

2.4.1.

Human and Trade Union Rights and Equality / Equality:

Resolution on Gender Equality

Proposed by: Executive Board
Original language: English

The 6th World Congress of Education International (EI) meeting in Cape Town, South Africa, from 22-26 July 2011

1. Affirms that gender equality is a human right, and one that underpins human endeavor for sustainable development, social justice, peace and security, and quality education for all;
2. Affirms EI's principle aim on the importance of equality, non-discrimination, respect for girls and women, and recognition of and respect for diversity;
3. Affirms EI's commitment to gender equality, that is, equality between men and women, and empowerment of women in unions, education and society;
4. Affirms the right of women to make decisions about their own lives;
5. Recognizes EI's policy and programmatic efforts to achieve gender equality, engaging both men and women;
6. Recognizes also that persistent gender inequalities continue to exist, in unions, in education, and in society, despite international standards and agreements, such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW 1979), Education For All and Millennium Development Goals (EFA and MDG 2000); and United Nations world conferences and specific action plans, such as the Beijing Platform for Action (BPA 1995);
7. Notes progress, but also that no country has fully achieved gender equality despite enabling legislation;
8. Notes that unemployment, global crises of finance, food security and climate change as well as unequal access to public health services, are exacerbating the situation of many women and girls in particular;
9. Recognizes MDG and EFA goals will not be universally met by 2015, and that consideration to strategic action beyond 2015 must be given, so as to ensure implementation and sustainability;
10. Notes that women outnumber men in education union membership globally and in most countries, but that progress in women's participation in union leadership is slow and uneven;
11. Believes that full representation and ensuring full participation of all members is the responsibility of the union;
12. Notes that diversity within countries and groups as well as among countries is important to consider in policy, programme and action;



13. Understands that collective responsibility and action are necessary to bring about significant change towards gender equality and the empowerment of women, and that the actions of member organizations largely determine what EI can achieve;
14. Affirms EI's commitment to pursue non-discrimination and gender equality in all and through all its endeavors, globally, regionally and nationally.

Purpose

To build on the outcomes and the momentum created by EI's first world women's conference, ***On the Move for Equality***, to revitalize, broaden and deepen collective union action in the struggle for gender equality, in unions, in education and in society.

Recommends that EI:

1. Promote and implement an EI Gender Equality Plan of Action, such plan to include specific targets and measures of success; with focus on the short term, 2011 – 2015, and considering the longer term, to 2030;
2. Include in the plan five objectives based on the key areas below:
 - **Strengthen and democratize unions** through achieving gender equality in unions, with full participation of women in unions and in union leadership; full participation of men in promoting gender equality; support for the work of Women's Networks; and ensure that EI policies and structures effectively support programmes and action that address gender justice and empowerment of girls and women;
 - **Ensure inclusive gender-sensitive quality public education**, with focus on the education of girls and women, from early childhood through to higher and further education; impediments such as child labour, stereotyping and gender based violence; the necessity for good educational programmes; and on the centrality of the role of the teacher;
 - **Mobilize Member Organizations** to advocate for and hold governments to account to meet MDG and EFA goals, ratify, implement and monitor treaties and conventions, improve the application of standards and enforce existing legal frameworks in order to advance gender equality in education and society at large;
 - **Build and maintain partnerships, alliances and coalitions that address public policy issues**, working with Global Unions, relevant international organizations including UN Women, UNESCO, ILO and nongovernmental organizations, at national and global levels, with emphasis on political and economic empowerment of women, through addressing pay equity, social protection and structural salary discrimination; an end to violence against women; and lead roles for women in building peace and security;
 - **Organize to increase membership**, particularly of women, within member organisations in order to provide more voice and strength of advocacy in issues critical to education and gender equity.
3. **Develop a communication and research strategy** to support the plan by making visible trade union practices that address gender discrimination, sharing knowledge through the use of information and communication technologies (ICT), enabling women's networks to improve communication and networking skills, and undertaking a study to identify gains and gaps, in access to and participation in a quality education for girls and training leading to full employment and decent work for decent lives for women.



4. Promote gender balance in all EI structures and delegations; include gender perspective in all policy, programme, and activities; and develop guidelines and practical tools to implement gender mainstreaming;
5. Promote and disseminate good practices on gender equality, gender mainstreaming;
6. Support member organisations in holding their governments accountable to meet international commitments;
7. Build and support networks of women to create a global community of women activists;
8. Promote exchange and foster coordination among specific EI Committees, including the Status of Women, Early Childhood and Vocational education and training, Indigenous, and Higher Education;
9. Refocus the Quadrennial Survey to monitor and report on the achievement of the Action Plan on a biennial basis;
10. Include monitoring and achievement of the Action Plan in the Annual Report.

Encourage member organisations to:

1. Carry out the Action Plan at the national level to the greatest extent possible;
2. Monitor and report progress on recommendations from the EI World Women's Conference and World Congresses;
3. Lobby for the ratification, implementation and monitoring of existing legal frameworks and improvement of the application of standards at the national level;
4. Hold governments to account to achieve and sustain international agreements, notably Millennium Development (MDG) and Education For All (EFA) goals ;
5. Ensure labor standards apply equally to men and women and that terms and conditions of employment address women's reality;
6. Include gender balance in all structures and delegations; include a gender perspective in all policy, programme and activities; and develop guidelines and practical tools to implement gender mainstreaming;
7. Provide training opportunities for women, including in leadership development and activism, organizing and negotiations, and advocacy and communication.