

UNESCO 38th General Conference, Education Commission (38C/COM.ED/1Prov.Debate 5, points 7.5 -38C31 (adult education); 7.6-38C32 (TVET)

IFBPW/BPW International statement

Madam President,

The International Federation of Business and Professional Women otherwise known as BPW International congratulates the Director General for the adoption of the EFA Framework for Action and commends UNESCO's leading role in education through partnerships.

We welcome the consultation for the revision of the recommendation on the development of adult education and TVET to reflect new challenges.

IFBPW (BPW international) advocates for the following:

- **Involve employers and make a connection with the UN Global compact, UN Women and implement the WEPs:**

The Women empowerment Principles (WEP) stress the importance of this: **Principle 4: Education and Training-Promote education, training and professional development for women; Ensure equal access to all company-supported education and training programs, including literacy classes, vocational and information technology training¹**. The Women's Empowerment Principles are a set of Principles for business offering guidance on how to empower women in the workplace, marketplace and community. They are the result of collaboration between the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and the United Nations Global Compact; BPW International being one of the main partners to implement the WEPs.

Education is a human right. It contributes to the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls and the eradication of poverty. It empowers women and girls in the context of global economic and technological changes and promotes development. Our organization emphasizes that education and training are essential to employment and access to the labour market in general.

The Commission on Sustainable Development in its seventeenth session concluded that **“vocational and entrepreneurship training including proactive and market-related elements to build capacities within rural communities, in particular for youth, young girls, women and indigenous people”** are necessary in order to enhance human capacity. Educated, well-trained women can advocate for themselves, develop and use their leadership abilities to enhance their domestic, economic, social and professional position and overcome the stereotyping and discrimination that keep them frequently in poverty, unequal to men and subject to violence.

¹ IFBPW is one of the main partners of UN Women and Global Compact for the promotion of the WEPs:
<http://wepprinciples.org/Site/Principle4/>

Recommendations:

- **To fully implement target 4.3 of the SDGs: By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university and where necessary expand or adjust the UNESCO programs to make that possible - so that vocational secondary level education especially for women and girls becomes a reality**
- **that women be encouraged and facilitated to follow vocational and in-service training programs to increase their employment opportunities; facilitate and acknowledge women's organizations and partner with them to bring this about**
 - Support **gender/ sex-disaggregated data** and gender sensitive information collection
 - Develop curricula where all **gender-bias is eliminated** , particularly in TVET where girls remain under represented and stress that **sanitation and drinking water provision in schools is crucial**
 - Develop and support **programs for RENFIL (recognition of non-formal and informal learning** and coordinate with OECD

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