**SSUNS 2016 Position Paper for Commission on the Status of Women**

Delegation: International Woman’s Health Coalition

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**Topic One: Women and Sustainability**

Although many different measures have been taken to combat the issue of women and sustainability, specifically the lack of gender equality that constrains women from making contributions to the economy, the international community and the International Women’s Health Coalition recognizes that the issue must be addressed. The IWHC recognizes the issues that women face and have implemented several programs to advance global policies, recruit activists for advocacy and partner with local groups in different countries in attempt to improve issues regarding the lack of sexuality education and provide women with the tools to succeed (International Women’s Health Coalition, 2016).

Focusing on empowerment and education has ensured the IWHC success with combating issues regarding women and sustainability. As a result, the organization has had great success in aiding women around the world. The IWHC has provided over 740 women’s organizations around the world with funding to implement and improve social programs that deal with gender equality issues and allow women access to the education and tools that they need to succeed (International Women’s Health Coalition, 2016). Partnering with Education as a Vaccine(EVA) the IWHC has been able to implement programs to help young women reach their full potential, and works to build and implement innovative and sustainable mechanisms for improved quality of life in Nigeria. Programs that EVA and the IWHC develop are implemented into the school systems of Nigeria allowing young girls to learn about the social, cultural, and community practices that prevent girls, adolescents, and women from accessing and completing their education; creating a supportive environment by addressing related issues such as hygiene, mobility, and safety (International Women’s Health Coalition, 2016).

In the past the IWHC has implemented many programs to aid women around the world. One of the main things that the organization does is create partnerships with local groups, as well as providing them funding and technical support to improve education systems giving women the ability to contribute to the economy. The organization believes that if the members of this committee came together and combined efforts, adequate funding could be provided to women’s organizations, such as EVA, to provide women with the eduction they need to succeed, as well as break the systematic, cultural and legal barriers that constrain them from making contributions to the economy, while also combating issues regarding hygiene and safety.

**Topic 2: Elimination of Gender Based Violence**

Although the origins of gender inequality and gender based violence against women stem from factors such as the class system, religion and poverty, the International Women’s Health Organization recognizes that gender based violence is a pressing issue that has yet to be resolved.

Some of the priorities of the IWHC include: advancing the rights of adolescent girls, promoting comprehensive sexuality education and ending early and forced child marriages, all of which directly relate to resolving the issue of gender based violence. Focusing on comprehensive sexual health and rights education the IWHC has made great advancements in solving particular problems concerning gender-based violence. In the past, the organization has become partners with a South Asian based community project called Aahung that works alongside schools, medial institutions and other organizations to provide education to students about sexual and reproductive health rights (International Women’s Health Coalition, 2016).

The IWHC emphasizes the need for the implementation of laws that condone early child marriages and violence by promoting the addition of comprehensive sexual education into the formal education systems of the countries in which these issues prevail. Organizations such as Aahung have educated over 11,000 people in the South Asian region. Promoting and assisting programs like Aahung will allow the issues of gender based violence and gender inequality to be resolved or lessened so that women and girls around the world will understand their full potential, as well as their sexual and reproductive health rights (International Women’s Health Coalition, 2016). The IWHC also supports the efforts of countries such as Finland, Denmark and Norway that have implemented frameworks which support the empowerment of women (Zahidi, 2013). The IWHC believes that the countries in which gender based violence issues exist can use Finland, Denmark and Norway as a model to resolve cultural and religious factors that cause gender based violence. The IWHC believes that resolving gender-based violence, including forced marriage and martial assault, is of utmost importance and should be top priority in committee session (International Women’s Health Coalition, 2016).

**Topic 3: Women in Education and Employment**

Issues concerning women in education and employment continue to be prevalent mainly in African and Asian countries. Factors such as poverty, early marriage, pregnancy and traditional attitudes cause women to be neglected of the education that they need to find employment and support themselves. The International Women’s Health Coalition recognizes the issue and is fully committed to solving it.

Focusing on education and empowerment the IWHC has made significant advancements where women in education and employment is concerned. In 2010 the IWHC partnered with Reprolatina, an organization that provides sexuality education that insures girls have the knowledge that they need to stay in school, as well as the knowledge of their sexual rights (International Women’s Health Coalition, 2016). The teen pregnancy rates were as high as 40% when Reprolatina and IWHC arrived in Barro Alto, Brazil and had fallen to 10% after the implementation of sexuality health education programs in the region (International Women’s Health Coalition, 2016).

The IWHC believes that if programs similar to that of Reprolatina’s were implemented into the education systems of Asian and African countries the teen pregnancy rates could be lowered insuring that more girls are in school getting the education they need to succeed and gain employment in the future. As well as sexuality education, social programs that break cultural and traditional barriers would be beneficial as some communities around the world do not see women as contributors to society and do not see their importance in society.

**Work Citied**

*International Women’s Health Coalition*. 2016. International Women’s Health Coalition. 3 November 2016. Web.

Zahidi, Saadia. “What Makes the Nordic Countries Gender Equality Winners?”. *The Huffington Post*. 24 October 2010. The Huffington Post. 3 November 2016. Web.