science and technology¹⁰ in areas such as genome editing and land use.

Masterclasses against discrimination: engaging youth for the gender dimension

UNESCO's Master Class Series against discrimination explores different types of gender-related discrimination

⁹ The International Bioethics Committee (IBC) developed the Report on Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ART) and Parenthood (2019).

¹⁰ The World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST) developed the Report on Land-Use Ethics (2021).

as it intersects with discrimination based on race, class, and age. The classes examine how discrimination is propagated in the media, public and private spaces, and in sports and the digital world. For International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, 25 November 2020, UNESCO held a Master Class entitled 'Youth against Gender-Based Violence' targeting secondary education students aged 14 to 18 years old and their teachers. Over 300 individuals from over 80 countries actively participated, drawing attention to issues such as harmful stereotypes of masculinity. Outputs included a list of action-oriented commitments for curricula and for students to fight GBV. Impacts included collaboration with the company ba&sh to develop a curriculum to sensitize employees, at all levels, on discrimination against women and girls. Two stamps were launched showcasing the visual identity of the Master Class Series against Racism and Discrimination.



In Action

India - Violence Against Women and Girls during the pandemic

The short film *Listen To Her*, supported by UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women and South Asia Foundation, aimed to encourage, and to challenge the taboo surrounding the reporting of domestic violence, amplified during the COVID-19 pandemic, when women were confined to their homes. It also aimed to highlight the unprecedented increase in workload for women during the pandemic, publicize helpline numbers, and encourage community activism to prevent and mitigate

domestic violence. By playing on the irony of 'Stay Home, Stay Safe', the film sparked discussions on domestic violence all over India.

The film was widely publicized on UNESCO, and UN social media channels in 2020. Bollywood actor and producer Nandita Das acted in the film and publicized it on her own social media channels including YouTube with 152,000 subscribers. In total, to date, the film has had 364 000 views and has received substantial coverage in print media.





In Action

Brazil – Girls' and women's right to education, entrepreneurship and social inclusion



UNESCO and the Criança Esperança Programme in Brazil, have partnered to promote social inclusion and girls' and women's right to education and entrepreneurship since 2004. In 2018, they supported the construction of a new building for the Instituto Proeza in Brasilia. The Instituto targets children, adolescents and young women that live in vulnerable conditions and experience violence, abuse, exploitation and abandonment. Its work focuses on income generation for low-income women fostering social inclusion through professional training, educational guidance, preparatory courses, sewing classes, ballet classes, and computer science. In 2020-2021, the new building has made it possible for girls and women to participate in technical courses and prepare for university entrance.



UNESCO's Flagship Programme against Gender Stereotypes

A series of six Regional¹¹ Expert Consultations against Gender Stereotypes were held virtually in early 2021 (between 11 January and 1 February) to take stock of the current challenges and solutions, and to draw a roadmap for UNESCO's future efforts to address gender stereotyping. This series targeted decision-makers, the academic and scientific communities, NGO communities, international civil society, media and the private sector.

Gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls in and through sport

Sport has multiple and interlinked benefits for physical and mental health for both men and women. For

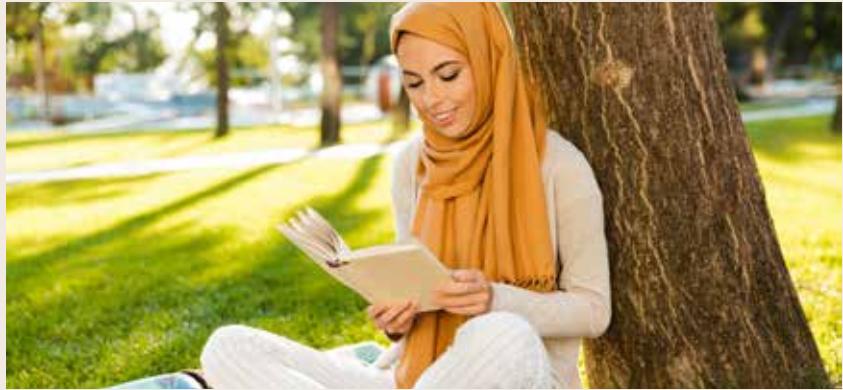
women and girls, participation in sport contributes to empowerment and builds confidence. Today, in Europe, men's competitions are broadcast up to 20 times more than women's, and 45% of men play sport at least once a week compared to 37% of women-disparities exacerbated by the COVID-19 crisis.

UNESCO works to advance participation and leadership of women in sport, and reduce gender inequalities in pay, media coverage, and safety. In April 2021, with UNESCO's support, The Global Observatory for Women, Sport, Physical Education and Physical Activity was established in Lausanne, Switzerland¹², as an incubating

11 North America, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, Arab countries.

12 With commitment of the Swiss authorities, including the Canton of Vaud, the City of Lausanne and the University of Lausanne.

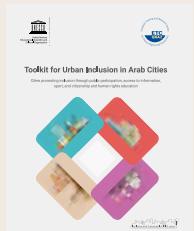
**In the USA,
40%
of all sports
participants are
women, yet female
athletes receive
only around
4%
of all sports media
coverage.**



→ In Action

Egypt - Women's rights to their cities

Lack of access to equitable and safe city services and spaces for young, old, and migrant women and those with disabilities is a challenge in many Arab cities. Due to the limited participation of women in local government urban planning, and in the design of cities, women's rights and needs are often overlooked. UNESCO, in partnership with the Coalition of Arab Cities against Racism, Discrimination, Xenophobia and Intolerance, in 2020, co-published the Toolkit for Urban Inclusion in Arab Cities, with the European Training and Research Center for Human Rights and Democracy in Graz (ETC-Graz), Austria. A specific addendum chapter on the inclusion of women will now be added to the Toolkit.



association¹³. The Observatory seeks to overcome global and systemic inequalities for girls and women in and through sport. It will advance quantitative and qualitative research on women's physical activity and sports practice, developing evaluation methodologies to guide policy and action plans, and monitor positive impacts of women's engagement at all levels in the world of sport.

Fit for Life, launched in November 2021, is UNESCO's new sports-based flagship designed to accelerate COVID-19 recovery, enhance the well-being of youth, and use sport to drive health, education and equality outcomes. With gender equality as one of its three priorities, using sex-disaggregated data, it aims to improve access to physical activity

in order to foster women's and girls' confidence, well-being, and leadership skills. Powered by a global compact of partners and public-private partnerships, women and girls will be involved at all the stages in the design of interventions. An incubating association has been established.



- ▶ Two of the 33 recognized international sports federations have a female president. Of the 206 National Olympic Committees, 13 have women presidents and 31 have women as secretary-general.
- ▶ In the USA, 40% of all sports participants are women, yet female athletes receive only around 4% of all sports media coverage.
- ▶ Adolescent girls were less active than adolescent boys, with 85% vs. 78% not meeting WHO recommendations.
- ▶ In Europe, 80% of young women equate participation in sport with an increase in confidence and decrease in anxiety.

¹³ The Swiss authorities are funding the incubation of the Observatory for two years.

Engaging men and boys for gender equality: tackling harmful gender norms and stereotypes

Gender equality refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Gender equality also recognises the diversity, interests, needs and priorities of different groups, and as such, must fully engage men. Together with women, men need to question and address the root causes of gender inequalities.

Social and cultural norms condition attitudes and behaviour including in relation to gender and reinforce stereotypes, independent of the personal identities, needs, and perspectives of individual people. Some norms and stereotypes are harmful and toxic, they endorse and perpetuate violence and gender inequalities.

UNESCO is focusing its efforts on addressing harmful stereotypes associated with some forms of masculinities that perpetrate violence and have detrimental effects on gender

equality, women's empowerment and men's own quality of life and well-being. In fact, violence against women is overwhelmingly, men's violence against women.

To mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women in 2020, UNESCO organized an online high-level roundtable to address the root causes of violence against women by calling on the international community to work together to shift narratives of men and masculinities, deconstruct stereotypes and address violent patterns of behaviour.

The UNESCO Transforming MENTalities Initiative developed in 2020-2021 aims to transform social and cultural norms that promote harmful stereotypes and behaviours, by reinforcing positive notions of masculinity. This global initiative *builds on previous work by* UNESCO in Costa Rica, India, Jamaica, Morocco, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe.





Across their lifetime, 1 in 3 women,

around 736 million, are subjected to physical
or sexual violence

The UNESCO Transforming MENTalities Initiative articulates around three pillars:

- **Research, data collection and analysis** for an improved evidence-base towards policy guidance on gender norms, including norms of 'masculinities', and on the interlinkages between the deconstruction of gender stereotypes and gender equality;
- **Capacity building** for the dissemination and development of theoretical and practical knowledge tools and programmatic support for the adaptation, replication and scale-up of good practices and policy recommendations;
- **Communication** and advocacy to sensitize the public and meaningfully mobilise all stakeholders, with a particular focus on youth.

In 2021, UNESCO established a partnership with four leading expert organisations specialized in different aspects, and with other civil society and educational institutions, working on engaging men and boys in gender equality, and on ending gender-based violence.

- Global MenEngage Alliance – advocates for reproductive justice and sexual health and rights;
- Promundo US - campaigns to foster equitable, nonviolent fatherhood practices and men's equal involvement in caregiving;
- The Sexual Violence Research Initiative – promotes knowledge management of violence against women and children;
- White Ribbon - promotes healthy 'masculinities' to prevent gender-based violence and discrimination.



→ In Action

Positively, Men: UNESCO Fostering Positive Masculinities

To promote positive roles of men and boys in support of gender equality, UNESCO collected testimonials of innovative action from a range of "positive men" across continents. The selected stories demonstrate how men and boys who reject toxic forms of masculinities, can be crucial in advancing gender equality, advocating, and supporting the empowerment of

women as equals. The 'Positively, Men' campaign started with a global call to testify with own concrete stories from the day-to-day life. The most compelling and inspiring testimonials are being compiled in a short media and print compendium and will be used to inspire men and boys to reflect on their behaviour and use their power to promote gender equality.

- ▶ Across their lifetime, 1 in 3 women, around 736 million, are subjected to physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner or sexual violence from a non-partner – a number that has remained largely unchanged over the past decade.¹⁴
- ▶ Among 105 countries with paternity leave policies, men can only access a median of 5 days.¹⁵

During the COVID-19 pandemic confinement measures:

- ▶ Domestic violence increased everywhere, up to 72% in certain places. Social distancing also led to the increase of cyber-violence and harassment - by 50% in some countries.
- ▶ According to Promundo's State of the World's Fathers 2021, men spent on average, 3.5 hours per week more on childcare, whilst women worked an additional 5.2 hours per week;

14 World Health Organization, 2021.

15 World Bank Gender Data Portal. 2021.



In Action

India – Transforming MENtalities Initiative

In India, UNESCO launched the Transforming MENtalities Initiative through four distinct steps:

- ▶ **A stakeholder mapping and analysis** identifying potential partners for UNESCO's Transforming MENtalities Initiative, with a focus on mobilizing knowledge and resources;
- ▶ **A partners dialogue on engaging boys and men for gender equality** bringing together over 100 participants from across 70 institutions in India including media, civil society organizations, government stakeholders, donor agencies, bi-lateral and multi-lateral organizations (UN Women, UNFPA, UNICEF), research institutions, and the private sector. This event helped to identify priority areas for action, namely, curriculum review, behavioral change through advocacy for questioning patriarchal attitudes, and fostering a positive gender equality role for community leaders and youth champions.

- ▶ **A national scoping report published in June 2021.** *Transforming 'Men'talities: Gender Equality and Masculinities in India*, highlighting the role of policymakers, civil society, and educational institutions in challenging normative behaviors and ideas that perpetuate gender-based discrimination. Understanding how best to identify and then transform those expressions of masculinity that impede gender equality and women's empowerment is the ultimate goal of this report. The UNESCO Chair on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment based in Amrita University (Kerala, India) spearheaded the drafting of the report.
- ▶ **UNESCO launched the online capacity building programme "Action for Equality"** for schools teachers and boys in India by working with schools to rebuild norms of masculinity to achieve gender equality, in partnership with the Equal Community Foundation.

In India, the Transforming MENtalities programme mobilized and disseminated knowledge and skill sets through online webinars to 130 educators. The trained educators engaged more than 6,000 boys in schools in India in open discussions on gender equality and create safe spaces for boys to think and act against gender-based violence. A cadre of Master Trainers was set up to support the training of other educators as a resource and to multiply impact.

By joining forces with four expert organisations – the Global MenEngage Alliance, Promundo-US, the Sexual Violence Research Initiative and White Ribbon – quality expertise, experience and networks are being mobilized to accelerate and upscale the initiative.



Promoting gender equality in and through the media

11

Independent media, freedom of expression, and professional and pluralistic journalism, pre-requisites for access to information, gender equality and sustainable development are under attack in many parts of the world. In addition, access to information, of highly variable quality and intent, on social media channels, including mis- and dis-information is presenting new challenges for citizens and societies.

UNESCO promotes freedom of the press and access to information through all types of media channels, at the same time mainstreaming gender equality through its programmes, projects and funding mechanisms on media policies, practice and content. UNESCO's Gender Sensitive Indicators for Media encourage media organizations to address gender inequalities in the workplace and in editorial content.

UNESCO builds the capacity of women and girls to engage with media and other content online, through its work on media and information literacy (MIL). Detecting and interpreting harmful gender stereotypes in all forms of media and content on- and off-line, MIL can enable people to develop and disseminate counter-narratives that promote gender equality. UNESCO ensures parity with a minimum of 50% girls and

women as beneficiaries of its MIL capacity building and mainstreams gender equality in all its MIL tools and standard-setting resources.



UNESCO has developed social media educational content on MIL and gender issues, disseminated via the MIL CLICKS social media channels (2020) enabling users to acquire (MIL) competencies.

More than half of the over 12,500 young people engaging in media and information learning on the UNESCO MIL CLICKS social media platform, are young women.

By 2021, close to 100 women leaders of youth organizations received training on how to integrate media and information literacy in their organizations' operations.

A UNESCO MIL Massive Open Online Course (MOOC)¹⁶ currently being updated, developed by UNESCO, focuses on gender equality. By

¹⁶ In partnership with the Athabasca University, Canada.

2021, more than 5000 students had registered for the course, with at least 2,260 achieving completion, of which more than half were women.

As part of a project¹⁷ 'Prevention of Violent Extremism in Jordan, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia', UNESCO has implemented MIL training for young journalists and youth organizations on gender-sensitive reporting.

UNESCO's **International Programme for the Development of Communication** (IPDC) supports media projects, including community media projects, and free and pluralistic media in developing countries. It supports projects that are gender transformative and mainstream gender equality. In September 2021, the IPDC launched a call for projects with a specific focus on gender-transformative projects.

UNESCO's **Multi-Donor Programme on Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists (MDP)** is an important mechanism to channel funding to gender-specific and gender-mainstreaming activities. It currently supports national actions in over 30 countries spread across Africa, the Arab Region, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

¹⁷ UNESCO-United Nations Office of Counter Terrorism (UNOCT)



UNESCO's Internet Universality Indicators



The gender digital divide assesses the difference between women and men's participation in the information society, and access to, and use of ICTs and the Internet. The UNESCO Internet Universality Indicators (IUI) assess to what extent national governments, companies, and civil society perform in adhering to the ROAM principles (Human Rights, Openness, Accessibility and Multi-stakeholder participation) in national

internet development and related policies. Of the 303 indicators in the ROAM framework, 21 are dedicated indicators on gender equality.

UNESCO supports Member States to implement the IUI framework. Each completed assessment, based on sex-disaggregated data, reports on gender equality issues in relation to access to digital technologies. The gender digital divide remains a concern particularly in less developed countries. Five countries (28 ongoing) have completed IUI assessments: Benin, Brazil, Germany, Kenya, and Senegal. As a result, legal frameworks to protect women from on-line attacks have improved in Benin, Brazil and Senegal.

**Independent media,
freedom of expression,
and professional and
pluralistic journalism,
pre-requisites for access
to information, gender
equality and sustainable
development are**

**under
attack in
many parts
of the
world.**



In Action

East Africa – focus on women journalists reporting on health issues and COVID-19



in 2020, over 280 women journalists enrolled and completed on-line training in new techniques on health reporting and the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as Wikimedia training, in Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, Tanzania and Uganda¹⁸. A resource hub was set up with a database on women journalists in East Africa, and with reference content to promote gender-responsive health reporting. Learning outcomes, among others, centred on: managing misinformation; accessing, interpreting and fact-checking scientific information; and gender equality aspects. The Wikimedia training increased the number of East African women Wikipedia editors by 113, and 42 new Wikipedia profiles of East African women doing exemplary work in response to COVID19 were added. A study within the project on the impact of COVID on Eastern African Women Journalists highlighted the dire challenges of female journalists at the frontline of the pandemic. Of 108 respondents to a survey, 52% were placed on unpaid leave, 11% lost their jobs and 64% experienced on-line harassment.

Recommendations included that regulatory agencies must require that media organizations have safeguarding policies to protect women from harm as part of the licensing procedures.

¹⁸ UNESCO's International Programme for Development of Communication (IPDC) in collaboration with Africa Women in Media (AWIM).



In Action

India - Fostering gender equality in community radio and reporting on sexual violence



Based on the principles of UNESCO's Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Media, UNESCO published in 2021, a manual entitled *Strengthening Gender-Sensitive Programming and Practices in Community Radio*¹⁹. With a detailed study of Indian and international community radio (CR) practices as well as participatory consultations with CR stations in India, the aim is to promote gender-responsive principles for community radio policies, programmes and editorial content. Through the UNESCO Chair on Community Media at the University of Hyderabad, India, research and consultations were conducted with a range of CRs in India, at the peak of the COVID-19 crisis. In its different phases, 65 representatives from 32 CR stations in India took part in the development of the manual. A capacity-building workshop was

held for around 20 CR stations to disseminate the results and recommendations.

Results included a greater understanding among participants: of gender laws, especially on sexual harassment; gender parity in management and listenership; gender-responsive CR programming, and use of gender-inclusive language. Recommendations encouraged the enhancement of women's participation in management and operations; capacity development of CR stations for engaging with gender-equality issues; and inclusive and gender-balanced participation in CR programming and production. Going forward, UNESCO in India, will explore translation of the manual into the regional languages, and continue capacity development in the regions. The manual can also be adapted for training in other South Asian countries.

A UNESCO²⁰ research and capacity-building project 'Media Action Against Rape'

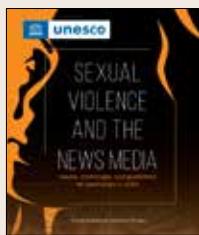
¹⁹ With the support of UNESCO's International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC)

²⁰ Led by Bournemouth University and UNESCO New Delhi



In Action

Maghreb-Mashreq Region - advancing gender equality in the film industry



produced a report *Sexual Violence and the News Media* to study inequalities in media reporting of sexual violence. Through content analysis and in-depth interviews

with journalists and media stakeholders across India, 257 reporters and editors were reached – working across print, television, radio, and online – in 14 languages, to identify how they reported on sexual violence. Only 13% of the respondents said they had access to written guidelines, while 14% said they did not have any type of guidelines. Respondents highlighted issues of harassment and the psychological challenges while reporting on sexual violence. The project put emphasis on advocacy and building capacity for balanced, accurate and ethical reporting on sexual violence and the development of targeted journalism curricula in India. The publication offers a set of recommendations and guidelines for the news industry.

A project, *Enhancing a gender responsive film sector in the Maghreb-Mashreq region* (2017-2020)²¹ targeted both female and male professionals. By 2020, the following are among the many achievements of this comprehensive project involving multiple aspects and stakeholders:

- ▶ Advocacy campaign for the promotion of gender equality within the film industry reaching over 2 million people, and the social media campaign #Women Creating Image reaching over one million people;
- ▶ 240 film professionals, including 80 women, worked on the "Chronicles of Her" anthology film bringing together five short films from Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia;
- ▶ Co-financed by the European Union, with the support of Sweden and the UNESCO Multi-Donor Programme for Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists, in synergy with UN Women, Mena Media Monitoring and the Salé Film Festival, in Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia.

21 Co-financed by the European Union, with the support of Sweden and the UNESCO Multi-Donor Programme for Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists, in synergy with UN Women, Mena Media Monitoring and the Salé Film Festival, in Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia.

on the theme of gender equality and the empowerment of women in the Arab region;

- ▶ Creation of the 'Arab Women in Film' online directory, with more than 190 professionals listed;
- ▶ Capacities of local Civil Society Organizations and of more than 200 community actors reinforced on monitoring and advocating for gender equality in the film industry;
- ▶ Eight women filmmakers benefitted from the SISTERS IN FILM support and capacity building programme for the exchange of expertise and have since launched the independent network 'Rawiyat';
- ▶ The call for the periodic organization of the 'Equality Assizes within the Audio-visual and Film Industry in the Maghreb-Machrek region' to make recommendations on the advancement of gender equality in the film industry in the region.

Strengthening the safety of women journalists

12

Worldwide, more than their male counterparts, women journalists face online and offline harassment, threats and attacks, not only with respect to their work as journalists, but also through gender-based violence (GBV). These threats can silence women journalists' voices and hinder gender equality, investigative journalism, freedom of expression, and the right to access information. Many women journalists show great resilience in the face of constant abuse.

As lead agency for the implementation of the United Nations Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists, and recognized for its work in this area, UNESCO aims to strengthen the safety of women journalists through research, capacity-building, awareness raising and policy advice.

UNESCO's Global Research Project on Online Violence against Women Journalists

To assess the scope and impact of online violence against women journalists worldwide and to develop recommendations on how to combat it, UNESCO launched an extensive global research project in 2020²², implemented by the International Centre for Journalists (ICFJ). The



interviews. The survey²³ was completed by over 900 participants from 125 countries. The report on the global survey, 'Online violence against women journalists: a global snapshot of incidence and impacts' was launched in December 2020.

Among the 714 respondents identifying as women:

- 73% of women journalists who responded had experienced online violence in the course of their work;²⁴
- 25% had received threats of physical violence;
- 18% had been threatened with sexual violence;
- 20% reported being attacked offline related to online violence they had experienced;²⁵
- 30% said they self-censor as a result of the abuse;

- 26% reported impacts on their mental health;
- 41% noted that online attacks appeared to be orchestrated disinformation campaigns aiming to discredit journalists or their work.



A discussion paper based on the above findings entitled 'The Chilling: global trends in online violence against women journalists' was published in April 2021. The findings were the subject of more than 80 articles and interviews in 14 languages in leading media outlets such as The Guardian, Al Jazeera English, The Washington Post, CNN, BBC, The Star, Le Monde, France Inter, Le Figaro, Continental, La Repubblica, etc.

At the regional level, UNESCO's International Programme for the Development of Communication supported a research project on gender-based violence against journalists, which analyzed, using data mining and data analysis tools, the Twitter accounts of 66 journalists who were targeted by online attacks, from seven countries of Latin America: Argentina, Colombia, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

²² Financially supported by UNESCO's Multi-Donor Programme on Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists (MDP) and the Swedish Postcode Foundation.

²³ In seven languages - French, English, Spanish, Arabic, Russian, Chinese and Portuguese.

²⁴ Expressed as a percentage of 625 respondents identifying as women who answered this question.

²⁵ Expressed as a percentage of 596 respondents identifying as journalists who answered the question.



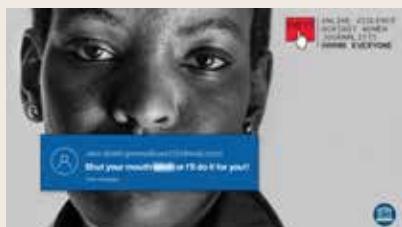
73%

of women journalists
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In Action

Strengthening the safety of women journalists



Through the project Promoting Safety of Women Journalists, supported by the Swedish Postcode Foundation, from 2019 to 2021, UNESCO trained around 155 women journalists and 64 media managers in four target countries: India, Mali, Senegal, and Sri Lanka to address the specific threats faced by women journalists.

These countries, and the rest of the globe benefitted from the tailored “know your rights” materials for women journalists and gender-sensitive safety guidelines for newsrooms. UNESCO’s advocacy campaigns at global and local levels served to raise awareness, to enhance capacity and as a call for action.

Around 520 students from all over the world, a majority of women journalists, have completed at least part of the Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) ‘How to report safely: Strategies for women journalists and their allies’ addressing the gender dimensions of journalists’ safety. A self-

paced version of the MOOC remains freely available, and Spanish and French language versions are under development.

Around 89% of women journalists who took the final evaluation questionnaire on the MOOC say they feel better prepared to reduce and mitigate threats as a result of the capacity-building, and 75% reported having developed a working safety plan.

In cooperation with Thomson Reuters Foundation, UNESCO also developed practical guidelines for women journalists on what to do when attacked online and guidelines on how to develop gender-sensitive safety policies for newsrooms.

The safety of women journalists was incorporated into training activities in Syria, Pakistan, Palestine, Myanmar, Sudan, South Sudan, Yemen and Latin America and the Caribbean.²⁶

A UNESCO project²⁷ studied responses to attacks faced by women journalists in Afghanistan, Iraq and Mexico, and assessed how to mainstream gender in the existing national safety mechanisms and initiatives for the protection of journalists. UNESCO

also supported the creation of a hotline reporting mechanism to protect women journalists, and trained female police officers in Iraq, in March 2021.

A #JournalistsToo campaign launched on International Women’s Day on 8 March 2021, focused on online violence gathered the second highest level of engagement on UNESCO’s main Twitter account during that period.



The 2020 and 2021 editions of the UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize were awarded respectively to two women journalists: Jineth Bedoya Lima (Colombia) and Maria Ressa (the Philippines). In May 2021, Maria Ressa received the Prize during the World Press Freedom Day Conference organized by UNESCO in Windhoek, Namibia, in recognition of her outstanding contribution to the defence of press freedom in the face of danger. In October, she was awarded the 2021 Nobel Peace Prize for her courageous fight for freedom of expression.

²⁶ With direct funding from the UNESCO Multi-Donor Programme on Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists.

²⁷ Supported by the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC).

UNESCO In Action for gender equality **in Africa**

13

In a fast-changing and uncertain world, mired by inequality, a pandemic, ecosystem degradation, biodiversity loss, climate change, and economic disruption, African countries, more than most, face acute sustainable development challenges. Africa is not only the cradle of humanity and diversity, giving rise to rich and unique cultural heritage and creativity, but it is also the youngest continent with 75% of its population under 35. Many African countries are mobilizing their rich culture, and are embracing digital technology as a fast track to sustainable development to create a brighter future for their young women and men. Africa and Gender Equality are UNESCO's two Global Priorities. UNESCO's work in Africa to advance gender equality has focused on advancing girls' and women's education, especially in STEM fields. In addition to the many examples in this document of how UNESCO is helping advance gender equality in Africa, here we shine the light on jazz women, digital technologies and empowering women with disabilities to advocate for their rights.

→ **Jazz Women in Africa**

The jazz music genre, developed in the United States from African-American musical traditions among other, is a vehicle for mutual understanding, diversity, innovation and improvisation. It is strongly linked with the struggle against discrimination. In November 2011, the UNESCO General Conference proclaimed the 30 April as International Jazz Day. For its 10th

anniversary in 2021, UNESCO brought jazz back to the voices of women and to African roots as an instrument to promote gender equality with three events²⁸. Thirty women artists from across the continent from more than 20 countries²⁹ performed in an online concert; two round table discussions were held respectively for Francophone and Anglophone participants including music journalists and producers. The aim was to raise the visibility of, and give voice to African women artists, shed light on aspects such as artistic freedom, access to markets and pay, especially in COVID times. The event has contributed to informing UNESCO's action on the status and future of women artists in Africa, in particular musicians.



Women led only 30% of the top 50 jazz albums by 2020. They have represented only 7.6% of Grammy nominees since 2013.

- 28 An initiative of UNESCO's Division for Gender Equality in collaboration with Brahim El Mazned of ANYA Music (Morocco).
- 29 Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Capo Verde, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Gabon, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Senegal, Tanzania, Togo, Zambia, Zimbabwe.



Addressing the digital gender divide on the African continent

UNESCO's YouthMobile Initiative builds on the availability of free and open source software and the widespread availability of mobile smart phones to teach, especially young girls and boys, in particular in Africa, to create useful mobile apps through coding. Students develop complex learning skills and find solutions to local sustainable development challenges.

In Madagascar, only 14% of the population have access to the internet. In 2021, 'UNESCO's YouthMobile Initiative: Fostering digital skills among women and girls in Madagascar' aimed to bridge the digital gender divide, by providing training to around 150 young women and girls (14-25 years) on coding and the development of mobile applications to improve ICT skills and as a resource to solve local development issues. The four-month training course in partnership with L'Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie focused on social innovation, ethics in the field of ICTs, coding and languages, design thinking, introduction to robotics and gaming, entrepreneurship and employability, and to addressing local challenges in the post-COVID context. A partnership with a telecommunication operator (Orange) enabled Internet access and technical assistance to participants and coaches. Participants formed 47 teams to develop and present their proposals for mobile applications at the end of the training.

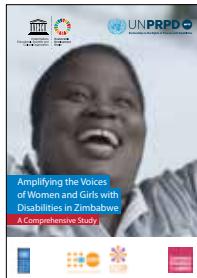


In October 2021, UNESCO, other UN actors and local stakeholders collaborated to organize **#Hack4Peace** hackathon, featuring the UNESCO YouthMobile Initiative as one of three competition categories. The Initiative sent 40 of the 47 teams to compete. Three innovative mobile applications won the YouthMobile category of the national hackathon: Broka, She'ld and Ny Hoaviko - that address SDGs issues within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, the Ny Hoaviko app promotes inclusion for women in the STEM education system in Madagascar. They are available to download on mobile phones locally. A partnership with a local incubator, Zafy Tody has enabled the winners to develop entrepreneurship around their projects.

UNESCO's YouthMobile Initiative is an important partner in the organization of the Africa Code Week³⁰, an event that takes place yearly over several months. By 2020, through thousands of short workshops and training, 10 million young girls and boys were reached and more than 80 000 teachers, in more than 40 African countries, with a female participation rate of around 46%. In addition, UNESCO supported local organizations for workshops targeting girls including through a dedicated "seed-grants" programme. The aim of Africa Code Week is to allow access to training and coding resources to more than five million young girls and boys across the continent by 2025.



Advancing the rights of women and girls with disabilities in Zimbabwe



Women and girls with disabilities in Zimbabwe, as in many parts of the world, experience intersecting forms of discrimination due to their disability, their gender, and to negative cultural norms and beliefs³¹. Marginalization, poverty, HIV and the COVID-19 pandemic have heightened their risks, already high, to gender based violence (GBV), sexual gender-based violence (SGBV), lack of sexual and reproductive health services (SRHS) and other social challenges. In 2020 and 2021, in the framework of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), UNESCO has worked through two joint UN initiatives³² and through Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) led by women with disabilities. Actions focus on the elaboration of knowledge products, awareness raising and capacity building in communities to combat stigma, and supporting institutions that provide judicial, sexual and reproductive health services. Support is given to the development of a national strategy and

policy to address GBV on women and girls with disabilities and to mass media campaigns using national broadcasting media platforms and community radios.

- ▶ Through both the United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Spotlight Initiatives, UNESCO complemented the Government of Zimbabwe's effort reaching an estimated 1000 women and girls with disabilities from marginalized areas empowering them to become self-advocates on their rights.
- ▶ By 2021, UNESCO working with UN partners trained at least 20 women and girls with disabilities from marginalized areas with leadership skills and SRHR. These women and girls then confidently advocated for their rights, and on GBV issues with Members of Parliament.
- ▶ An estimated 300 Community leaders who include chiefs, village heads, religious leaders, health care workers and school heads have been engaged by the OPDs, changing their perceptions towards disability.
- ▶ There is an increased availability of knowledge products in Zimbabwe guiding programming on disability inclusion, in many cases in local languages (Shona & Ndebele) and in Accessible formats-Braille and Sign Language.

30 An initiative by the private company SAP together with multiple partners.

31 Amplifying the Voices of women & girls with disabilities in Zimbabwe: A Comprehensive Study (<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf000374388>)

32 The United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) project on "Advancing the Rights of Women and Girls with Disabilities in Zimbabwe" and The EU funded Spotlight Initiative on Eliminating Gender-Based Violence in Women and Girls, to empower women with disabilities to exercise their rights.

UNESCO In Action for gender equality in Small Island Developing States



Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are subject to specific sustainable development challenges linked to, among other, their remoteness, small size of their economies and vulnerability to climate change. The SAMOA (SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action) Pathway, an outcome of the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States in 2014, identified gender equality as a SIDS priority in the context of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. UNESCO mainstreams gender equality in its actions in SIDS, in areas such as freshwater management, artificial intelligence, climate risk impacts and the role of women's ancestral voyaging knowledge in the Pacific.



Caribbean Sheroes Initiative

In the Caribbean sub-region, at least one in three women has been a victim of at least one form of gender-based violence in her lifetime. The underlying traditional social norms that shape and perpetuate power structures still permeate all layers of society in the region leading to different forms of inequalities, in particular gender inequality.

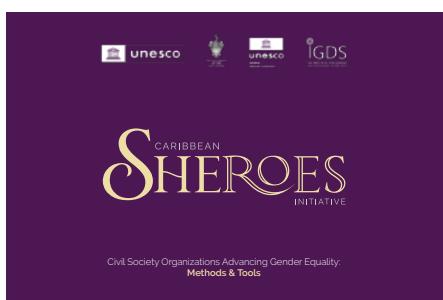
The Caribbean Sheroes Initiative, launched by UNESCO³³ in April 2021, is a sub-regional initiative targeting 20 countries and territories³⁴. It aims

to produce knowledge and enhance the skills of young people to promote gender equality and to transform gender norms in the English and Dutch-speaking Caribbean.

So far, it has brought together 12 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Jamaica working for gender justice to form a network of Gender Equality Champions with the ambition to extend to other CSOs in other countries and territories in the Caribbean. A toolkit commissioned by UNESCO and produced by the Institute for Gender and Development Studies (IGDS) at the University of the West Indies (UWI) entitled *The Caribbean Sheroes Initiative Toolkit - Civil Society Organizations Advancing Gender Equality: Methods & Tools* was launched in July 2021 to build capacity among the CSOs.

³³ In partnership with the Institute for Gender and Development Studies (IGDS) of The University of the West Indies (UWI), and supported by the Jamaica National Commission for UNESCO.

³⁴ Aruba, Antigua and Barbuda, Anguilla, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Caymen Islands, Curaçao, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sint Maarten, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago.



From 4 to 12 October, 2021, a Sheroes Summer School was facilitated by the IGDS. Five intensive virtual evening classes, spanning two weeks, taught 30 young people from 13 countries and territories in the Caribbean, the basic concepts and tools for project planning in human rights and sustainable development, focusing on gender equality. The Summer School also aimed to establish a network of young advocates for gender equality in the Caribbean. In the final session, the young advocates presented their own advocacy project plan to promote

gender equality in the region. Project ideas ranged from advancing women's entrepreneurship, to raising awareness about sexual and reproductive health and rights, to promoting policy change, using Caribbean history as a tool for understanding gender inequalities and challenging different perceptions of gender identities. Outstanding scholars, activists and experts in the field and the Gender Equality Champions engaged with the participants. UNESCO in partnership with IGDS then launched an awareness-raising campaign 'Orange the World – Sheroes Youth Action to End Gender-Based Violence in the Caribbean'. During 16 days of Activism to combat Gender-Based Violence, from 25 November to 10 December 2021, Sheroes Summer School participants shared their work and messages on UNESCO's social media.

In the effort to reach more young change-makers in the region, within

the framework of the Initiative, UNESCO, in collaboration with IGDS, also organized regional training on gender equality, advocacy and development, based on the content developed for the Sheroes Summer School. More than 30 young advocates from across the Caribbean attended the three training sessions from October 19-21, 2021, to expand their knowledge around gender equality and project planning.

An awareness-raising and visibility campaign highlighting the actions of the Initiative has led to the development of a network of youth-led organizations and influencers that work on Gender Justice issues (intersectional feminism, LGBTI+ rights, education on gender issues, GBV), featured in UNESCO's #iRespectU campaign. This is youth-based social media awareness campaign for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the Caribbean SIDS.

Addressing the challenge of gender equality **during** a pandemic

Building back equal for gender equality: COVID-19 and school closures

Experience tells us that public health outbreaks have distinct gendered impacts, and that preparedness and response efforts must understand the gender dimensions of these crises to avert widening inequalities and seize opportunities to advance gender equality. The COVID-19 pandemic is no different.

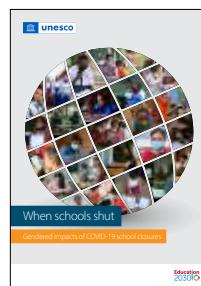
This unprecedented disruption to education has immediate and potential longer-term effects on education and gender equality, particularly on the most marginalised. However, the pandemic has also been an opportunity to build back equal through innovative gender-responsive measures that transform education systems, prioritize resilience, and address the key bottlenecks and barriers to girls' education.

In March 2020, UNESCO quickly mobilized more than 200 partners from the United Nations family, civil society, academia and the private sector through the creation of the Global Education Coalition (GEC) aimed at promoting solutions to ensure learning continuity. The GEC's Gender Flagship

aims to support 5 million girls to fulfil their right to education, with a focus on the 20 countries with the greatest gender disparities in education. The GEC is currently operating in 112 countries.

The Global Education Coalition Gender Flagship focuses on:

Data and research to inform policies, programmes and plans



In October 2021, UNESCO published *When schools shut: gendered impacts of COVID-19 school closures*. This global study³⁵ showed that, despite swift

responses, remote learning strategies in most countries failed to account for gender-based considerations following school closures. In-depth research in local communities in Bangladesh, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Mali and Pakistan demonstrated widespread limitations of access to tech-based remote learning, disproportionately affecting girls. Girls often carried an extra burden of domestic responsibilities,

³⁵ The study was generously funded by the Global Partnership for Education.

whereas boys were more likely to work outside the home to generate income. The closures have also severely impacted children's mental health. The study calls for sustained gender-transformative action to tackle learning loss and low return-to-school rates in vulnerable communities. There is an urgent need to ensure that, informed by sex-disaggregated data, remote learning includes no-tech and low-tech solutions, and that schools are equipped to provide psychosocial support to learners returning to school from lockdown.

Advocacy and communication to promote continuity of learning and return to school



UNESCO, through the GEC's Gender Flagship, launched the global *Keeping Girls in the Picture* campaign to advocate for and mobilize actions for girls' learning continuity and their safe return to school. The multi-campaign, which features a signature launch video, engaging social media assets, powerful human interest stories and



practical toolkits for radio and youth-led organizations, was launched for partners to engage audiences and stakeholders in advocacy efforts for girls' return to school. Youth activists, community radios, influencers, experts, education professionals and champions have amplified the campaign:

- The campaign has reached over 400 million people since its launch in 2020, with the engagement of UNESCO's GEC partners;
- Messages shared by Gulli Africa reached 1.5 million subscribers in 25 French-speaking countries in Africa;

- CJ Group, a key funder of UNESCO's work on girls' education, leveraged their international K-POP events to reach 4 million young people in 150 countries and mobilize additional funds for advocacy;
- Over 30 influencers, including Nobel laureate Malala Yousafzai, former President of Malawi, H.E. Dr Joyce Banda and UNESCO champion for girls' education and professional football player Nadia Nadim contributed to the campaign.

**In addition to the
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→ In Action

The UNESCO-led Global Education Coalition Gender Flagship

The UNESCO-led Global Education Coalition Gender Flagship worked to accelerate the deployment of gender-responsive distance learning approaches during the pandemic. Technovation³⁶, in partnership with UNESCO, piloted IdeaLab, a five-week online programme in July and August 2020, to scale up girls' complex systems thinking and problem-solving skills and help them to learn how to work with technology. UNESCO's support engaged 1,500 girls aged between 10 and 18 in Brazil, India, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria and Pakistan. Volunteer mentors from companies such as Ericsson, SAP, Uber, Google, and NVIDIA provided feedback and support to students throughout the pilot. The Micro:bit Education Foundation supplied micro:bits-tablets with educational resources as prizes for girls in participating countries. End-pilot survey results found that 75% of girls felt that they learnt artificial intelligence (AI) and problem solving skills in the pilot. They used their new skills to design AI models to address community problems such as deforestation, contaminated drinking water, and crop disease.

A second phase of cooperation, through Technovation Girls³⁷ took place in 2021.

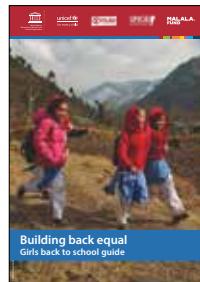
³⁶ Technovation is a global tech education non-profit that empowers girls to become leaders, creators and problem-solvers.

³⁷ The **Technovation Girls** programme equips young women (ages 8-18) to become tech entrepreneurs and leaders. With the support of volunteer mentors and parents, girls work in teams to code mobile apps that address real-world problems.

UNESCO and several GEC partners joined forces with Technovation to support girls in learning and applying the skills needed to solve real-world problems through technology. More than 5,900 girls from 65 countries have joined Technovation Girls since 2020 and worked in teams to submit app-based solutions to community problems around the world, such as poor local water quality, COVID-19 safety, sustainable agriculture, and wildfire preparedness. In 2021, Coalition members Ericsson, Qualcomm and SAP served as mentors to participants, while Siemens Stiftung, the UNESCO Associated Schools Network and UNESCO field offices supported recruitment and engagement efforts. More than 3,500 educators, parents and mentors were also engaged to provide capacity building support for the girls.

- ▶ Through Technovation, more than 9000 mobile apps and AI prototypes have been created by girls and families tackling issues such as healthcare and climate change.
- ▶ 76% of Technovation Girls alumni go on to pursue a STEM degree.
- ▶ 60% of Technovation Girls alumni are working in STEM-related fields.
- ▶ Technovation was showcased at the marketplace segment of the 2021 Consultation of the E9 Ministers of Education as a good practice in encouraging girls to become tech entrepreneurs.

Country-level action to prevent widening gender inequalities in education



UNESCO, together with the Malala Fund, Plan International and the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative, released the *Building back equal: Girls back to school guide* in August 2020. It advocates for putting gender equality at the heart of the education response to COVID-19, targeting policy-makers and practitioners in Ministries of Education. UNESCO has supported the use of the guide in COVID-19 response and recovery plans. See 'In Action' for more specific and country-level actions of the GEC Gender Flagship.

Facts and figures:

- School closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic affected nearly 1.6 billion learners in more than 190 countries;
- In addition to the 130 million girls who were already out of school, UNESCO estimates that over 11 million girls might not return to school after the pandemic.
- Gender disparities are already beginning to appear in data on return to school, in many settings at girls' disadvantage;
- The Global Education Coalition's Gender Flagship brings together some 70 members and sympathizers to support learning continuity and the return to school for all girls and boys;
- In the first 18 months of the Flagship (March 2020-September 2021) alone, some 950,000 learners benefited directly from activities deployed within the framework of the Flagship.



In Action

Women at the centre of UNESCO's COVID-19 response in India

To address the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on women in India, UNESCO joined hands with UN Women and a non-profit organization, Seeking Modern Applications for Real Transformation (SMART) to raise awareness and build capacity on domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic. Programmes were broadcast on SMART-supported community radio station Radio Mewat with



around approximately 0.7 million listeners across 180 villages in India's Haryana Nuh district. As part of the project, UNESCO supported the broadcast of 140 bulletins

on COVID-related information on domestic violence, facts on transmission, symptoms, preventive measures, misinformation, and stigmatization.

Women scientists addressing COVID-19

A survey, between March and June 2020, by The Organization for Women in Science for the Developing World (OWSD), a UNESCO programme unit, on the impact of Covid-19 on more than 5,000 women scientists in developing countries reported that:

- 26% had been raising awareness or disseminating information about the disease;
- 8% had been involved in coordinating a policy response to Covid-19 at the institutional level;
- 4% were undertaking research directly on the Covid-19 virus including developing treatments or vaccines, and;
- 14% were studying the impact of the coronavirus on other health conditions, or its societal or economic impact³⁸.

Gender equality in the creative sectors in COVID-19 times

In response to the severe effect of COVID-19 pandemic on the Culture and Creative Industries (CCIs), UNESCO launched the ResiliArt Movement in April 2020. Resiliart acts as a platform for artists and cultural professionals to share their stories and to advocate for their stronger social and economic rights. Nineteen debates³⁹ stressed women's role in the creative sector and the negative effects of the pandemic on their participation in the CCIs.

Gender & Creativity: Progress on the Precipice, a report published by UNESCO in 2021, explores existing, and at times widening, gender gaps in the creative sector, in particular in digital media, notably in the context of COVID-19. Without the systematic application of a gender perspective to policy responses, COVID-19 could have a long-lasting regressive effect on gender equality in the cultural and creative industries.

The COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown measures had an unprecedented

impact on the cultural and creative industries (CCIs): in 2020 there was a USD 750 billion contraction in the Gross Value Added (GVA) generated globally by the CCIs relative to 2019. Job losses in the CCIs were estimated at more than 10 million worldwide, which has had a significant impact on women, who make up the majority of those working on short, temporary or insecure contracts in the CCIs⁴⁰.

Addressing domestic violence in the time of COVID-19

The UNESCO series of webinars '*Inclusion in the time of COVID-19: addressing racism, discrimination, and exclusion*' aimed to exchange experiences and expertise on the social dimensions and measures to address the COVID-19 crisis at global and local levels. A webinar on 'Taking Action to End Domestic Violence' organized in May 2020 raised awareness, and shared experience on how to address issues of social isolation, domestic abuse and gender-based violence in times of quarantine.

38 Source: adapted from Johnson, Erin (2020) The Impact of Covid-19 on Women Scientists from Developing Countries: Source: UNESCO Science Report (2021)

39 3 Global, 1 Europe, 2 Colombia, 1 South America, 1 Africa, 1 Gambia, 1 Algeria, 1 Morocco, 1 West Asia, 3 Peru, 1 Palestine, 1 Mongolia, 2 West Africa.

40 Source: *Cultural and Creative Industries in the Face of COVID-19: an economic impact Outlook*, June 2021

Fitting in the broader picture:

The United Nations, UNESCO and Gender Equality

UNESCO fully participates with its UN and international partners to advance gender equality in line with its mandate on education, science, culture and communication.

UN System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality (UN-SWAP).

The second generation of UN-SWAP 2.0, launched in 2018 incorporating the 2030 Agenda, measures actions to promote gender equality against 17 performance indicators in relation to: results-based management; oversight; accountability; human and financial resources; capacity; knowledge, communication and coherence. The third year of reporting in 2020 against UN-SWAP 2.0 accountability framework on gender mainstreaming in the UN system examined seventy UN entities, which make up 94 per cent of the UN system. UNESCO met (10 indicators) or exceeded (3 indicators) of the requirements for 13 performance indicators out of 16 applicable. This constitutes a significant improvement from 11 performance indicators in 2019. As in 2018 and 2019, in 2020 UNESCO exceeded requirements for evaluation and met the requirements for equal representation of women. However, UNESCO's financial resource allocation for gender equality missed requirements in 2018, 2019 and again in 2020.

Share of ratings meeting/exceeding requirements of all ratings



Not applicable ratings omitted
Source: UN Women (2020)

UNESCO capitalizes 81% of positive ratings (meeting/exceeding requirements). This is higher than average ratings across the UN (68%) and specialized agencies (66%).

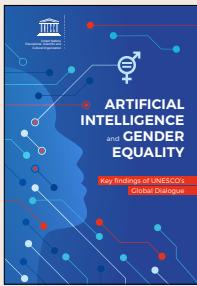
'Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development' and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) includes Goal 5 on gender equality: 'Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.' Gender equality is mainstreamed throughout the Goals, their indicators and targets. Thirty of the SDG targets and 40 of the indicators are gender-related. This includes at least 15 gender-related targets for the nine Goals to which UNESCO directly contributes.

Together with the UN and the international community, UNESCO celebrates the following International Days related to gender equality:

- ▶ International Day of Women in Multilateralism on 25 January (new!);
- ▶ International Day of Girls and Women in Science on 11 February;
- ▶ International Women's Day (IWD) on 8 March;
- ▶ International Day of the Girl on 11 October;
- ▶ International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on 25 November.

In November 2021, the 41st session of the UNESCO General Conference endorsed the establishment of the International Day of Women in Multilateralism to be celebrated every year on 25 January. The Day recognizes the essential role played by women in the promotion of human rights, peace and sustainable development within the multilateral system. It also encourages young women to pursue careers in multilateral organizations and aspire to leadership positions by providing role models.

In 2021, UNESCO celebrated IWD under the theme 'Women in leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19



In 2020, UNESCO planned a conference on using AI as an instrument to advance gender equality. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the *in presentia* conference gave place to an on-line dialogue between international experts in the fields of AI and gender equality resulting in UNESCO publication *Artificial Intelligence and Gender Equality*. It was a follow-up to the March 2019 UNESCO publication, *I'd Blush if I could: closing gender divides in digital skills through education* that sparked a global conversation on the gendering of AI technology and the importance of education to develop the digital skills of women and girls.

Snapshot of international commitments to gender equality

- ▶ **1945:** Charter of the United Nations adopted-no discrimination on the basis of gender
- ▶ **1946:** Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) created to promote, track and document gender equality and women's empowerment around the world.
- ▶ **1975:** First World Conference on Women, Mexico (called for by the CSW). UN Decade for Women, **1975-1985**, declared. Start of a new era of global efforts to advance women and promote gender equality.
- ▶ **1979:** UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), described as 'the first human rights treaty for women' was voted into force and adopted in 1980. Now ratified by 189 states – 96% of all UN Members.⁴¹
- ▶ **1980:** Second World Conference on Women, Copenhagen, assessed progress midway through the UN Decade for Women- called for stronger national measures on women's ownership and control of property, as well as women's rights to inheritance, child custody and nationality.
- ▶ **1985:** Third World Conference on Women, Nairobi, reviewed the UN Decade to assess progress towards the objectives set in Mexico and Copenhagen.
- ▶ **1995:** Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, a landmark event with 17,000 participants and 30,000 activists from all over the world gathered and produced the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, covering 12 different areas of action, all relevant to UNESCO's work. This document remains an influential blueprint to this day, clearly establishing gender mainstreaming as the key global strategy for promoting gender equality.
- ▶ **2000-2020/1:** Beijing + 5, +10, +15, +20, +25. The 1995 conference was followed by five-yearly meetings to renew the commitment and measure progress to gender equality.
- ▶ **2015:** UN Agenda 2030 – moving from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), gender equality is mainstreamed through the 17 SDGs and has its own Goal 5 'Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.'
- ▶ **2021:** Generation Equality Forum (GEF).

world'. The focus was on feminist leaders who tackle and deconstruct power structures to build an equal world. Gender equality is a fight for social justice and men must be involved in the construction of a fairer society. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, multiple webinars were organized, among other, on topics including: gender bias in AI with the World Economic Forum; women's leadership in the ocean sciences; women's entrepreneurship in culture; giving a voice to women artists and cultural actors in Africa; women and beekeeping; and on-line violence against women journalists.

⁴¹ The six UN member states that have not ratified or acceded to the convention are Iran, Palau, Somalia, Sudan, Tonga, and the United States.

Generation Equality Forum 2021

- Beijing + 25



The 2021 Generation Equality Forum, convened by UN Women and co-hosted by the governments of Mexico and France in partnership with civil society, with commitments from the United Nations and international community, marked the 25th anniversary⁴² of the landmark Beijing Conference on Women in 1995. In June 2021, the Forum is a forward-looking global initiative, aiming to drive commitments from organizations across the globe on six intersecting thematic issues for gender equality through 'Action Coalitions'. The Forum culminated in the launch of a global 5-year action plan to accelerate gender equality by 2026, and commitments from governments, civil society, international organizations, philanthropies and the private sector to invest nearly 40 billion USD to advance this transformative agenda.

42 Postponed from 2020 to 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic



Generation Equality Forum Action Coalitions

- ▶ Gender-Based Violence
- ▶ Economic Justice and Rights
- ▶ Bodily Autonomy and Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights
- ▶ Feminist Action for Climate Justice
- ▶ Technology and Innovation for Gender Equality
- ▶ Feminist Movements and Leadership

UNESCO made commitments, over the next five years, to two of the Generation Equality Forum Action Coalitions in addition to girls' education, designated as a key and cross-cutting action area critical to the achievement of the six Action Coalitions.

Action Coalition on Technology and Innovation for Gender Equality

UNESCO has committed 24 million USD over the next five years (2022 to 2026) to contribute to reducing gender inequalities in STEM and the digital gender divide. The intention is to increase access of girls and women to STEM education in particular in Africa; to give research, leadership and visibility opportunities to women scientists in particular in physics, and to promote the ethical use of AI that is free of gender bias, sexism and stereotypes.

Action Coalition on Economic Justice and Rights

UNESCO has committed five million USD from 2022 to 2026 to empower women artists and those working in the creative industries in Africa. The intention is to improve their economic

situation and access to audiences, funds, and social protection schemes; to promote women's freedom to create; and to increase their mobility and the number of creative industries enterprises owned and led by women.

Girls' education and achieving gender equality in and through education

In the framework of Her Education, Our Future:

UNESCO has committed 30 million USD over the next five years to reach 28 million learners in 80 countries with quality gender-transformative teaching, and learning. UNESCO will track countries' progress on their commitments to gender equality in and through education in its role as the officially recognized source for cross-nationally comparative data on SDG 4 and through annual in-depth analyses of strategies and trends to address



gender disparities in education. UNESCO commits to monitor the status of 195 countries' legal frameworks on girls' and women's education and to support national legal and policy reforms and sector plans in this domain, and to lead global coordination to support girls' education in the wake of COVID-19 through UNESCO's Global Education Coalition's Gender Flagship.



Monitoring (GEM) Report's Gender Report reviewed 25 years of efforts to advance gender equality in and through education. UNESCO and the GEM report published a series of case studies taking stock of how selected

strategies recommended in the Beijing Platform for Action have been implemented in 11 countries around the world:

- Case studies from Argentina, Sierra Leone and the United Kingdom considered how early pregnancy hinders girls' education, and what steps have been taken to remove barriers to formal education for pregnant adolescents and young mothers;
- Case studies from Botswana, Germany, and the United Arab Emirates reviewed what steps have been taken to ensure non-discriminatory and gender-sensitive school and career counselling to encourage girls' pursuit of fields where they are under-represented, including science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) or technical and vocational education and training (TVET) programmes;
- Case studies from Comoros, Ethiopia, and Nepal considered efforts to develop curricula, textbooks and teaching aids that are free of gender-based stereotypes and bias;
- Case studies from Brazil and Bulgaria considered progress to advance equality in the education workforce since 1995.



UNESCO also published with the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and Plan International *Beijing+25: Generation equality begins with adolescent girls' education* that reviewed progress, obstacles and levers for action to advance adolescent girls' education. This report provided recommendations for the Generation Equality Forum's Action Coalitions, and was used along



with a fact sheet for policy audiences, and a short brief calling for 12 years of education for every girl.

UNESCO promoting sport for Generation Equality

The Beijing Platform for Action explicitly mentions sport for its enormous capacity to propel women and girls' empowerment. The UN Women-led Sport for Generation Equality Initiative launched in 2020 with UNESCO's support invites all partners to commit to mobilizing sport as an engine for gender equality. UNESCO contributed to the high-level roundtable 'The Paris Call on Sports for Gender Equality' in the Forum, in the context of its role in establishing the Global Observatory for Women, Sport, Physical Education and Physical Activity, and of Principle 6 of the Initiative, on regular monitoring and evaluation of women's participation and leadership in sport.

Action Coalition on Feminist Action for Climate Justice

The United Nations Conference on Climate Change (COP 26), in Glasgow in the UK, dedicated 9 November 2021 as 'Gender Day'. In the framework of the UN Generation Equality 'Action Coalition on Feminist Action for Climate Justice', governments, civil society, business leaders and activists announced new commitments building on previous pledges of more than 139 million USD already made at the Generation Equality Forum in July 2021 in Paris.

UNESCO's Strategy for Action on Climate Change (2018-2021) supports Member States to understand, mitigate and adapt better to the mutations and risks associated with climate change. Over 30 UNESCO programmes, among others, related to the ocean,

freshwater, ecological and social sciences, in education, in culture, communication and information contribute to creating knowledge, educating and communicating about climate change, and to understanding the ethical implications for present and future generations. Climate change adversely affects women more than men, but women are rarely involved in decision-making related to, for example, carbon emissions. UNESCO mainstreams gender equality and the empowerment of women into all its work related to climate change.

UNESCO brought its expertise to the United Nations Conference on Climate Change (COP26) in Glasgow, in the United Kingdom in November 2021, in the fields of freshwater and the oceans, disaster risk reduction, biodiversity and education for sustainable development.

In conclusion

UNESCO's global priority gender equality took on new meaning over the past biennium. The years 2020 and 2021 have been marked by dramatic social, political, environmental, and economic changes across countries resulting from an unprecedented pandemic: COVID-19.

The COVID-19 pandemic magnified deep rooted structural gender inequalities across societies and forced the world to question the degree to which advances towards achieving gender equality had been made since the first UN World Conference on Women held in Beijing.

This publication shows how a collective work by all structures of UNESCO has mobilized an extraordinary effort to go beyond a necessary adaptation to a multi-faceted crisis and counter backlashes and strengthen the resilience of women and girls and the systems which protect and empower them around the world through education, sciences, culture, communication, and information.

Through its Global Education Coalition and Gender Flagship, UNESCO sounded the alarm on the disproportionate impact that the pandemic would have on women's and girls' education. "Keeping Girls in the Picture" was an important campaign reaching over 400 million persons to ensure girls' continuity of learning and return to school, and that #LearningNeverStops. The "Building

Back Equal: Girls Back to School Guide" was also launched, providing technical guidance to policy makers to build education systems that are more inclusive, gender-responsive, innovative, and resilient to shock. Advancing girls' access to remote learning and digital skill development was also a priority.

UNESCO continued to recognize and celebrate outstanding women who dare to innovate and shape global discussions, such as artists, journalists, and scientists. Among the laureates of the 24th L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science is Professor Katalin Karikó, awarded for her crucial contribution to the development of messenger RNA technology that contributed to the breakthrough in the development of vaccines against COVID-19. Investigative journalist and media executive Maria Ressa of the Philippines was named as the 2021 laureate of the UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize and, a few months later, she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

Understanding the root causes of gender inequalities continued through UNESCO's work to record and bring transparency to the challenges faced by women and girls around the world.

Gender & Creativity: Progress on the Precipice (2021), revealed that women continue to be poorly represented in decision-making and key creative positions, gender pay gaps persist

and women have been granted less public funding for their creative works in comparison to men. Stereotypical and imbalanced portrayals of women in film, television, digital media, and advertising also have widespread consequences for gender equality at all levels of society. There is also a worrying frequency of abuse and threats to women artists in online spaces that are resulting in self-censorship, reduced presences in the digital environment and suppression of freedom of artistic expression.

The *2021 World Science and World Engineering Reports* also recorded the challenges faced by women scientists and made urgent calls to governments to address the gap between the level of university students in stem fields (45-55% women) and their access to jobs in their fields of study. As of now, glass walls and ceilings are firmly in place: only 30% of the scientific researchers are women and they occupy only 12% of the seats on national science academies around the world. There is also a great risk that the fourth industrial (digital) revolution will take place without the significant participation of women if they remain a minority in digital information technology, computing, physics, mathematics, and engineering fields. Women's unique contributions to the advancement of science are still too often invisible or marginalized.

A UNESCO supported global media monitoring project confirmed that women represented only a third of sources in COVID-related news and only a fifth of experts or media commentators consulted. Of the COVID-related news on Twitter only 3% challenged gender stereotypes. Furthermore, *The Chilling: Global trends in online violence against women journalists* (2021) revealed an increased spread of disinformation and attacks against women journalists that have an enormous impact on their livelihoods, mental health, and physical integrity.

Keeping the voices of women from disappearing in the pandemic chaos was also a priority for UNESCO. Through the "Inspiring Voices" platform, the Organization gave space and visibility to innovative solutions from eminent women thinkers and continued to honor its commitment to serve as a laboratory of ideas for the construction of a post-COVID world that is more equal, inclusive, human, and sustainable. Advocacy actions such as the ResiliArt movement, digital campaigns such as #La Voix des Résilientes with women creators from West Africa, concerts by Jazz Women in Africa on International Jazz Day 2021 or the "Creative Resilience" exhibition all helped to showcase female talent while analysing gender deep-rooted inequalities and recommending redress.

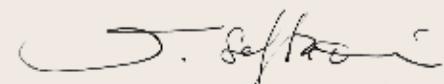
As UNESCO celebrated its 75th anniversary, the Organization is bouncing back with bold actions and Generation Equality Commitments to advance gender equality in and through education, as well as in the fields of technology, artificial intelligence, innovation, and the creative industries. UNESCO chartered a new pathway on gender equality and Artificial Intelligence (AI) with its various publications and debates over the biennium 2020-2021, which exposed gender divides in digital skills and the high rates of women exposed to cyber-violence, sexism, and gender bias in AI-generated software. Responses to these and other issues were integrated into the *UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence* adopted at the General Conference (November 2021). In addition to pursuing a gender mainstreaming approach across the Recommendation, a specific gender chapter has been included with articles advocating for swift action to empower women to participate in AI research teams, in top management of digital/AI companies and as entrepreneurs, as well as to address gender stereotypes, sexism and gender bias in AI software, online harassment, bullying and the trafficking of girls and women.

UNESCO has concluded new partnerships with major platforms to provide STEM mentorship programmes for high school girls, including courses in coding, robotics, and AI. Work will

be pursued with new stakeholder groups such as judicial actors and law enforcement agencies to end impunity on attacks against women journalists, both online and offline.

Finally, the way forward for gender equality is not the prerogative of women alone. It is not just a women's fight. It is a fight for social justice. Men also need to be involved in the construction of a fairer society and UNESCO is standing side by side with men who take actions to reject harmful forms of masculinity. UNESCO is establishing partnerships with global movements for positive masculinities and launching new campaigns to identify and deconstruct gender stereotypes among men and rally them to women as equals.

These and many other ambitions for action are captured in the Medium-Term Strategy (2022-2029), Programme and Budget (2022-2025) adopted by the 41st session of UNESCO's General Conference. As we go forward to roll-out these initiatives, gender equality will continue to have a strong foothold across UNESCO's work.



Jamila Seftaoui,
UNESCO Director for Gender Equality