



## WHEC Update

### Briefing of worldwide activity of the Women's Health and Education Center (WHEC)

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## *Shaping the Future*

The women's and children's health has suffered globally, as the impacts of conflict, the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change converge, with devastating effects on prospects for children, young people and women. Evidence clearly shows a clear and critical regression across virtually every major measure of childhood wellbeing, and many key indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Since the last *Every Woman Every Child Progress Report* published in 2020, food security, hunger, child marriage, risks from intimate partner violence, and adolescent depression and anxiety have all increased.

As the world emerges from the pandemic, protecting and promoting the health of women, children and young people is essential for supporting and sustaining the global recovery. The pandemic has raised the stakes for all vulnerable communities, and reversed hard-won progress for women, children and adolescents. But we are NOT powerless to change this. By investing in resilient, inclusive primary health care systems, jumpstarting routine immunization programs, and strengthening the health workforce, we can make sure that every woman and every child can access the care they need to survive and thrive.

In the face of increasing political pushback against sexual and reproductive health and rights in many countries, women, children and adolescents today are left without many of the protections of just a decade ago, and many others still have not seen the progress they need.

The new detection of polio this year in previously polio-free countries are a stark reminder that if we do not deliver our goal of ending polio everywhere, it may resurge globally. No place is safe until polio has been eradicated everywhere. As long as the virus still exists somewhere in the world, it can spread – including in our own country. We now have a realistic chance to eradicate polio completely and we want to jointly seize that chance. Wild poliovirus is endemic in just two countries – Pakistan and Afghanistan. However, after just six cases were detected in 2021, 29 cases have been recorded so far this year, including a small number of new detections in southeast Africa linked to a strain originating in Pakistan. Additionally, outbreaks of polio variants that can emerge in places where not enough people have been immunized – continue to spread across parts of Africa, Asia, and Europe, with new outbreaks detected in the United States, Israel and the United Kingdom in recent months.

**We know that women and children are the foundation of our societies and our future.** We must prioritize their rights, and ensure continued access to services that support health, access to clean water, nutrition and education. Millions of children living in conflict zones and fragile settings face even greater hardship with the onset of the pandemic. We need to work collectively to meet immediate needs caused by the pandemic while also strengthening health systems. Only then do we protect and save lives. Every 13 seconds a newborn baby dies – every hour 33 women did not survive in childbirth; and 33,000 girls a day were forced into marriages, usually involving much older men. For too long, the health and rights of women, children and adolescents have received insufficient attention and services.

We call on all partners and UN Agencies to work together to support Member States to strengthen health systems and tackle the inequalities that constrain progress. We can be certain that even as barriers continue to grow, healthier and empowered women, children and adolescents are the key to achieving a better world. But we cannot move in the right direction – toward a world where the most vulnerable are prioritized and reached – without concerted and collaborative efforts. Share your projects and programs with us on **WHEC Global Health Line (WGHL)** – create an account.

Global Health: Our Projects and Promise to Protect Women and Children

**Rita Luthra, MD**



## Your Questions, Our Reply

Is woman leadership transformative to the societies and companies? Does the representation matters? Is closing the gender gap in leadership more important than ever?

**Representation Matters:** Women's leadership is transformative. The women leaders with us today are living proof of this fact. Inclusive governance can result in policies that create positive change over the long term. By integrating the views of diverse women – especially at the highest levels – governments can effectively tailor and target solutions to those most in need.

**Long road ahead** – out of the 193 Member States of UN, only 28 women serve as elected Heads of State or Government. Globally, women comprise 21% of the world's ministers, 26% of national parliamentarians, and 34% of elected local government seats. At the current pace of progress, equal parliamentary representation will not be achieved until 2062. When more women lead in political and public life, everyone benefits, especially in crises. A new generation of girls see a possible future for themselves. Health, education, childcare, and violence against women, receive greater attention and better solutions. We must find every possible way to amplify the assets women leaders bring. This is an opportunity to make a better decision-making-process.

At our current rate of progress, it could take 300 years to achieve gender equality. We must act now. Accelerate investment in girls and women. Scale up efforts to empower women. Expand opportunities for girls. Eliminate gender-based violence.

The UNGA Platform of Women Leaders, recently established Platform by UNGA, is an opportunity to do just that – how women's full and effective participation and decision-making are crucial to addressing global priorities. Countries with greater numbers of women leaders championed policies that address its social and economic impacts on the most vulnerable groups. It is our strong belief that the world needs more women leaders and more diverse leaders, people with all kinds of backgrounds and life experiences. The decisions leaders make affect all people in our societies. These decision should be made by people who have a real and deep understanding of how most people live, of what their concerns are, and are therefore responsive to their needs.

Data also shows that in conflict-affected contexts, women's representation in public life brings heightened credibility to peace processes and negotiations, helping unify divided communities.

**Obstacles women leaders still face:** While women are just as likely as men to seek higher roles, once they are in them, they tend to face more microaggressions that undermine their authority and send signals that it will be hard for them to advance. It is found that 37% of women leaders (defined as manager or higher) surveyed reported have had a coworker who took credit for their idea vs. 27% of men leaders. And they were twice as likely as their male counterparts to be mistaken for someone more junior.

For Black Women Leaders, the undermining is worse. The study found, for example, they were 1.5 times as likely as women leaders overall to have colleagues say or imply they are not qualified for their jobs. Women leaders overall are also twice as likely to spend substantial time and energy supporting employee wellbeing and fostering diversity, equity and inclusion, but do not get rewarded for it. Of women leaders surveyed, 40% said their diversity, equity and inclusion efforts are not acknowledged in performance reviews.

Societies and companies that do not take action may struggle to recruit and retain the next generation of women leaders – and for companies that already have a 'broken rung' in their leadership pipeline, this has especially worrisome.



# Learning Life Lessons Series

## For Teachers and Students

A Quarterly Series for *WHEC Update*

### TOOLS for CHILD DEVELOPMENT

## CHAPTER VI Attitudes and Behaviors for Success

### WHY ARE ATTITUDES IMPORTANT?

Answering this question depends on understanding the relation of attitudes and behavior. 1) Attitudes are pervasive; 2) Attitudes predict behavior toward their objects; 3) Attitudes are selective force in perception and memory; and 4) Attitudes serve various psychic functions. Attitudes comprise of three basic components: Emotional, Informational, and Behavioral. Out of three components of attitudes, only the behavioral component can be directly observed.

Do you know when you are charged with positive emotions, you tend to be able to discover more opportunities and are able to see things clearly and also learn better?

### KEY POINTS FOR POSITIVE ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOR FOR SUCCESS

1. Have a strong desire to achieve more. Have a burning desire for success. A goal without desire is just a wish. So make this your attitude.
2. Have passion and enthusiasm at work. When you are passionate, you will give your best.
3. Commit to mastery. Develop an attitude of constant improvement. You need to master the skills and become the best in what you do.
4. Do things that others do not want to do. Extraordinary people choose to do what is difficult.
5. Always be optimistic. Most people understand the power of positive thinking in achieving success.
6. Be goal oriented. Setting goals is the first step in turning the invisible into the visible. Have a clear direction.
7. Believe in the impossible. Dream the impossible. Never take NO for an answer. When you believe wholeheartedly that something is possible, and worth pursuing, you will put in 100% effort and make it happen.
8. Focus on your vision. The ability to focus on your vision and separate yourself from whatever is going on around you is one of the keys to most people's success. People think focus means saying yes to the things you have to focus on. But that is not what it means at all. It means saying no to the hundred other good ideas that there are. You have to pick carefully. Innovation is saying 'no' to 1,000 things (Steve Jobs).
9. Work hard strategically. It is true that solely depend on hard work alone is not enough to get what you want, but if you have done everything right, and you pour in hard work, magic will happen. Success will come to you, and you will get the results you want. Make sure your strategy is right and work hard on it.
10. Have strong determination and never give up. Finally, you need to have a strong determination for what you want and choose to never give up. Most people lack the patience for their dreams. Make patience one of your behaviors. And make the spirit of never giving up your attitude.

### SUGGESTED READING

**Learning Life Lessons Series: Part II** ; available at:

<http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/gynmh/gynmh017.php3>

\*Corresponding Author: Dr. Rita Luthra, President, Women's Health and Education Center (WHEC);  
e-mail: [rita@womenshealthsection.com](mailto:rita@womenshealthsection.com)



## United Nations at a Glance

### Permanent Mission of Netherlands at the United Nations



Netherlands became UN Member State on 10 December 1945



The **Netherlands**, informally **Holland**, is a country located in Northwestern Europe with overseas territories in the Caribbean. It is the largest of four constituent countries of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. It borders Germany to the east, Belgium to the south, with a North sea coastline to the north and west.

It shares maritime borders with the United Kingdom, Germany and Belgium in the North sea. Official language: Dutch; Capital: Amsterdam; Population:17,755,400 (2022); Religion: 55.5% - No religion, 38% - Christianity, 5.2% -Islam; Area: 41,850 km<sup>2</sup> (16,160 sq mi). Government: Unitary Parliamentary constitutional monarchy. It hosts several intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and International Courts, which are centered in The Hague.

*Netherlands* literally means "lower countries" in reference to its low elevation and flat topography, with only about 50% of its land exceeding 1m (3.3ft) above sea level, and nearly 26% falling below sea level. It is the 16<sup>th</sup> most densely populated country in the world and the second-most densely populated country in the European Union (EU), with a density of 529 people per square kilometer (1,370 people/sq mi). nevertheless, It is world's second-largest exporter of food and agriculture products by value, owing to its fertile soil, mild climate, intensive agriculture, and inventiveness.

The Netherlands abolished the death penalty in Civil Law in 1870, though it was not completely removed until a new constitution was approved in 1983. The Netherlands allowed women's suffrage in 1919 and was the first country to legalize same-sex marriage in 2001. Its mixed-market advanced economy had the eleventh-largest per capita income globally. The Netherlands ranks among the highest in international indices of press freedom, economic freedom, human development and quality of life, as well as happiness.



The Netherlands was able to remain neutral during World War I, but in World War II Nazi Germany invaded the Netherlands on 10 May 1940. Dutch army surrendered in four days. During the occupation, over 100,000 Dutch Jews, were rounded up and transported to Nazi extermination camps; only a very few of them survived. In 1954, the Charter of the Kingdom of the Netherlands reformed the political structure of the Netherlands, which was a result of international pressure to carry out decolonization. In the Lesser Antilles islands of the Caribbean, the territories of Curacao, Aruba and St. Maarten have a constituent country status with the wider kingdom of the Netherlands. The Caribbean Netherlands have maritime borders with Anguilla, Curacao, France (St. Barthelemy), St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Maarten, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Venezuela.

The Netherlands is divided into 12 provinces, each under a King's Commissioner. All provinces are divided into municipalities of which there are 344 (2022). The Dutch water boards are among the oldest democratic entities in the world still in existence. Direct elections of the water boards take place every four years. in the field of renewable energy, Netherlands has the intention to organize a forum on sustainable production of biofuels.

Details: <https://sdgs.un.org/statements/netherlands-10088>

# Collaboration with World Health Organization (WHO)

## WHO | Netherlands



### Health System Review

Dutch health system reviews recent developments in organization and governance, health financing, healthcare provision, health reforms and health system performance are analyzed here.

Without doubt, two major reforms implemented since the mid-2000s are among the main issues today. The newly implemented long-term care reform will have to realize a transition from publicly provided care to more self-reliance on the part of the citizens and a larger role for municipalities in its organization. A particular point of attention is how the new governance arrangements and responsibilities in long-term care will work together.

The 2006 reform, replaced the division between public and private insurance by one universal social health insurance and introduced managed competition as a driving mechanism in the healthcare system. Although the reform was initiated almost a decade ago, its stepwise implementation continues to bring changes in the healthcare system in general and in the role of actors in particular. In terms of performance, essential health care services are within easy reach and waiting times have been decreasing. The basic health insurance package and compensations for lower incomes protect citizens against catastrophic spending. Out-of-pocket payments are low from an international perspective.

Moreover, the Dutch rate the quality of health system and their health as good. International comparison shows that the Netherlands has low antibiotic use, a low number of avoidable hospitalizations and a relatively low avoidable mortality. National studies show that health care has made major contributions to the health of the Dutch population as reflected in increasing life expectancy. Furthermore, some indicators such as the prescription of generic and length of stay reveal improvements in efficiency over the past years. Nevertheless, the Netherlands still has one of the highest per capita health expenditures in Europe, although growth has slowed considerably after reverting to more traditional sector agreements on spending.



### Healthcare System In Transition

The Health Systems in Transition (HiT) series provided detailed description in the countries of the WHO European Region as well as some additional OECD countries. An individual health system review (HiT) examines the specific approach to the organization, financing and delivery of health services in a particular country and the role of the main actors in the health system. It describes the institutional framework, process, content, and implementation of health and health care policies. HiTs also look at reforms in progress or under development and make an assessment of the health care system based on stated objectives and outcomes with respect to various dimensions – health status, equity, quality, efficiency and accountability.

In many respects, the Dutch healthcare system is different from other European health care systems. One of the reasons is the separation of health care financing and organization into two main compartments, of which only one is an insurance system with universal coverage. This is also the oldest insurance system in the world explicitly covering many of the risks associated with the need for long-term care. The second compartment is separated into a compulsory health insurance segment and a rather large segment for private insurance.

Details: <https://www.who.int/countries/nld/>



**United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization**  
*Collaboration with UNESCO*

**The Netherlands Joined UNESCO on 01 January 1947**



**The 1954 Hague Convention**

*For the protection of cultural property in the event of Armed Conflict.*

**Assistance of UNESCO:** The High Contracting Parties may call upon the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for technical assistance in organizing the protection of their cultural property, or in connection with any other problem arising out of the application of the present Convention or the Regulations for its execution. The Organization shall accord such assistance within the limits fixed by its program and by its resources. The Organization is authorized to make, on its own initiative, proposals on this matter to the High Contracting Parties.

[https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/1954\\_Convention\\_EN\\_2020.pdf](https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/1954_Convention_EN_2020.pdf)



**Windmills of Kinderdijk-Elshout**

The network of nineteen windmills in Kinderdijk-Elshout shows the impressive contribution of the Dutch have made to the technology to keep water under control. In the Middle Ages, the construction of waterworks began – necessary for drainage of agricultural land and villages – and continues to this day. The area shows all the typical features associated with this technology – dikes, reservoirs, pumping stations, administrative buildings and the 19 beautifully preserved windmills. The mills were taken out of function in 1950, but all still work. They are

'reserved' in case the modern installations fail .

**Outstanding Universal Value**

Construction of hydraulic works for the drainage of land for agriculture and settlement began in the Middle Ages and has continued uninterruptedly to the present day. The property illustrates all the typical features of technology: polder water, embankments and dikes, 19 drainage mills, 3 pumping stations, 2 discharge sluices and 2 Water Board Assembly Houses. The beautifully preserved mills can be divided into 3 categories: 8 round brick ground sealers, 10 thatched octagonal smock mills, and one hollow post mill. The installations in the Kinderdijk-Elshout area demonstrate admirably the outstanding contribution made by the people of Netherlands to the technology of handling water.

**Groundwater Governance: A Global Framework for Action.**

It is dedicated to the UNECE region, and was held in The Hague, Netherlands in February. It was organized by UNESCO International Hydrological Program (IHP), in cooperation with the UNECE Secretariat and with the support of the International Groundwater Resource Assessment Center. It included participation of private and public Cooperation for Groundwater Governance. And explored opportunities for partnerships, information sharing, support and definition of key messages.

Details: <https://www.unesco.nl/nl>

*Education-for-All and Health-for-all*

## Bulletin Board



### Goal 13 Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

#### KEY FACTS

- Different temperature scenarios for coral reefs: 70-90% are gone; die off completely with 2°C scenario.
- Sea Level will rise 30 -60 cm by 2100.
- Drought is estimated to displace 700 million people by 2030.
- Medium- to large-scale disasters will increase by 40% from 2015 to 2030.
- Energy-related CO<sub>2</sub> increased by 6% in 2021 – reaching the highest level ever.
- Climate finance falls short of \$100 billion yearly commitment – developed countries provided \$79.6 Billion in climate finance in 2019.
- Rising global temperatures continue unabated, leading to more extreme weather.

In order to limit global warming of 1.5 degrees Celsius about pre-industrial levels, scientists recommend that by 2030 global emissions should be cut by 4% compared with 2010 levels. according to current national commitments, however, global emissions are set to increase by almost 14% during the rest of the decade.

#### KEY MESSAGES

1. All actors have a part to play in transforming humankind's relationship with nature.
2. At the heart of the transformative changes needed for a sustainable future are informed, and participatory governance systems, where all relevant stakeholders have a voice.
3. All actors have individual, complementary and nested roles to play in bringing about cross-sectoral and economy-wide transformative change with immediate and long-term impact.
4. Knowledge based cooperation that harnesses human, societal and technological ingenuity will unveil new possibilities and opportunities in the transformation to sustainable future.
5. The media and social networks play a critical role in informing the public about the interconnected nature of pressing issues and the role that environmental degradation plays in exacerbating societal issues, thus stimulating public awareness and political support for meaningful solutions.
6. The media can also hold governments and businesses to account, comparing promises with actions taken.
7. Social networks can be designed to and managed to highlight reasonable dissent and prosocial norms and expose false claims.
8. Cooperation and innovation on this scale by all actors can generate new possibilities and opportunities for social and economic development in the transformation to a sustainable future.
9. Address earth's environmental emergencies and human well-being together.
10. Transform food, water and energy systems to meet growing human needs in an equitable, resilient and environmentally friendly manner..

### **Making Peace with the Nature!**



## Collaboration with UN University (UNU)

UNU-WIDER (World Institute for Development Economics Research)

Expert Series on Health Economics

### Policy Diffusion within International Organizations

*A bottom-up analysis of International Monetary Fund tax work in Panama, Seychelles, and the Netherlands*

The author analyzed the evolution of the International Monetary Fund tax policy advice in three countries commonly used for tax evasion or avoidance: Panama, Seychelles, and the Netherlands. A review of loan agreements and Country Reports covering 1999 to 2017 highlights the dependence of the Fund's country teams on external assessments produced by the Fund's other departments and smaller international organizations. As far as the Fund has paid attention to international tax flight, its focus has largely been on individual-level tax evasion instead of corporate tax avoidance. The responses have been inconsistent, with the tax haven regime of Seychelles getting much more attention than Panama and the Netherlands.

According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), tax avoidance intends to reduce 'tax liability and ... although the agreement could be strictly legal, it is usually in contraindication with the intent of the law it purports to follow.' It is the key concern in the corporate sector, where even successful court cases rarely fall under criminal law. Tax evasion, which is illegal, is more relevant to individual investors. . both phenomenon benefit from tax havens, or secrecy jurisdictions.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) advised its member states in relation to its loan programs and as an ongoing activity, and the 'soft power' of the IMF can influence national legislations even in non-indebted countries. It also gives a green light to loan programs managed by the World Bank.

**The Netherlands:** The IMF has neglected the role that the Netherlands plays in international corporate tax flight. While one could argue that the Netherlands does not have any loan programs either with the World Bank or the IMF, the IMF has nevertheless issued and monitored policy recommendations to the Dutch government in various reports. Hence, should the IMF be serious about its commitments to tackle corporate tax flight from the developing countries, it should address the international structures in which the Netherlands play a significant role.

There is a need for a better understanding of how the IMF shapes international tax governance together with the other International Organizations (IOs) working in this and related areas. This would call for more country-level case studies. Overall, the IMF's work has received hardly any attention in the recent literature on global tax governance, which hinders our understanding of the scope and capabilities to address the underlying concerns. Finally, the research material employed in the case studies dose not enable a conclusion to be drawn about why the IMF chose to neglect the Global Forum peer review in Panama even though it utilized the Global Forum assessment's recommendations in Seychelles, or why the Netherlands was treated so light-handedly.

Publisher: UNU-WIDER; Author: Matti Ylonen; Sponsor: The United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research provides economic analysis and policy advice with the aim of promoting sustainable and equitable development. The Institute began operations in 1985 in Helsinki, Finland, as the first research and training center of the United Nations University. Today it is a unique blend of think tank, research institute, and UN agency—providing a range of services from policy advice to governments as well as freely available original research.

*Details of the paper can be accessed from the link of UNU-WIDER on CME Page*  
<http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/cme/>



## Two Articles of Highest Impact, August 2023

*Editors' Choice – Journal Club Discussions*

*Fully open-access with no article-processing charges*

*Our friendship has no boundaries. We welcome your contributions.*

1. **Rare Clotting Factors Deficiencies;**

<http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/obsnc/obsnc017.php3>

WHEC Publications. Funding: WHEC Global Initiatives are funded by a grant from an anonymous donor. Join us at WHEC Global Health Line for discussion and contributions.

2. **Iron Deficiency Anemia in Pregnancy;**

<http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/obs/obs038.php3>

WHEC Publications. Funding: WHEC Global Initiatives are funded by a grant from an anonymous donor. Join us at WHEC Global Health Line for discussion and contributions.

### **Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health (World Health Organization) PMNCH Member**

**Worldwide service is provided by the WHEC Global Health Line**



### **From Editor's Desk**

*WHEC Projects under Development*

### **Investing in women and children is investing in our future**



#### **Statistics tell the story**

- A child born in a low-income country has an average life expectancy at birth of around 63 years, compared to 80 in a high-income country. In 2020, 5 million children died before their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday, mostly from preventable or treatable diseases.
- Most maternal, child, and adolescent deaths and stillbirths are concentrated in just two regions – sub-Saharan Africa and Asia.
- More than 45 million children have acute malnutrition in 2020, a life-threatening condition which leaves them vulnerable to death, developmental delays and disease. Nearly three-quarters of these children live in lower-middle-income countries.
- A staggering 149 million children were stunted in 2020. Africa is the only region where the numbers of children affected by stunting increased over the past 20 years, from 54.4 million in 2000 to 61.4 million in 2020.
- The six countries with the highest numbers of internally displaced persons – Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen – are also among the top 10 food insecure countries.
- A woman in sub-Saharan Africa has around a 130 times higher risk of dying from causes relating to pregnancy and childbirth than a woman in Europe or North America.
- Millions of children and their families are experiencing poor physical and mental health from recent humanitarian disasters in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Pakistan, Somalia, Ukraine and Yemen.

In 2021, a record 89.3 million people worldwide were driven from their homes by war, violence, persecution, and human rights abuse.



### **Protecting Our Promise**

In the face to increasing political pushback against sexual and reproductive health and rights in many countries, women, children and adolescents today are left without many of the protections of just a decade ago and many others still have not seen the progress they need. Children and adolescents face widely divergent chances of leading a healthy life simply based on where they are born, their exposure to conflict, and the economic circumstances of their families.

**Our projects / programs call on the global community to address this damaging trajectory and protect the promises made to women, children, and adolescents in the SDGs.** In particular, it advocates for countries to continue investing in health services, to address all crises and food insecurity, and empower women and young people around the world.

### **Our Common Agenda**

Every child has the right to health, education and protection, and every society has a stake in expanding children's opportunities in life. Yet, around the world, millions of children are denied a fair chance for no reason other than the country, gender or circumstances into which they are born.

Poverty affects women and children disproportionately. Around the world, one out of six children lives in extreme poverty, living on less than US \$1.60 a day. Their families struggle to afford the basic healthcare and nutrition needed to provide them with a strong start. These deprivations leave a lasting imprint; in 2019, 149 million children under the age of five were stunted. Despite great progress in school enrolment in many parts of the world, more than 175 million children are not enrolled in pre-primary education, missing a critical investment opportunity and suffering deep inequalities from the start. 6 out of 10 leave primary school without achieving minimum proficiency levels in reading and mathematics, according to 2022 UNESCO Report. This challenge is compounded by the increasingly protected nature of armed conflict.

### **Our World, Our Children and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

More than 400 million children live in countries and areas affected by armed conflicts. WHEC's Recommendations and future initiatives call for investing in a future that believes in their future and better life. We suggest that ways to get involved:

1. **Share human interest stories, blogs and videos** of girls changemakers, and the inspiring networks and organizations that are resourcing girls, letting girls lead, and strengthening services for girls. Let's collectively amplify their leadership, actions and impact to inspire others.
2. **Engage government officials, policymakers and stakeholders** to make more targeted investments that tackle inequalities experienced by girls, especially while accessing mental health and psychological support services in the face of conflict, forced migration, natural disasters, and the effects of climate change.
3. **Engage key female influencers** across industries to be the face of change we want girls to see as possible. Role models speak a thousand words. Let's change the global conversation and public of girls leaders.
4. **Amplify your commitment** to raising awareness about and addressing factors that hold girls in your country and region back.

### **Our Time is Now!**



## In The News

### Thirty Years of hope and higher education for refugees in West Africa



For the last three decades, DAFI (Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative) scholarships have given refugees the chance to earn a university degree, providing the gifts of education, hope and a brighter future.

Story of Ornella Banam: After surviving a brutal rebel assault on the church where she worshiped, she escaped the civil war in Central African Republic in 2014, fleeing to Burkina Faso. She managed to continue her studies there, hoping to become a nutritionist but, when her father died two years later, she could no longer afford the fees and had to drop out of college. Last year, Banam was selected for the DAFI scholarship programs, allowing her to return to higher education.

The most recent figures show that refugee enrollment in tertiary education globally rose to 6% in the academic year 2020 – 2021. This represents a welcome increase from 1% just a few years ago, but still falls well short of the target of 15% higher education enrollment by 2030 set by UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, under its ‘15by30’ campaign. The figures reflect a pervasive inequality whereby refugees suffer enrolment rates that are – at every level of education: primary, secondary, and tertiary – lower than even the poorest sections of society.

The DAFI Tertiary Scholarship Program <https://www.unhcr.org/dafi-scholarships.html> funded principally by the German Government with support from Denmark, the Czech Republic, UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, and private donors – is crucial to achieving the 15by30 goal. It has enabled 21,500 refugees to enroll in higher education globally since 1992, including 6,200 in West Africa since 2010. This year, 934 young refugees won DAFI scholarship in 15 West African countries.

Like many others in the DAFI program, Banam’s dream stems from her own experience, growing up in a country where poverty is rife and food often short. Malnutrition is the leading cause of infant mortality in the world, particularly in most of the countries in Africa. With the DAFI scholarship covering the cost of her tuition fees, rent, and living expenses, Banam is, once again, able to devote herself to her studies.

Since 2021 DAFI has taken on the cost of many refugees in Africa – their tuition fees, freeing them to focus more closely on their studies. Thanks to this scholarship, which covers recipients fees, daily transport and medical expenses, they have a better life and feel fulfilled. The impacts of DAFI scholarship can be life-long. It is not only the scholarship, but these recipients also receive training and coaching in how to be in life, in an enterprise, and to look for jobs.

By the end of 2021, over 8,300 young refugees from 53 countries were enrolled in DAFI scholarships in 55 countries, an impressive leap of nearly 1,000 students compared to the 2020 cohort. Female students represented 41% of the total, and achieving gender parity remains a core aim of the program. Last year it drew record applications of more than 15,800, reflecting increased demand and greater need for investment in higher education scholarships and opportunities for refugees. Still, refugee enrolment in higher education stands at only 6%, although this continues an upward trend from mere 1% only a few years ago.

**Due to host community restrictions, severe cost and financial barriers, the lack of opportunities for employment, the language barriers, and other factors, access to higher education for a refugee seems impossible. Join our efforts !!** Source: UNHCR | USA

**A Dream**

In visions of the dark night  
I have dreamed of joy departed  
But a waking dream of life and light  
Hath left me broken-hearted.

Ah! What is not a dream by day  
To him whose eyes are cast  
On things around him with a ray  
Turned back upon the past?

That holy dream – that holy dream,  
While all the world were chiding,  
Hath cheered me a lovely beam  
A lonely spirit guiding.

What though that light, thro' storm and night,  
So trembled from afar  
What could there be more purely bright  
In Truth's day-star?

- Edgar Allan Poe (1809 – 1849); American Poet, writer and playwright.

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*Monthly newsletter of WHEC designed to keep you informed on  
The latest UN and NGO activity*

<http://www.WomensHealthSection.com>

