

Securing the Future of Women in Sustainable Development

As gender bias has continued within several countries around the world, it has caused extreme discrimination and lack of protection. With this said women have become even more endangered due to their vulnerability within the environment and with the prevailing climate change. Their large role within the environment has also been overlooked, as beginning in only the 1980's discussion of policies between discrimination and sustainability were created. It has been seen that women's management of natural resources, as well as knowledge towards the environment has become increasingly valuable as well.¹ Women take extreme responsibility for a large amount of food production, while these agricultural tasks are often undermined for their gender; however, women continue to be liable for 80% of sub-Saharan Africa food production, with 60% within Asia and 50% in Latin America. Due to a lack of food security women responsible for agriculture continue to work under men, as they often own land and deal with larger enterprises while women are responsible for smaller and less commercialized farming.² For this reason women have thus become responsible for the business of cash crops while lacking in responsibility in the ideas that can be brought forth to sustainability.

Aside from this environment sustainability has also been characterized by philosophical ideas and value systems. Women's dominance within the environment has brought upon ideas of ecofeminism as well, putting together the ideas of women and environmental empowerment. Beginning with the creation of movements in the 1970s, ecofeminism has become one of the ways the so called "female instinct" for caring for the environment and the knowledge towards nature power has become publicized according to Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean.³ With this being faced the country of Bahrain has witnessed the combats women have been forced to approach, as women's education and foreign influence has begun to change society. In fact, with the Bahrain Women Association for Human Development environmental advancements for women have focused on creating relations between women that weaken gender inequality.⁴ With the International Conference for Environmental Protection awareness as well as responsibility for taking action has been taught. Initiatives such as these ultimately promote projects that can allow women to have a stronger voice to work towards equality.⁵

With the continued poverty that has also caused the lack of women within sustainability, the World Survey on the Role of Women in Development of 2014 brought upon the ways poverty has decreased safety when concerning women, as well as human rights violations that are not regulated.⁶ Furthermore, the connection between poverty, women and sustainability has proven dangerous, especially with waste in mind. Women have become majorly affected by menstrual waste in particular, as it is estimated 62,415 pounds is created by each woman throughout the span of her estimated thirty-eight years of the menstrual cycle. In poverty struck countries waste turns into much bigger of a problem due to the lack of resources to manage it, also leading to disease such as Hepatitis B and C.⁷ As the issue is rising Bahrain has seen it necessary for stricter regulations and management of waste, seen through the Bahrain Ministry of Health utilizing technology and healthcare to benefit women. Aside from causing women to feel a burden and guilt, menstrual waste is dependent on the culture as these policies have been somewhat strict due to religion.⁸

Additionally with these sustainability issues Bahrain has seen the lack of women within parliament, as in 2002 several political reforms took place encouraging women to have positions within government and voting as their civic duty. With this Bahrain has seen it necessary for ways to provide equality for women to ensure that they are given equal opportunities for a more positive future, ultimately through the Green Program. The Green Program will promote the idea of keeping a green environment for the future while ensuring women are taking part. This program can also promise women are more involved in government and organizations like the Food and Agriculture Organization, or the FAO, to ultimately shift policies and gain equal rights to protect the future of the environment. The FAO can provide higher positions of authority for women that will allow them to have a stronger voice towards policies regarding cash crops and subsistence crops. As women have seen the difference between the two the Green Program will ensure ideas can be discussed between women who manage land but lack the freedom of speech to make necessary changes. Within these discussions conflicts such as food security will be also be discussed, ensuring women and men can hold land and agriculture in an equal way. Women's increase in management and security can provide women with stronger power within the economic field, thus bringing them more power and control over sustainability for the future.

This program must also focus on menstrual waste within developing nations to protect women's rights. In the case incinerators are put in place, regions must be identified as safe enough to hold these, ensuring the public is healthy as well. To decrease the amount of gases released and the high price demand these will be created with concrete and clay through pottery, costing approximately \$20. The waste from the incinerators will then be burned every week with a chemical compost that allows it to be combusted with soil for agriculture.⁹ This reduces the amount of pollution released as it is used in a much more sustainable way. In the case incinerators are not capable of being put in place new regulations of sanitary napkins must occur to ensure they are used properly and to the best of their ability to not damage the environment. With this Bahrain believes women can ultimately become more involved in the development of sustainability.

Endnotes

¹<http://www.oecd.org/regreform/policyconference/46270065.pdf>

²http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/nr/sustainability_pathways/docs/Factsheet_SMALLHOLDERS.pdf

³<http://www.cepal.org/en/publications/5886-gender-environment-and-sustainability-development>

⁴ <http://en.bahrainws.org/>

⁵<http://bna.bh/portal/en/news/717343>

⁶<http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2014/10/world-survey-2014>

⁷http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/the_green_lantern/2010/03/greening_the_crimson_tide.html

⁸<http://www.moh.gov.bh/en/>

⁹<https://cedarcirclefarm.org/tips/entry/compost-turn-food-waste-into-soil-nutrients>

Ending Gender-Based Violence

As gender-based violence has become such a prevailing issue worldwide, it has come to affect women worldwide. This lack of security provided for women has even continued to decrease as punishment is not taking place. Violence has led to extreme conflicts including marital assault, forced marriage, dowry-related violence, and even female infanticide. It has become a violation of women's rights and has taken away, under no circumstance, the equalities that should be provided for all.¹ Seeing that marriage has increased this conflict as well, 29.4% of women married at the ages fifteen to nineteen have become susceptible to lifetime intimate violence, while women married from twenty-five to twenty-nine are 32.3% susceptible to this. Currently, Africa leads in gender-based violence due to the economic decline that has left women exposed to dreadful conditions. It has been seen that about 70% percent of women in Africa have experienced violence, whether it be physical or sexual. As a result of this violence, women are twice as likely to become depressed, as well as gain a sexually transmitted disease.³

This violence can also be accounted due to the relation between government and religion, seen in regions like Saudi Arabia, where the Quran is used as their constitution. Within the Middle East honor killings and domestic violence are the most prevalent due to religious influences.⁴ Laws within states have taken away basic human rights that are meant to protect women against violence as well. For example, according to the United Nations every year 5,000 women in the Middle East alone are killed due to what are labeled honor killings. Becoming a victim of sexual assault or bringing a form of dishonor to a family have become labels that allow women to be murdered. These human rights have also been violated through dowry-related marriages, as women being incapable of paying a specified demand has lead to violence such as rape, battering, and bride burning.⁵ Common in countries such as India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh, these acts have gone unpunishable, leaving women weaker and incapable of fighting for freedom and security.⁶

Due to social normalities within countries these acts have almost been seen as traditional, such as the honor killings. These uniformities have taken away freedom of speech within secluded countries and prevent any power given to women. In the same way, women within countries like India and China are under the pressure of having sons instead of daughters, thus leading to female infanticide.⁷ Whether it also be for the forced pregnancy or monetary responsibilities infanticide has increased dramatically. In fact according to the UNFPA within China the gap between males and females has grown so large that between the ages of 0 and 19 there are 25 million more males. This issue has specifically become so prevalent as it is affecting future generations and creating an divided gap that will evidently only bring a negative impact to society.⁸

With these issues presented, Bahrain has presented a want for democracy and increased women's rights, aside from other bordering Islamic countries that have not taken as specific movements. Especially within the political field women have been encouraged to take part in bringing equality. It is necessary however to look at the government and the precautions that need to take place for increased protection under the state and law.⁹ Relation between the Kingdom of Bahrain and UN Women took place in June 2016 on the other hand, discussing

cooperation and protocols that can be surely met in the future.¹⁰ Bahrain has also put an importance on the several forms of violence that must be dealt with and the resources that need to be provided for women's health. As government control, or lack of control, has led to women having a decrease in protection it is necessary for women to be brought a form of legal insurance under government or the state. Within secular nations this can be done in a more accessible way, as often religion does pose a lack of women involvement. Under law women are often not protected once being raped, as out of 100 rape cases 97 will be freed.¹¹ With stricter laws toward the violence of women Bahrain sees that women will be granted more freedom.

Bringing attention to this violence must be both short and long term, as country policies have proven the differences regarding equality. It is necessary for an ending to forced marriage that has lead to acts such as marital assault and female infanticide. For women to be capable of living sustainable lives marriage laws must be revised that show no biasness towards women or men. Often women once married are not capable of gaining custody over their children, but acts like these, as well as ownership of wealth and land must be taken into consideration. Bahrain believes this can be accomplished through the International Women's Protection Program. This program will be created to protect women and secure them as independent people. Aside from this it will work towards meeting with governmental institutes if necessary to discuss the ways women can be granted healthcare and insurance once being physically assaulted, ultimately promoting the strength of women. Within developing countries especially it will be of the essence to provide ways in which women can gain this health care, particularly when discussing infanticide. An insurance of protection under the government will increase regulation and promote the ways women can become independent. Regulation will include an expansion in security cameras in public places, and alert systems women can use in both private and public environments. If women feel unsafe they can also join a GPS tracking app called the Protect 360, established under the Protection Program, that has a software system shareable with families and police if needed. With this said however, as often reporting violent acts is difficult, Bahrain would like for stronger ways regulations can occur. As violence often occurs through dowry marriages and marital assault stricter licenses and marriage permits must be created. New regulations on women and men being married will include specified ages as well as details about the relationship. Once these are approved by governmental officials a marriage can continue, however if found dangerous new requirements must take place. With the process of going through this marriage license men and women can be granted benefits under the government as well. This can show to be extremely effective especially within developed countries that lack regulations under marriages.

Additionally, Bahrain sees it fit for a way in which countries can join to amend different regulations hurting the protection of women, including the Dowry Prohibition Act to strengthen regulations that must be followed. As often these are not mandated within religious countries punishment will be one aspect monitored rigorously, altering the years of punishment from 5 to 8 for the acceptance of dowry money, and at smallest 15 if violence was found in the dowry marriage. Also, women and families found responsible for providing money to men must not be punished under the same restrictions, as often the position they hold is different. With this women who have begun to live in a world of violence can ultimately find a positive outcome.

Endnotes

¹<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/violence.htm>

²<http://www.girlsnotbrides.org/why-is-child-marriage-a-form-of-violence-against-women-and-girls/>

³<http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures>

⁴<http://www.wnd.com/2013/04/the-quran-is-our-constitution/>

⁵<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=33971>

⁶<http://www.icrw.org/media/multimedia/responding-violence-against-women-india-and-pakistan>

⁷<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/nov/02/chinas-great-gender-crisis>

⁸<https://www.unfpa.org/swop>

⁹<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/Review/responses/BAHRAIN-English.pdf>

¹⁰<http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2016/6/yannick-glemarec-in-bahrain-to-launch-new-global-award-for-womens-empowerment>

¹¹<https://www.rainn.org/news/97-every-100-rapists-receive-no-punishment-rainn-analysis-shows>

Committee on the Status of Women
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Promoting Education and Employment for Women

Every day as women have lacked the capability of gaining equal rights their sense of education and involvement in the employment business has decreased. In fact, solely concerning adolescent girls there are currently 34 million who are not expected to gain an education.¹ While this may seem concerning, women within the employment business in countries are also gaining approximately 80 cents for every dollar a man makes worldwide.² Many women have lacked gaining educational benefits, especially within poverty stricken countries due to the fact they have been forced into domestic workload. Gaining an education has not been seen of the essence, as the lack of capability for being transported to schools, as well as issues such as women's menstrual cycles have stopped this. The inferiority of women has also been due to views of social and cultural exclusion, giving woman a downfall when looking at the opportunities a country could permit.³

The lack of opportunities for education has also brought forth the deduction in women employment, seeing that women only have a 9% chance of holding a high position in a job within India and a total of 27% in female labor participation as of 2014. With this a lack of empowerment is seen for women, as demonstrated through looking at the worldwide 21.7% wage gap.⁴ Additionally, mothers are incapable of commuting and gaining a full time job, especially where a lack of childcare and maternity leave is in place. In response initiatives have taken place to secure women's rights, including the Millennium Development Goals. Discussing issues such as maternal health, gender equality, and universal education they have brought the attention to issues that are not only necessary for a strong country, but also for the future of women. Goal three in specific discusses this universal education between girls and boys, looking at the fact in 2015 alone 57 million children were not enrolled in primary school.⁵ Humanitarian goals such as these have thus presented the capability women should hold.

As this lack of education and employment is largely due to cultural and traditional barriers, as well as large workloads in countries including Pakistan, a view for equal opportunity has taken place. With this said the country of Bahrain has been shaping education nationwide beginning in 1930 in which public schools and universities for boys and girls were created, seeing that before this only private educational systems were offered. Since then the literacy rate has risen to 94.6% and educational expenditure has increased its involvement in the economy. Bahrain also became the first Arab state of the Persian Gulf to create social organizations for women in 1965. Seeing that some forms of education within Bahrain have separated boys and girls, Bahrain has seen success in the decrease in discrimination that takes place.⁶ With this said however we have also supported joint education in developing and developed countries. Progression such as this has thus been shown with increasingly positive results.

Employment within Arab countries has traditionally been held by men, with women responsible as homemakers, but progression has begun to change this. In recent years women have worked in the nursing and teaching fields, in banking and finance, as doctors, lawyers, and as advertisers. Women in the workforce are required to obtain a permit before working, which must ensure to be unbiased in all forms in the future. Although conflict still arises, it is

astonishing to look at the ways the workforce has been changed since 1960's when a woman's job depended on her husbands.⁷

With this said alterations for women must take place to bring an assurance equal rights can be brought in the future. Due to a lack of goals solely pertaining to the long term ways women can live prosperous lives through employment Bahrain sees it fit for the 2020 Visions for Women. By the year 2020 it is necessary for countries to be capable of looking at regulations that must begin to be considered if women will ever be granted opportunities. These goals will first focus on creating sensitive classrooms, allowing girls especially to gain an education in an unbiased environment, especially due to the fact women are brought into a much different workforce than men. This means children will be both separated by language if not done so previously and by gender if discrimination or negative inclination between girls and boys is found. Women's education within schools will be followed by working with community outreach programs and nongovernmental organizations by the age of seventeen to gain access into the employment business within a country. It is also necessary to look at women's age in labor forces, as a regulation and work permit must be created after a specified education within a girl's life has taken place. As these work permits can decrease the illegal workforce, minimum wages must be further secured in countries to prevent unequal pay. Aside from equal pay, the 2020 Visions will ensure that a specified percentage of a country's workforce will be made up of women, with the stated amount depending on a country's population. With these future goals Bahrain believes women's equality will be promised in a more attainable way.

To ensure girls can still obtain an education in developing countries or nations with weak governments the Pencil Program must take initiative. As pencils bring ideas and innovations they will thus represent how women can move forward in the future. This program will work internationally with governments to find ways girls can be educated properly, as often they are seen to drop out after undergoing their menstrual cycle or needing to work for families and not being capable of gaining transportation. Resources including books, pencils, calculators and forms of technology will be accessed to prevent this. In fact, technologies such as the Aakash Tablet that have been used in India, costing no more than \$35, is an accessible way governments can decrease the division in education.⁸ This is one way in which governments will work with the Pencil Program to innovate girls in gaining an education for the better of their future. Tablets will be subsidies established under the government, putting insurance on the fact governments put an initiative on girls gaining education. Bahrain ultimately believes this can bring innovation for women worldwide in the future to ensure equality takes place.

Endnotes

- ¹<http://www.aworldatschool.org/issues/topics/discrimination>
- ²<http://www.iwpr.org/initiatives/pay-equity-and-discrimination>
- ³<http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/edumat/IHRIP/circle/modules/module4.htm>
- ⁴<http://www.catalyst.org/knowledge/statistical-overview-women-workforce>
- ⁵<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>
- ⁶<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ba.html>
- ⁷<https://www.justlanded.com/english/Bahrain/Bahrain-Guide/Jobs/Working-Women>
- ⁸<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-south-asia-10740817>