



# Economic and Social Council

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## Commission for Social Development

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**Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: Priority Theme: “Fostering social development and social justice through social policies to accelerate progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to achieve the overarching goal of poverty eradication”**

### **Statement submitted by Women’s Health and Education Center (WHEC), a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council\***

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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\* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



## Statement

### Investing in Human Capacities and Wellbeing to Achieve 2030 UN Agenda

Strategies to eradicate poverty and hunger are most effective when they are built on the underlying premise that deprivations overlap. People who are income-poor overwhelmingly suffer from multiple forms of deprivations, such as, in the fields of education, health and an array of living standards (including lack of access to safe drinking water, sanitation, electricity, housing, assets and cooking fuel), which also perpetuate the intergenerational transmission of poverty. These simultaneous deprivations are tightly interwoven and mutually reinforcing. Ensuring that everyone has universal access to basic services and infrastructure, is essential for inclusive, and equitable recovery. It is a key factor in eradicating poverty. This includes access to safely managed drinking water and sanitation, quality schools, public transport, quality healthcare services that people can benefit from without incurring financial hardship, affordable housing, and reliable and affordable broadband INTERNET.

**Education:** Digital technologies offer considerable potential to improve and scale up distance-learning and to build more open, inclusive and flexible education systems. The introduction of artificial intelligence (AI) into life and work has already fundamentally changed the way people interact within their societies in both developing and developed countries. Governments who have invested in this area have done so based on a recognition that AI skills are essential for both the current and future economy of their country and also for full participation of citizens in social life. An understanding of what AI is, how it works and what it can do, empowers students with the ability to better understand their world, advocate for their own and others' rights, and leverage technology and data for public good.

Tele-school has impelled investment in school connectivity. Digital technologies can also help to close the urban-rural divide in education attainment. Our projects and programs make a strong case for a new social contract for education, grounded in two principles: ensuring the right to quality education throughout life and strengthening education as a public endeavor; and a common good. The pursuit of gender equality and rights of women, girls, and minorities remains a crucial goal of the Women's Health and Education Center (WHEC), since its inception. Our e-Learning, e-Health and e-Government initiative: <http://www.WomensHealthSection.com> was launched on 24 October 2002, in collaboration with the Department of the Public Information of the United Nations (UN). It is serving with pride in 227 countries and territories, to about 12 to 13 million subscribers, every year. Our educational programs ensure that students are prepared for the future, in both life and the workforce, with a focus on skilling, reskilling and upskilling – *Learn to do* and *Learn to Learn*.

Our first task is swift and targeted action to recover the learning losses inflicted by the pandemic, particularly on the marginalized groups. WHEC with its partners and with the support of UNESCO, is actively reimagining education systems and promoting to raise the status of education. We must ensure that learning powers of individuals and societies, to reshape the present, and lead us to a more just, sustainable, resilient, and peaceful future. WHEC's initiatives encourage schools to be *Health-Promoting* to improve both physical- and mental-health, to prevent gender and gun violence. Helping students, teachers and administrators and supporting them in their quest to make their lives better. It helps to improve the communities too. And that is our mission.

**Healthcare:** e-Health is playing an increasingly essential role in the achievement of Universal Health Coverage (UHC). The digitalization of health

services has increased during the crisis, spurred by the accelerated pace of digital transformation. WHEC's strategic digitalization initiative is developing, building on lessons learned during the pandemic, to ensure that new digital tools support a more resilient and sustainable health system. It is our privilege to submit the UN Publication: E/CN.6/2020/NGO/118, published by 58th session of Commission for Social Development (CSocD58): Our initiatives for achieving Universal Health Care based on concepts of equality and reducing poverty – A Concept Note. Available at: [http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/documents/CSocD\\_2020\\_Written\\_Statement.pdf](http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/documents/CSocD_2020_Written_Statement.pdf)

**Investments in Early Childhood Education and Healthcare:** This can contribute significantly to reducing child poverty and breaking intergenerational cycles of poverty. Unsafe living, the chronic stress of poverty, and lack of adequate stimulation and learning opportunities during early years can diminish children's chances of success throughout their lives. Our advocacy projects and programs encourage UN Member States to take measures targeted at children. Standard operational child protection procedures are put in place since 2020 to establish the role and responsibilities of each sector that intervenes in the field of child protection. Overall, as the countries emerge from the crisis, design of recovery strategies are to introduce opportunities to begin building back better, to overcome challenges, to the full implementation of 2030 Agenda.

**Harnessing digital revolution for the benefit of public education and creating common good:** If harnessed properly, the digital revolution can be one of the most powerful tools for ensuring quality education-for-all and transform the way teachers teach and learners learn. If not governed properly, it could exacerbate inequalities and undermine learning outcomes, as the pandemic has made it all too apparent. Countries should take rapid actions toward full educational connectivity to their populations. WHEC will continue to support country actions, and strengthen inclusive digital learning platforms and content, worldwide.

Quality education and UHC are the most important investments that any country can make for its future and for its people. Investing in health and education is investing in people and in our collective future. This is moral, political and economic imperative. **Science-Policy Brief**, published by 8th Multistakeholder session of Science, Technology and Innovation Forum, is submitted, to re-confirm that, upscaling the social protection responses and supporting mutual learning through the exchange of good practices with regard to socio-economic policies, the provision of basic services and social protection measures can help in this endeavor.

### **Open Science to Achieve United Nations 2030 Agenda**

[http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/documents/B41\\_Luthra\\_Science\\_and\\_Technology\\_to\\_Educate\\_Sustainable\\_Development.pdf](http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/documents/B41_Luthra_Science_and_Technology_to_Educate_Sustainable_Development.pdf)

### **Our vision, our efforts and our recommendations**

We aim to mobilize humanity's collective intelligence, that involves youth, educators, civil society, governments, business, corporations and stakeholders. There is rich diversity of ways of knowing, which relies on broad- and open-process.

- Inclusion and equity in and through education sector: it is the cornerstone of a transformative education agenda.
- Access: motivated by our significant achievements in expanding access to evidence-based health information on our global platform for the last two decades – we will ensure that the provision of access to the Least Developed Countries is free, publicly-privately funded, equitable quality primary and

secondary education, of which at least 10 years are compulsory, leading to relevant learning outcomes.

- Gender Equality: We are committed to supporting gender-sensitive policies, planning and learning environments; mainstreaming gender issues in teacher training and curricula; and eliminating gender-based discrimination and violence in schools.
- Quality Education: Our resource and continuing education programs ensures quality education, that fosters creativity and knowledge, and ensures acquisition of foundational skills of literacy and numeracy as well as analytical skills, problem solving, and other high-level cognitive, interpersonal and social skills. In 2021, WHEC launched a new initiative for SDGs 3, 4, and 5: ***Learning Life Lessons Series***. These so-called **Life Lessons** are very popular, these programs are helping schools, universities, teachers, students, and administrators to plan and develop – *Health Promoting Schools*. We encourage institutions to use this as a resource to increase engagement, learning and good mental health.
- Life-long Learning Opportunities: We commit to promoting quality life-long learning opportunities for all, in all settings and at all levels of education.

We recognize that the success of the Education and Health projects requires sound policies and planning as well as efficient implementation arrangements.

Join our efforts! We welcome everyone!

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