



SMH-MUN III

Saturday, March 21, 2015

French Revolution Background Guide

Revolution: Demanding Progress or Endorsing Chaos?

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Topic 1: Female education in third world countries

I. Introduction

Created by the UN General Assembly in July of 2010, UN Women's purpose is to focus specifically on gender equality and women's empowerment, making it the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. Therefore, it is only appropriate that UN Women addresses the issue of gender education bias in third world nations, where women are often shut out from the education system. Education has been identified as the key to the improvement of individual well-being and societies' economic and social development. Recently, in the Middle East and North Africa, access to education, particularly girls' and women's education has improved dramatically over, yet has not been enough to meet appropriate standards. In third world countries, women are often kept out of school to help with household chores or to engage in arranged marriage, barring them from continuing their education. This gap in educational attainment is not only affecting women; numerous studies show that educating females is a key factor in eliminating poverty and aiding development, as well as the growth of national income by improving the productive capacities of the labor force.

II. History of the Problem

a. Brief Summary

Throughout history, women's education has been neglected and often seen as unnecessary, particularly in third world countries. These countries' cultures bar young girls from attending school as often as their male counterparts if at all, since many of them are charged with household duties or are coerced into an arranged marriage. However, the population's beliefs are not the sole blame for the issue, as gender discrimination in the region is often codified in law, frequently in family laws or civil codes. Women often have to obtain permission to perform many everyday tasks, and going to school is unheard of. The problem has now become cyclical: most uneducated women are more likely to keep their daughters from schooling in order to assist them in the home, unknowing of the effect the education of women has on society.

****Delegate Tip: The educational gender gap varies in extent by country, so make sure your research is specific to your country or region, but also analyzes the global issue.**

b. Consequences and Events

Due to previous gender education bias, two-thirds of the world's 799 million illiterate adults ages 15 and over are women. Most third world countries do not require any form of female education as seen



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but the fact that approximately 67 countries have primary school attendance and enrollment rates for young girls at less than 85 percent. On the global scale, there are just 96 girls for every 100 boys in

primary school, with disparities at the secondary level even more acute. The lack of education of women has horrifying effects such as a greater likelihood of contracting HIV/AIDS, which spreads twice as quickly among uneducated girls than among girls that have even some schooling. Additionally, the lack of education of women leads to less socially and politically active individuals, and a decrease in independence.

****Delegate Tip: Keep in mind, this topic has many different consequences, so research accordingly.**

III. Past UN Women Action

UN Women has implemented various initiatives involving the education of women in third world countries, but the most significant action taken are the UN's Millennium Development Goals, some of which strive to promote gender equality and empower women, and specifically acknowledge the educational gender gap in third world countries. Additionally, the UN has sponsored many studies that link the education of women to a prosperous economy in efforts to encourage third world countries to amend their policies.

****Note: Consider the initiatives made by UN Women as paths to possible solutions.**

IV. Possible Solutions

- a. Just as the problem has become cyclical, the solution can be cyclical. Since educated women are more politically active and better informed about their legal rights, these women can be used as mentors to women in third world countries to encourage education and provide guidance.
- b. Educating third world governments about the positive effects of the education of women could assist them in realizing the economic growth that narrowing the gender gap could cause.
- c. Creating all-female schools in third world countries could allow for specialized education that also acknowledges cultural barriers and possible domestic responsibilities while still narrowing the gender gap and resolving the problem.

****Delegate Tip: Use these solutions as ideas for your own, which should be more specific.**



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V. Helpful Links

****Delegate Tip:** Though these sources are useful, delegates should continue their own research and expand on this list of sources.

General Research:

<http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/JOTS/Summer-Fall-2001/akubue.html>

<http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/economic-empowerment/facts-and-figures>

<http://www.unicef.org/mdg/gender.html>

<http://www.prb.org/Publications/Reports/2003/EmpoweringWomenDevelopingSocietyFemaleEducationintheMiddleEastandNorthAfrica.aspx>