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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: Creating full and productive employment and decent work for all as a way of overcoming inequalities to accelerate the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

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.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



Statement

Improving Digital Cooperation – Placing Women and Girls at The Center of Fair-Wages Policy

There is no single or simple solution to wiping out poverty and hunger. Decent work, equal pay, the promotion of rights, employment, social protection and dialogue – will always be at the heart of successful policies, to get there. Let there be no illusion: COVID-19 may look pale in comparison to the future challenges ahead, if we do not learn from the failures, that have costed lives and livelihoods. Our best projections show that a stark choice confronts us on decent-work-for-all. Women’s Health and Education Center (WHEC) promotes sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent-work-for-all, with special focus on girls, women, minorities and marginalized people. The experience gained so far in mainstreaming decent-work-for-all, shows that, there is much to be gained and to build upon, for both our global advocacy and our country-level initiatives.

Decent Work Deficits. Decent work is declining in many parts of the world, despite considerable rates of economic growth. According to the World Bank, more than half of world’s 3 billion labor force, is either unemployed or live on less than \$2 a day. Youth unemployment is around 80 million, almost 40% of the total unemployed. Women in most parts of the world still remain an unpaid and overworked human resource and constitute 60% of the working-poor – a ratio that is unfortunately showing an increasing trend, in the last decade. The growing number of natural and man-made crises has had a disastrous impact on employment of women and minorities, in parts of the world, where decent jobs are most needed.

Motherhood stands out as one of the key factors in explaining the gender-gaps in the labor market, since women are still the primary caregivers, at home. This means that, in the workforce and in the good paying jobs, motherhood explained 40% of the gender gap. It can also be attributed to the presence of children at home. Motherhood reduces women’s labor workforce supply in the extensive and intensive margins. It influences female occupational structure towards flexible occupations – part-time work, self-employment, and labor informality – needed for family-work balance. Furthermore, countries with more conservative gender norms and less generous family policies, are associated with larger differences between, mothers’ and non-mothers’ labor market outcomes.

Gender Inequality – Women account for 67% of workforce in health and care sectors. (Source: ILO and WHO). But currently women in the health and care sectors, face the largest gender pay gap, than in other economic sectors – earning on average of 24% less than peers who are men. There will be no inclusive, resilient and sustainable recovery without a stronger health and care sectors. We cannot have better quality of health and care services without better and fairer working conditions, including fairer wages, for health and care workers, the majority of whom are women and minorities.

Women’s Health and Education Center’s (WHEC’s) priorities are:

1. Creating a level playing field for girls, women and minorities in technology;
2. Full and productive employment and decent work for all;
3. The gender gap in youth unemployment;
4. Ending all forms of child labor, and formalizing the informal economy;

5. Entrepreneurship and micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises;
6. Protecting labor rights and promoting safe, secure working environments, with special focus on girls, women and minorities;
7. Migrant and Refugee workers: fair wages and healthy working conditions.

Women's unique strength in scientific research and social development should be fully emphasized. WHEC's Global Health Line (WGHL), through its Learning and Innovation Network for Knowledge and Solutions (**LINK**) **Access Project** – aims to catalyze collaborative networks – cutting across disciplines, sectors, and borders – that seek science and technology-based solutions to developmental challenges. <http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/documents/LINK-Access-Project.pdf>

Women's Health and Education Center's (WHEC's) Recommendations on three key areas:

I. Policy Changes at the Country Level

- Willingness of Governments to prioritize the goal and targets and adjust their policies. WHEC's initiatives are available to inspire better policy design.
- Comprehensive and effective national strategies for: Social protection, skills, small- and medium-sized enterprises, youth employment, child labor, labor rights, safe working conditions and migration.
- Strengthening national capacities and institutions is an important, starting with better collection and analysis of labor market statistics.
- 'Data Revolution' demands innovative public and private initiatives to improve large-scale collection and dissemination of development statistics.
- Building competent and accountable national administrations, as well as effective labor market institutions and organizations. Multilateral cooperation works better when international agencies and Governments work alongside other bodies, such as civil society organizations, the private sector, local authorities and other stakeholders.

II. Global Partnerships

- A supportive international environment will be essential to advance the post-2015 agenda, especially in poorest countries;
- The post-2015 agenda should be seen as an additional arena, a supplementary channel to reach out to technocrats, politicians and the public-at-large.
- Regular thematic reviews of global progress in key areas will be one component of the future framework for the agenda's implementation.
- Forge a solid consensus for the promotion on inclusive, sustainable, and job-rich economic growth.

III. Delivering as ONE

- Closer cooperation on the Sustainable Development Goals with sister agencies and international financial institutions, will renew efforts to deliver as one United Nations System.
- WHEC's multilateral nature sets us apart from the rest. We must adapt the way we operate while helping the wider United Nations System to appreciate the value of our distinct approach.
- Need for a fair globalization.

It is indeed our pleasure and privilege to introduce to you, WHEC's e-Learning, e-Health and e-Government Initiative:

<https://hlpf.un.org/2022/programme/improving-global-partnerships-for-education-and-health>

WHEC will play an active role in ensuring that, its efforts, projects and programs, lead to concrete changes. By pooling our efforts to respond to people's demand for a fair chance at a decent job, for both men, women and minorities, will go a long way in eradicating poverty and hunger. Building back better means, taking action to deliver these transformative policies, for women, girls and minorities and all health and caregivers, now.

The potential of decent work as a driver of inclusive and sustainable development is well-recognized in the 2030 United Nations Agenda.

Join our vision!
