

QTMUN

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# United Nations Women

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## Content Disclaimer

At its core, Model United Nations (MUN) is a simulatory exercise of diplomatically embodying, presenting, hearing, dissecting, and negotiating various perspectives in debate. Such an exercise offers opportunities for delegates to meaningfully explore possibilities for conflict resolution on various issues and their complex, even controversial dimensions—which, we recognize, may be emotionally and intellectually challenging to engage with.

As UTMUN seeks to provide an enriching educational experience that facilitates understanding of the real-world implications of issues, our committees' contents may necessarily involve sensitive or controversial subject matter strictly for academic purposes. We ask for delegates to be respectful, professional, tactful, and diplomatic when engaging with all committee content, representing their assigned country's or character's position, communicating with staff and other delegates, and responding to opposing viewpoints.

The below content warning is meant to warn you of potentially sensitive or triggering topics that are present in the formal content of this background guide, as well as content that may appear in other aspects of committee (e.g., debate, crisis updates, directives), so that you can either prepare yourself before reading this background guide or opt-out of reading it entirely

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**Discrimination, eg: racism, transphobia, sexism, ableism**  
**Mental illness**  
**Injury and blood**  
**Death and dying**

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We ask for your cooperation in maintaining order, both inside and outside of committee session, so that we may provide a professional, safe, inclusive, and educational conference.

Throughout the conference, please note that delegates shall only:

1. Wear Western Business Attire (i.e., no costumes, no casual wear)
2. Embody their assigned country's/character's position, not their mannerisms (e.g., no accents, no props)
3. Opt for diplomatic, respectful, and tactful speech and phrasing of ideas, including notes (e.g., no foul language, suggestive remarks, or obscene body language)
4. Make decisions that contribute to a professional, safe, inclusive, and educational space for debate

The rest of our conference policies can be found on our website.

By attending all or part of a UTMUN conference, attendees agree to abide by all of our conference policies.

Furthermore, delegates' efforts to contribute to a culture of collaboration, inclusivity, and equity at our conference, both inside and outside of committee session, will be considered by the dais and Secretariat when determining conference scholarships and committee awards.

In cases of failing to adhere to any of UTMUN's policies, the Secretariat reserves the right to take any action it deems necessary, including rendering delegates ineligible for awards, taking disciplinary action, and prohibiting delegates from participating further in the conference.

## Equity Concerns and Accessibility Needs

UTMUN 2021's Secretariat and Staff are committed to ensuring every attendee has an enjoyable, comfortable, and safe experience and is able to participate fully and positively at our conference.

If you have any equity concerns (e.g., concerns about barriers to participation) or accessibility needs now or during the conference, please do not hesitate to contact your committees' dais and/or our Director of Academics at [academics@utmun.org](mailto:academics@utmun.org).

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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to UTMUN 2021! My name is Leila Koohi and I am your Director for this committee. The Dais and I are pleased to welcome you to the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)!

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women operates as a primary organ under the United Nations, observed by the Economic and Social Council and General Assembly. The entity works alongside the UN, Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), and its Member States to continuously improve upon the status quo.

In this committee, you will debate issues that heavily impact the lives of marginalized women and collaborate with your peers to produce resolutions which advance the cause of gender equality. To prepare, we suggest you familiarize yourself with the topics listed in the background guide and use its contents as a foundation for your research. However, the background guide is, and should not be, your sole resource when conducting individual research. We encourage you to develop both depth and breadth to your understanding of your country's policies and stances on the issues discussed in this committee.

The UN Women staff are dedicated to ensuring that this committee remains equitable in its conduct. Please note that this committee touches upon sensitive subjects so we ask that delegates be mindful of the language they use in their position papers and in committee. This warning is not meant to serve as a deterrent from discussing these topics in depth, but rather a reminder that delegates should refrain from making value judgements that utilize harmful assumptions, or use any language that marginalizes the already under-represented groups discussed in this committee. We kindly ask delegates to remain diplomatic in their approach.

Should you have trouble researching any of the topics, please refer to the guiding questions located at the end of each topic as well as the starting resources at the end of the background guide to help you. However, if you require assistance or have any questions about any of the material in the background guide, feel free to email me as I and the UN Women staff would be more than happy to help you out.

I look forward to reading your position papers and hearing about the innovative ideas you and other delegates will construct to tackle the multi-faceted issues women face in the world today.

We'll see you soon!

Leila Koohi,

Director, UN Women

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# Improving Conditions of Sex Workers in Developing Countries

“Sex work is work. This simple and powerful statement frames sex workers not as criminals, victims, vectors of disease or sinners, but as workers.”<sup>1</sup>

According to a study in 2012, there are estimated to be 40 to 42 million sex workers worldwide, and while this number may have changed over the years, there are no definite statistics to confirm the number of workers in this industry.<sup>2</sup> The limited amount of population-level data on sex work worldwide points to the larger issue of the lack of visibility for sex workers, particularly in developing countries and countries where this practice is banned. Policies and laws that ban sex work embed the exclusion of sex workers into their systems of society through determining the extent of economic and social support, occupational health and safety measures, and social protection that they receive. These discriminatory policies ensure that sex workers are unseen in the eyes of the law and society, resulting in a perpetual cycle of invisibility.

As sex workers are underrepresented in international policy that protects their human rights and workers rights, they are left to work in an unregulated, yet incredibly sought-after, industry, which makes them vulnerable to human rights violations and violence. Working in an industry seen as “criminal”, forces sex workers to operate in locations that are less visible, and consequently less secure, which increases their encounters with violence from clients, family, or police. Coupled with the likelihood of physical abuse and violence, sex workers also face increased chances of contracting HIV and AIDS that, without specialized services, make their work deadly. It is estimated that two thirds of countries lack the appropriate targeted social and health programs for sex workers, forcing them to obtain access to these necessary services, like risk-reduction or HIV programmes, through “general health-care settings” where the stigmatization of sex work may not make them feel welcome, or welcome them at all.<sup>3</sup> While the remaining one-third of countries have risk-reduction programmes for sex workers, they often vary in their overall quality. Ending the cycle of invisibility that perpetuates the marginalization of sex workers means developing socio-political infrastructure that creates an environment in which the full protection of the human rights of sex workers is universal.

## Defining ‘Sex Worker’

The goal of this committee is not to determine the legitimacy of sex work or engage in the debate of criminalization versus decriminalization, but rather focus on the conditions in which sex workers operate in around the world. Therefore, it is essential to place boundaries upon the definition of ‘sex worker’ itself to minimize the scope of the topic at hand.

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<sup>1</sup> “Policy Brief: Sex Work as Work,” NSWP, 2017. Accessible from [https://www.nswp.org/sites/nswp.org/files/policy\\_brief\\_sex\\_work\\_as\\_work\\_nswp\\_-\\_2017.pdf](https://www.nswp.org/sites/nswp.org/files/policy_brief_sex_work_as_work_nswp_-_2017.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Gus Lubin, “There Are 42 Million Prostitutes In The World, And Here’s Where They Live,” Business Insider, accessed November 12, 2020, <https://www.businessinsider.com/there-are-42-million-prostitutes-in-the-world-and-heres-where-they-live-2012-1>.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, *People Left Behind: Sex Workers* (2014), Available from [https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media/images/gap\\_report\\_popn\\_06\\_sexworkers\\_2014july-sept.pdf](https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media/images/gap_report_popn_06_sexworkers_2014july-sept.pdf)

The dangers in placing exact definitions on the term “sex worker” largely stem from the potential relationship between the sex industry and human trafficking. Basic economics highlights that the mere presence of an operating sex industry creates a supply of services and commodities provided by people employed by the business, and as long as there is a steady supply, there will eventually be a consumer base to fulfil demand. Should demand increase, the market will respond appropriately to increase supply and those who fill the supply—autonomous sex workers or trafficked individuals—remain largely unknown. There is insufficient literature to suggest a concrete causation between the sex industry and human trafficking, but the undeniable fact is that there most definitely exists trafficked individuals that are stuck within the sex industry with no means of escaping.

It is for this reason that, within the confinements of the UN Women committee, the definition of ‘sex worker’ is “any adult who engages in sexual services inexchange for money.” This definition is intentionally loose to include female sex workers (FSWs), men who have sex with men (MSMs), and transgender sex workers who willingly partake in the industry as well as those who have become trapped within the system of human trafficking because, regardless of the method of arrival to the industry, giving these workers basic human rights remains a top priority for the international community.

However, taking into consideration the existence of trafficked individuals in the sex industry is not meant to detract from the focus of this committee. The challenges being addressed are the working conditions of sex workers in developing countries—not human trafficking—so the scope of resolutions for this specific topic should focus on developing appropriate social, health, and safety infrastructures for those who are employed within the industry, trafficked individuals or not.

## International Policy Framework

First and foremost, sex work is “work”—an income-generating activity—and the right to work is an “inalienable right to all human beings.”<sup>4</sup> However, sex workers have struggled to receive the benefits of regulated wages, proper health and safety standards, and social protection that come with being employed in a “legitimate” line of work. This is due to the lack of international policies that acknowledge sex workers as “workers” despite the inclusive term “everyone” that is used in international human rights and labour policies. Therefore this committee should seek to create inclusive policies that encourage the protection of the social, health and safety of sex ‘workers.’

The United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) states explicitly in Article 23 that, “Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.”<sup>5</sup> While the UDHR is not a legally binding document, the principle of inclusively protecting the right to work as expressed in Article 23, is expanded upon in several other important pieces of international policy that champion the necessity for the fair treatment of workers. Part 3 article 6 clause 1 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), a resolution ratified by a majority of member states in the UN, indicates that “The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize right to work, which includes the right of everyone to the opportunity to gain his living by work which he freely chooses or accepts, and will

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<sup>4</sup> “Universal Declaration of Human Rights,” October 6, 2015, <https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>.

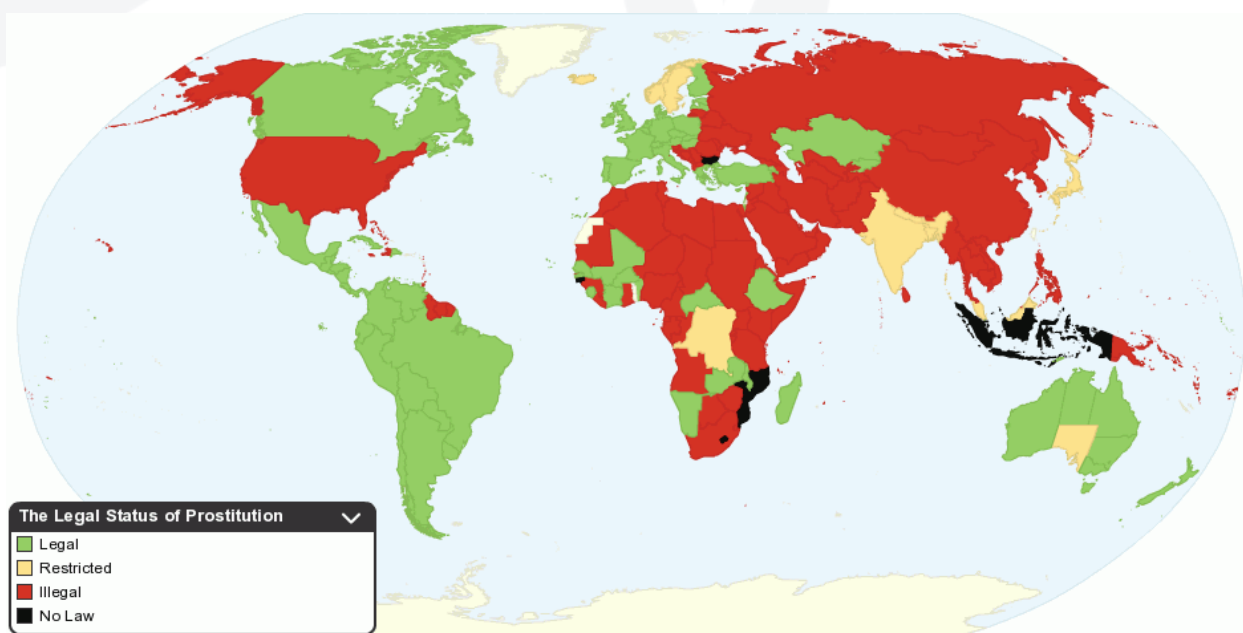
<sup>5</sup> United Nations, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 6.



take appropriate steps to safeguard this right.”<sup>6</sup> In conjunction with the UDHR and ICESCR, the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals presented by the UN, which aim to address the issues of poverty, hunger, climate change and conflict through 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets, strive to “realize the human rights of all and to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls” in the next 15 years.<sup>7</sup> By 2030, Sustainable Development Goal 8 aims to “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.”<sup>8</sup> Finally, the International Labour Organization’s (ILO) Decent Work Agenda further expands on the 8th SDG by advocating for decent wages for all, especially women who “are often in undervalued and low-paid jobs.”<sup>9</sup>

These four key pieces of international policy champion the importance of maintaining a universal standard of safe working conditions that encourage individuals to exercise their fundamental right to work; however, safe working conditions are not guaranteed to sex workers and are dependent on the status of prostitution, which theoretically violates their supposed “universal” right. However, due to the potential correlation between sex work and human trafficking, unique rules and regulations are placed upon the sex industry in an attempt to mitigate human trafficking which could inhibit sex workers’ universal right to work.

Depending on the severity of the regulations, which is determined by the status of sex work within a specific country, sex workers experience varying degrees of barriers in their line of work. Figure 1.1 presented below reflects four statuses of prostitution—legal, restricted, illegal, no law—which present a general picture of the overall status of sex work worldwide.



6 “OHCHR | International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.” accessed November 12, 2020, <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CESCR.aspx>.

7 “Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” accessed November 12, 2020, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>.

8 United Nations, *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.

9 United Nations, International Labour Organization, *Decent Work and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, (n.d.), Available from <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/sdg-2030/lang-en/index.htm>.

Figure 1.1. The Legal Status of Prostitution (Sex Work)<sup>10</sup>

As the figure shows, the legal status of prostitution itself, not including the status of complementary services, in a vast majority of countries is 'illegal,' particularly for countries in Africa and Asia, while most North American and European countries deem the practice 'legal' along with Australia.<sup>11</sup> However, labelling the systems 'legal,' 'restricted,' 'illegal,' and 'no law' is a rather oversimplified categorization, particularly regarding the status of 'legal' on this map. National legislation that deems sex work 'legal,' does not necessarily equate to the legalization of sex work. Specifically, there are two statuses of legality that are not differentiated between on this map that must be distinguished along with the remaining three statuses that make up a total of five global statuses of sex work, varying from decriminalization to criminalization.

The first status is decriminalization, which is labelled as 'legal' on the map in Figure 1.1. As the term suggests, decriminalization makes sex work non-criminal. It does not punish the buying or selling of sex services and complementary activity. Adopting this status simply allows for the market economy of a country to determine the supply and demand of the service with some governmental regulation. To date, New Zealand is the only country that has fully decriminalized sex work,

The second status is legalization, which is the second form of 'legal' in the legend of Figure 1.1. Legalization, much like the title suggests, entails the governmental regulation of prostitution through labour laws along with complementary services like pimping, buying, and brothel ownership, which allows for the uninhibited growth of the industry by the legal system.<sup>12</sup> Such a status has been adopted in Senegal, Germany, the Netherlands, and Canada.<sup>13</sup>

The third status is partial criminalization under which the buying and selling of sex is not criminalized, but, rather, the activity that expands the accessibility of it, like brothels is. Partial criminalization is labelled as 'restricted' under the legend of Figure 1.1. And as noted on the map in the figure, countries that adopted partial criminalization are rare with only 11 countries giving sex work this status.<sup>14</sup> Some examples of these countries include India, Iceland and Japan.

The fourth status of sex work is more of a niche system that is largely overlooked called "the Nordic Model." The Nordic Model of prostitution is centred around the prohibition of the buying of sexual services, essentially criminalizing buyers of prostitution rather than the prostitutes themselves.<sup>15</sup> This status, otherwise known as "asymmetrical decriminalization," is not present in Figure 1.1, as it cannot be classified precisely as "restricted" or "illegal." The most prominent example of a country that employs the Nordic Model is Sweden.

The fifth, and final, status of sex work is full criminalization. Within this status, the sale of sex, for all intents

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10 "The Legal Status of Prostitution by Country." Accessed November 12, 2020. <http://chartsbin.com/view/snb>.

11 Chartsbin, *Legal Status of Prostitution by Country*.

12 Ane Mathieson, Easton Branam, Ana Noble, Prostitution Policy: Legalization, Decriminalization and the Nordic Model," *Seattle Journal for Social Justice* 14, no. 2 (2015): 367-428, <http://digitalcommons.law.seattleu.edu/sjsj/vol14/iss2/10>, 378.

13 Mathieson, Branam, Noble, *Prostitution Policy*, 378.

14 Chartsbin, *Legal Status of Prostitution by Country*.

15 Ibid, 371.

and purposes, is entirely illegal for all parties that participate in its buying and selling. This status is labelled as 'illegal' on the legend in Figure 1.1, and as the map reflects, a large majority of countries utilize this status as it places a blanket policy over the regulation of sex work, making it easier for the legal system to control the sex industry. However, completely squandering the sex industry through the full criminalization system results in the emergence of black market services that are completely unregulated. By not actively regulating sex work and treating it as a revenue-generating sector, countries that deem sex work are leaving an incredibly complex industry in a grey zone of management with no expected standard for how it should operate the same way any other industry is regulated. Countries that employ this form of legal system include: Iran, South Korea, and the Philippines.

As evidenced by Figure 1.1, the status of sex work, and thus the working conditions of sex workers, varies, which makes policy development for the improvement of working conditions more complex. But, for many nations, often Western and democratic, the key to the development of a worldwide standard of health, safety, and protection for sex workers lies in the complete legalization or decriminalization of sex work worldwide. The argument is that decriminalization or legalization would allow for the sex industry to merge into the labour market as simply another form of work that, in turn, would alleviate the restrictions placed on sex workers physically and socially.<sup>16</sup> Many UN organs have begun to adopt this stance, including the ILO and UNHCR, which have both declared their positions as being "for decriminalization."<sup>17</sup> However, UN Women has presently taken a neutral stance on the debate of decriminalizing sex-work as of October 2019, presenting a varying stance compared to those of fellow UN agencies. The executive director of UN Women, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka stated that "UN Women does not take position for or against the decriminalization/legalization of prostitution/sex work."<sup>18</sup> The declaration was made in response to the concerns of over 1,400 civil society representatives expressed in a letter to Mlambo-Ngcuka in early 2019.<sup>19</sup> The letter articulates a fundamental concern with the overwhelmingly loud narrative of "pro-decriminalization" within the United Nations.<sup>20</sup> The undersigned cited the decriminalization movement by dominantly Western democratic nations to be a failure on the part of international bodies, including UN Women, to bring representation for smaller, less wealthy nations to an issue that must have equal representation, stating; "UN Women has clearly failed, advertently or inadvertently, to engage in outreach and mobilization of a broad and diverse representation."<sup>21</sup> In order to fulfil the requests of the undersigned in this letter, the member states of this committee must consequently be focused, not on debating the issue of criminalization or decriminalization, but on collaborating to ensure sex workers can fundamental human right to safe working conditions regardless of the status of sex work where they live.

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid, 371.

<sup>17</sup> United Nations, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment (UN Women), *Global Letter to UN Women*, (17 October 2019), Available from [https://c-fam.org/friday\\_fax/un-women-takes-neutral-position-on-criminalization-of-prostitution/](https://c-fam.org/friday_fax/un-women-takes-neutral-position-on-criminalization-of-prostitution/).

<sup>18</sup> C-Fam. "UN Women Takes Neutral Position on Criminalization of Prostitution." Accessed November 12, 2020. [https://c-fam.org/friday\\_fax/un-women-takes-neutral-position-on-criminalization-of-prostitution/](https://c-fam.org/friday_fax/un-women-takes-neutral-position-on-criminalization-of-prostitution/).

<sup>19</sup> United Nations, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment (UN Women), *Global Letter to UN Women*, (17 October 2019), Available from [https://c-fam.org/friday\\_fax/un-women-takes-neutral-position-on-criminalization-of-prostitution/](https://c-fam.org/friday_fax/un-women-takes-neutral-position-on-criminalization-of-prostitution/).

<sup>20</sup> UN Women, *Global Letter to UN Women*, 2.

<sup>21</sup> United Nations, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment (UN Women), *Global Letter to UN Women*, (17 October 2019), Available from [https://c-fam.org/friday\\_fax/un-women-takes-neutral-position-on-criminalization-of-prostitution/](https://c-fam.org/friday_fax/un-women-takes-neutral-position-on-criminalization-of-prostitution/), 2.

## Improving Social Protection

Regardless of the status of sex work in their countries of employment, sex workers are stigmatized and the social discrimination they face leads to their marginalization, forcing them to live and work in environments that place them at risk of physical and verbal violence, and police brutality. Therefore, it is the task of this committee to find solutions that destigmatize sex work and improve how they are socially perceived, protected against discrimination, and protected from physical violence that stems from stigma.

### Stigma and Societal Perception

“When there is violence, it is mostly the prostitute’s fault. Consumers are buying a commodity. If they are satisfied with what they are buying, then why should they be violent? They will be violent when they are cheated, when they are offered a substandard service... Sometimes violence is because the prostitute wants the client to use condoms. They force it on the client. He will naturally be disgruntled and there will be altercations.”<sup>22</sup>

The social discrediting of sex workers through derogatory terms like “prostitutes,” “hookers,” and “whores,” insinuates that being a sex worker is a mark of disgrace. Such terms create narratives of sex workers as individuals with spoiled identities, setting up society to view them as disposable victims rather than as people. These narratives are perpetuated by media and politics which cement a norm of validation for rape and violence against sex workers, coupled with victim blaming for those who attempt to seek justice. While such a social phenomenon like stigma can be perceived to be harmless due to its intangible effect on society, stigma is incredibly harmful. It sullies the social perception of sex workers, encouraging global systemic discrimination against them which in turn validates their abusers in scenarios of mistreatment. This committee, therefore, seeks to benefit from working with fellow member states to find solutions that destigmatize sex work.

### Discrimination:

The stigmatization of sex work is pervasive in all societies and the root of the stigma comes from how sex workers are seen in the eyes of the law. Under the five statuses of sex work, each status inadvertently isolates and excludes sex workers by forcing them to hide away from the law.

Under a full criminalization system, sex workers are punished for participating in their line of work and branded as “outlaws” in society. They are isolated and treated as invisible, thus, the law does not protect them, creating an environment that leaves verbal and physical abuse and police brutality unchecked. Under the partial criminalization system, where complementary activities relating to the buying and selling of sex, like brothels, are criminalized, sex workers are forced by these constraints to work alone. Being forced to work alone under a system of partial criminalization is equally isolationist as full criminalization due to sex workers still being forced to work in less visible environments that could potentially expose them to danger. Under the Nordic model in which sex work is meant to be eliminated, further constraints to working environments are placed on sex workers, in comparison to both the full and partial criminalization systems. Even within a model of full legalization, sex workers still face stigma and discrimination in social, economic, and health systems that segregate them.

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22 Samuel Centre For Social Connectedness, *Stigmatization Behind Sex Work*.

Each system—from criminalization to decriminalization—forces a distinction to be made in society between those employed in the sex industry and those who are not. Such a divergence actively instills the idea of difference, labelling sex workers as “the other.” This alienation created by the structure of law, coupled with the pre-existing social stigma that already ostracized sex workers, creates warped societal perceptions of sex workers being foreign “others,” which results in further discrimination against them.

### Police Brutality and Abuse

“Eventually, verbal abuse becomes so constant the individual tends to place themselves within a “box.” They do not venture outside that box into public and society, where society would deem you [a sex worker] unfit, that they would look at you as though you were lesser than—not human.” – Transgender woman, Trinidad and Tobago.<sup>23</sup>

The social stigma and discrimination that makes sex workers invisible also labels them as “criminals,” along with other negative terms that serve to devalue the lives of sex workers. As a result, law enforcement see the elimination of these “criminals” as part of their duty, and capitalize on the invisibility of this marginalized group to eliminate them in the most brutal way possible. And within legal systems that see the elimination of sex workers to be beneficial, there is little support offered to them in situations of abuse or police brutality. Consequently, sex workers operate without any legal infrastructure to support them in the justice system, leaving them vulnerable at the hands of those who know they cannot seek retribution, particularly in developing countries and in countries where sex work is criminalized.

A study conducted on gender-based violence in Latin America and the Caribbean found that female-sex workers, MSMs, and transgender sex-workers in Barbados, El Salvador, Trinidad and Tobago, and Haiti face extreme levels of gender-based violence. The study found that 75% of participants of the study had experienced violence four or more times in various locations from public settings, to personal places.<sup>24</sup> Such forms of violence included emotional, economic, physical, and sexual violence among other human rights violations.<sup>25</sup> Emotional violence was determined to be most common, however psychological and verbal abuse, threats to commit further harm or sexual violence, coercion, manipulation, insults and other forms of harassment were additionally reported to be common experiences.<sup>26</sup> Sexual and physical violence such as kidnapping, drugging, rape, refusal to wear a condom, and coercion into sexual activity were also cited along with human rights violations in addition to arbitrary detention, arrest or threat of arrest at the hands of police and law enforcement officers.<sup>27</sup>

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23 Emily Evens et al., “Experiences of Gender-Based Violence among Female Sex Workers, Men Who Have Sex with Men, and Transgender Women in Latin America and the Caribbean: A Qualitative Study to Inform HIV Programming,” *BMC International Health and Human Rights* 19, no. 9 (March, 2019): 1-14, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12914-019-0187-5>.

24 Emily Evens et al., “Experiences of Gender-Based Violence among Female Sex Workers, Men Who Have Sex with Men, and Transgender Women in Latin America and the Caribbean: A Qualitative Study to Inform HIV Programming,” *BMC International Health and Human Rights* 19, no. 9 (March, 2019): 1-14, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12914-019-0187-5>.

25 Evens et al., *Gender-based violence among female sex workers*.

26 Evens et al., *Gender-based violence among female sex workers*.

27 Evens et al., *Gender-based violence among female sex workers*.

Overall, the pervasiveness of the effects of stigma, including discrimination and violence against sex workers, create hostile and unsafe working conditions for sex workers. Therefore, this committee should seek to integrate innovative policies that address the issues of social stigma, discrimination, and client and police violence against sex workers.

### Improving Occupational Health and Safety

Circumstances in which sex workers are marginalized and criminalized by their societies results in an additional challenge of being unable to access necessary health services that keep sex workers safe, particularly from HIV and AIDS. According to UNAIDS, the organization which compiled the data in Figure 1.2 below, the issue of the prevalence of HIV among sex workers is significantly higher than for the prevalence amongst individuals not employed within the sex industry, making sex work not only a dangerous industry of employment, but a deadly one.

Globally sex workers now make up 9% of the total number of new HIV infections, and the number of sex workers contracting the infection continues to rise.<sup>28</sup> On average, sex workers are 13 times more likely to become infected with HIV than other adults in the general population.<sup>29</sup> However, there are significant variations between regions and countries on the exact statistics due to varying circumstances and scenarios that affect sex workers' ability to protect themselves and practice good sexual health.<sup>30</sup>

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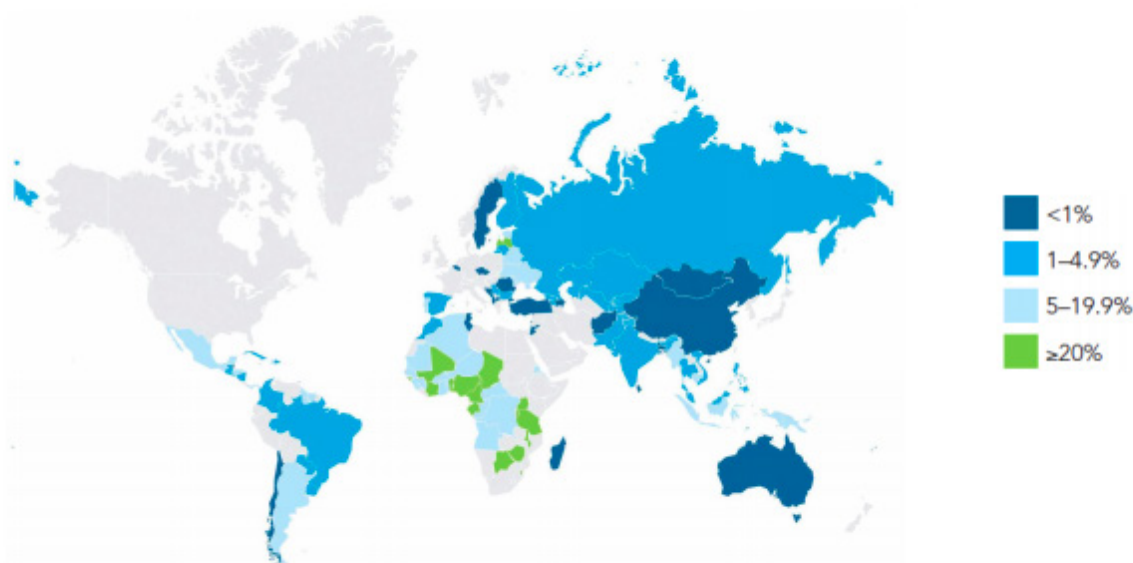
28 Avert. "Sex Workers, HIV and AIDS," July 20, 2015. <https://www.avert.org/professionals/hiv-social-issues/key-affected-populations/sex-workers>.

29 Avert. "Sex Workers, HIV and AIDS."

30 Ibid.



## HIV prevalence among sex workers, 2009–2013



Source: Global AIDS Response Progress Reporting 2014.



Figure 1.2. HIV Prevalence Among Sex Workers, 2009–2013.<sup>31</sup>

Although there are several underlying social, legal, and economic factors that increase the likelihood of a sex worker contracting HIV and AIDS, the prevalence of the infection is largely due to the fact that sex workers have comparatively high numbers of sexual partners compared with the general population. However, this does not necessarily increase their likelihood of becoming infected with HIV if they use condoms consistently and correctly, but this is the primary issue that is perpetuating the increase of HIV and AIDS cases amongst sex workers.<sup>32</sup>

International public health agencies as well as policy and public health experts recommend consistent condom use as vital to the effort to reduce the spread of HIV and protect the health of sex workers.<sup>33</sup> Recognition of this has led to the launch of condom distribution and education programs worldwide, but the simple distribution of condoms does not ensure their use, and it is in this transition between the distributor and the user where the

31 United Nations, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, *People Left Behind: Sex Workers* (2014), Available from [https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media/images/gap\\_report\\_popn\\_06\\_sexworkers\\_2014july-sept.pdf](https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media/images/gap_report_popn_06_sexworkers_2014july-sept.pdf)

32 Avert. "Sex Workers, HIV and AIDS," July 20, 2015. <https://www.avert.org/professionals/hiv-social-issues/key-affected-populations/sex-workers>.

33 Open Society Foundations. "Criminalizing Condoms," Accessed November 13, 2020. <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/uploads/77d576b0-41b0-45d8-ba72-afae15438e50/criminalizing-condoms-20120717.pdf>

problem lies.

While there are several outstanding countries where condom use is largely practiced, like in in Lesotho, for example, where HIV prevalence among female sex workers was estimated at 71.9 percent in 2015 and 64.9 percent in 2017, or in India, Laos and Sri Lanka where a 2018 study by UNAIDS found that these three countries had condom use of over 90% among sex workers, a majority of countries fail to meet a similar standard.<sup>34</sup> Particularly countries in the Middle East and North Africa generally have inadequate condom use which results in the increased transmission of HIV to and from sex workers and contributes to the increasing number of HIV cases worldwide.<sup>35</sup>

In light of these statistics that point to a discrepancy between the distribution and usage of condoms, this committee should seek to find new solutions that address the lack of use of condoms in order to ensure the occupational health and safety of sex workers. As the stigmatization surrounding sex workers undermines their ability to receive access to health services and tools that protect their well-being, it is more important than ever that this committee derive new and innovative solutions that ensure that the promotion of condoms does not stop at the distribution phase, and take into account the challenges of regulating their use.<sup>36</sup>

## Conclusion

The pre-existing international policies that enshrine the universal human right to work lack any acknowledgement of sex-workers as ‘workers,’ employed in a legitimate industry. Consequentially, the current international policies fail to uphold the right to work in safe working conditions as protected in the UDHR for sex workers. The lack of regulation protecting sex workers’ right to work thus leads to social protection and occupational health and safety standards being unregulated as well, subsequently resulting in violent, dangerous, and hostile working conditions of sex workers. With cooperation from the members states within this committee of UN Women, resolutions that aim to fix the underlying issues of social stigma, discrimination, police brutality and violence, and increased HIV transmission can be produced to ensure the safety of working condition for everyone employed within the industry.

## Questions to Consider

1. What is your country’s stance on sex work and why? Are there social, cultural, or economic influences that have shaped this stance? How do the current policies address your country’s concerns on sex work? How can your country’s policies improve the international approach to regulating sex work?
2. What strategies or policies can be implemented to reduce the stigma surrounding sex work?
3. How does the legal system used—decriminalization, legalization, partial criminalization, the Nordic Model, or criminalization—impact the lives of sex workers?
4. Sex workers have an increased likelihood of contracting HIV/AIDS, and stigma may prevent them from receiving the health care services and products they need like condoms. How can member states improve occupational health and safety for sex workers?

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34 Avert. “Sex Workers, HIV and AIDS,” July 20, 2015. <https://www.avert.org/professionals/hiv-social-issues/key-affected-populations/sex-workers>.

35Avert. “Sex Workers, HIV and AIDS.”

36Open Society Foundations. “Criminalizing Condoms,” Accessed November 13, 2020. <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/uploads/77d576b0-41b0-45d8-ba72-afae15438e50/criminalizing-condoms-20120717.pdf>



## Topic B: Empowering Women with Disabilities

"Women and men with disabilities can and want to be productive members of society... Many societies are also recognizing the need to dismantle other barriers - making the physical environment more accessible, providing information in a variety of formats, and challenging attitudes and mistaken assumptions about people with disabilities."<sup>37</sup>

Over one billion people worldwide experience some form of disability, with 19 percent of the demographic being women. Across the globe, studies reveal staggering and terrifying facts on violence against women and girls with disabilities.<sup>38</sup> While women with disabilities are exposed to the same forms of violence experienced by women without disabilities, the intersectionality of living as both a woman and an individual with a disability puts them at further risk of violence that is unique and less detectable.<sup>39</sup> In fact, evidence suggests that girls and young women with disabilities may face up to 10 times more violence than women and girls without disabilities in their lifetime. These forms of violence against women and girls with disabilities include a lack of respect for personhood and withholding of assistive devices such as wheelchairs, hearing aids, and white canes. Restricting the accessibility of these devices may limit mobility and interactions with other people, increases a sense of powerlessness, dependency, and risk of sexual violence. Therefore, the committee's primary goal in regard to empowering women with disabilities should be to develop resolutions that proactively prevent violent scenarios of abuse, support those who have unfortunately experienced them, and provide representation for these women and girls in places of leadership.<sup>40</sup>

### International Policy Framework

Before discussing the current policies that focus on supporting women and girls with disabilities, it is crucial that the definitions of 'women with disabilities' and 'disability' are covered. The term 'women and girls with disabilities' refers to all women with disabilities including adolescent girls and young women.<sup>41</sup> The term 'disabilities' itself is defined by the United Nations as all forms of impairment including but not limited to: "physical, psychosocial, intellectual or mental, as well as sensory conditions with and without functional limitations".<sup>42</sup>

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37 International Labour Organization. "Inclusion of People with Disabilities in China." Accessed on November 12, 2020. [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/---ifp\\_skills/documents/publication/wcms\\_112380.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---ifp_skills/documents/publication/wcms_112380.pdf)

38 UN Women. "Issue Brief: Making SDGs Count for Women with Disabilities." UN Women. Accessed November 13, 2020. <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2017/making-sdgs-count-for-women-with-disabilities.pdf?la=en&vs=731>

39 Ibid.

40 Ibid.

41 UN Women. "Issue Brief: Making SDGs Count for Women with Disabilities." UN Women. Accessed November 13, 2020. <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2017/making-sdgs-count-for-women-with-disabilities.pdf?la=en&vs=731>

42 UN Women. "Issue Brief: Making SDGs Count for Women with Disabilities." UN Women. Accessed November 13, 2020. <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2017/making-sdgs-count-for-women-with-disabilities.pdf?la=en&vs=731>

Beyond the medically defined aspects of disability, the United Nations has further defined 'disability' as "the social effect of the interaction between individual impairment and the social and material environment."<sup>43</sup>

For policies regarding women with disabilities, The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol, intended to serve as a human rights instrument with an explicit, social development dimension that champions the rights of individuals with disabilities, was adopted on December 13<sup>th</sup> 2006 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, and was opened for signature on 30 March 2007.<sup>44</sup> As a historic piece of international policy, the Convention saw 82 signatories alone, along with 44 signatories to the Optional Protocol and 1 ratification of the Convention, making it the document with highest number of signatories in history at a UN Convention on its opening day. The Convention is also the first comprehensive human rights treaty of the 21st century and the first human rights convention to be open for signature by regional integration organizations.<sup>45</sup> This landmark international and human rights policy adopts a broad categorization of persons with disabilities and reaffirms that all persons with different types of disabilities must enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms. This document clarifies and qualifies how all categories of rights apply to persons with disabilities and identifies areas where adaptations have to be made for persons with disabilities to effectively exercise their rights and areas where their rights have been violated, and where protection of rights must be reinforced. As a ratified document, The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is a key piece of legislation that will serve as an indispensable framework for this committee, should it seek to further policies championing the rights of individuals, particularly women, with disabilities.

More recently, the year 2015 marked the beginning of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda that highlights an action plan to work towards achieving the world's Sustainable Development Goals that support women with disabilities under Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) three, four, and five, which are as follows: "Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages," "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all," and to "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls."<sup>46</sup> These SDGs set the expectations for international UN organs like UN Women for supporting and empowering women with disabilities. To realize these goals, UN Women produced the "United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) Strategic Plan for 2018-2021," which establishes a plan to achieve the aims of closing the achievement gap and decreasing the gender disparity when it comes to accessing technology and opportunity as set by the UN's SDGs

Specifically, Clause 98 of the Strategic Plan articulates a five-point blueprint to achieve this goal of providing opportunities for women and girls with disabilities. The first of its five-point plan states that UN Women aims to "support the development of markets for innovations and encourage investment in innovation for gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls."<sup>47</sup> Its second is to "Work with industry partners to take

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43 Ibid.

44 United Nations. "Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) Enable." Accessed November 13, 2020. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html>.

45 United Nations. "Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) Enable." Accessed November 13, 2020. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html>.

46 "Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform." United Nations. United Nations. Accessed November 13, 2020. <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>.

47 "United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) Strategic Plan 2018-2021." Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, 2017. <http://undocs.org/en/UNW/2017/6/Rev.1>.

a gender-responsive approach to the innovation cycle: the UN Women's Global Innovation Exchange platform connects external partners to showcase good practices and encourage collaboration."<sup>48</sup> Its third is to "Promote women as innovators: UN Women is partnering with UNOPS' Global Innovation Centres to promote women innovators."<sup>49</sup> Its fourth is to "Support pilot innovations by civil society organizations to challenges faced by women and girls, including through grant-making mechanisms."<sup>50</sup> And, finally, to "Advocate for the participation and visibility of women and girls in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)."<sup>51</sup> These five points highlight areas that this committee of UN Women should seek to elaborate upon along with the other policies in the international policy framework in future resolutions that seek to fulfil these goals.

Overall, The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol stands to be the backbone of a large majority of international policy regarding individuals with disabilities. Therefore, to make the UN's Sustainable Development Goals of supporting women with disabilities a reality along with the goals set by the Strategic Plan, this committee should use The Convention as a foundation to produce policies that aim to do so.

## Violence Against Women With Disabilities

Worldwide, one in five women live with a disability in comparison to one in eight men, and there are numerous intersectional issues that arise from having a disability as a woman. Disability is largely equated with an incapacity, and such negative language and stereotypes perpetuate the stigma that prevents disabled persons, particularly disabled women, from accessing opportunities. Unfortunately, this stigma starts young. According to the World Bank, female infants born with disabilities are more likely to be "mercy killed"—intentionally killed in order to spare one's life from pain or suffering—than male infants with disabilities due to the patriarchal nature of many societies which value males over females. But, even for female infants with disabilities that live beyond infancy, most never receive recognition of their existence as many girls with disabilities never receive a birth certificate.<sup>52</sup> As a result, girls and women with disabilities come to be disproportionately underrepresented in local and national legislation. This suggests that they are unable to access basic services that come with being a visible member of society such as health care, education, and social services, which can lead to compounded vulnerability built upon their pre-existing lack of support.<sup>53</sup> More specifically, adult, adolescent, and young women with disabilities routinely face various barriers to accessing health services. For example, an issue brief presented by UN Women revealed that women with disabilities are less likely to receive screening for breast and cervical cancer than women without disabilities due to "a lack of targeted health promotion and prevention campaigns, and a lack of appropriate physical accommodations" that could make such a service accessible.<sup>54</sup> Even if women with disabilities were able to access these health services more consistently, there are also issues that arise with staff. According to the issue brief, health workers may lack the skills and knowledge to address

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48 Ibid.

49 Ibid.

50 Ibid.

51 Ibid.

52 Koistinen, Mari et al. "Five facts to know about violence against women and girls with disabilities" *World Bank Blogs*. December 5, 2019. <https://blogs.worldbank.org/sustainablecities/five-facts-know-about-violence-against-women-and-girls-disabilities#>:

53 Ibid.

54 UN Women. "Issue Brief: Making SDGs Count for Women with Disabilities." UN Women. Accessed November 13, 2020. <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2017/making-sdgs-count-for-women-with-disabilities.pdf?la=en&vs=731>

the specific needs of women with disabilities.<sup>55</sup> In the context of sexual and reproductive health, for example, the misconception about women and girls with disabilities being asexual is widespread, resulting in women with disabilities facing a significant number of unmet needs in sexual and reproductive health services, including access to family planning and maternal health care.<sup>56</sup> The general inaccessibility of health services for women with disabilities is only one example of the impact of underrepresentation, but it reveals how the invisibility of these women leads to the lack of supporting infrastructure for them, furthering the neglect of women and girls with disabilities and increasing their vulnerability.

The increased vulnerability of women and girls with disabilities additionally renders them more susceptible to violence and abuse. A study conducted by researchers at the Inter-American Development Bank found that young women and girls with disabilities experience up to 10 times more violence than those without, potentially experiencing multiple forms of violence in their lifetime from psychological and emotional abuse, neglect, financial abuse, exploitation, and physical or sexual abuse.<sup>57</sup> And while this abuse is common according to the study, this violence against women and girls with disabilities is rarely reported.<sup>58</sup> The under-reporting of violence against women and girls is largely due to fundamental resources required to report a crime being inaccessible to individuals with disabilities.

At the most basic level, many police stations and courthouses are not physically accessible, nor are equipped with additional resources like sign language interpreters or communication services that can facilitate communication between the complainant and judicial personnel, subsequently making the disabled individual dependent on the accompaniment of an acquaintance, friend or family member to file their complain.<sup>59</sup> This dependency poses issues for the complainant, for privacy reasons and for personal safety reasons. If the individual accompanying the complainant does not want the victim to report the issue, like in a circumstance where the violence is caused by a family member, personal aide, or prominent and powerful person within the community, the disabled individual risks placing themselves in greater harm if they proceed with reporting the crime than if they simply keep it to themselves.<sup>60</sup> However, even in the scenario where they do come forward, the complainant is still heavily dependent on their caregivers to communicate, or they are perceived to be unreliable if they communicate themselves, which is especially the case for women and girls with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities.<sup>61</sup>

In essence, women and girls with disabilities face a disproportionate amount of violence in their lifetimes as a result of their intersectional identity, and are often unable to report the violence inflicted on them due to a lack of support provided by fundamental services which makes justice inaccessible. In order to give women and girls with disabilities the support they have failed to receive for so long, UN Women should develop policies that improve the accessibility of these essential services including the need for sign language to be universally

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Luana Marques Garcia et al. "Violence Against Women and Girls with Disabilities in Latin America and the Caribbean," Inter-American Development Bank. <http://dx.doi.org/10.18235/0001581>.

<sup>58</sup> "Fact Sheet: Violence Against Women and Girls with Disabilities." Commission on the Status of Women. Accessed November 13, 2020. [https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw57/side\\_events/Fact%20sheet%20%20VAVG%20with%20disabilities%20FINAL%20.pdf](https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw57/side_events/Fact%20sheet%20%20VAVG%20with%20disabilities%20FINAL%20.pdf)

<sup>59</sup> Inter-American Development Bank. "Brief on Violence Against Women and Girls with Disabilities." December, 2019. [https://www.vawgresourceguide.org/sites/vawg/files/briefs/vawg\\_resource\\_disability\\_formatted\\_v6.pdf](https://www.vawgresourceguide.org/sites/vawg/files/briefs/vawg_resource_disability_formatted_v6.pdf), 14.

<sup>60</sup> "Brief on Violence Against Women and Girls with Disabilities," 15.

<sup>61</sup> "Brief on Violence Against Women and Girls with Disabilities," 15.

applied to courthouses and police stations, or accessibility training and protocol in hospitals and places that distribute health care services that has been adjusted to address the specialized needs of these women and girls. These are some examples of potential measures that encourage and facilitate the reporting of violence against women and girls with disabilities, while strengthening the capacity of the justice system to ensure that women and girls with disabilities can receive access to the justice to which they are entitled to.<sup>62</sup>

## Economic Empowerment

UN Sustainable Development Goals 4 and 8 aim to “eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children and in vulnerable situations,” and “achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.”<sup>63</sup> Both Sustainable Development Goal 4 and 8 recognize the need to improve access to educational and employment opportunities specifically for women and girls, and highlight this as top priority.

Unfortunately, within the status-quo, women and girls with disabilities face major barriers like social stigma, discrimination, and inaccessibility, which impact their ability to receive a complete education and, in turn, lower their employment prospects. Women and girls with disabilities face these barriers early on in life as they experience the sexism most women and girls already face in hiring and promotional practices across the globe. As a result of few employment opportunities, women and girls with disabilities are made dependent upon family and assistants to live, creating a never-ending cycle of dependency. This cycle of dependency feeds the narrative of women and girls being incapable of providing for themselves economically and thus being unfit for employment. Therefore, this committee should aim to find solutions that break the cycle of dependency and improve women and girls with disabilities access to employment opportunities.

Education and training are crucial to setting individuals up for future success in the workplace.<sup>64</sup> But young people with disabilities often lack access to formal education or to opportunities to develop their skills.<sup>65</sup> The gap in educational attainment between those with a disability and those without is a significant causal factor contributing to the disparate levels of employment between able-bodied people and people with disabilities.<sup>66</sup> Studies show that employers may discriminate against people with disabilities because of misconceptions about their capabilities, or because they do not wish to include them in their workforce.<sup>67</sup> Different impairments elicit different degrees of prejudice, with the strongest prejudice exhibited towards people with mental health conditions. Of people with schizophrenia, for example, 29 percent experienced discrimination in either finding or keeping a job, and 42 percent felt the need to conceal their condition when applying for work, education,

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62 Luana Marques Garcia et al. “Violence Against Women and Girls with Disabilities in Latin America and the Caribbean,” Inter-American Development Bank. <http://dx.doi.org/10.18235/0001581>.

63 “Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” accessed November 12, 2020, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>.

64 “World Report on Disability.” World Health Organization. World Health Organization. Accessed November 13, 2020. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789241564182>.

65 Ibid.

66 Ibid.

67 Ibid.



or training.<sup>68</sup> In addition to discrimination and prejudice towards individuals with disabilities in the workplace, people with disabilities may face environmental obstacles that make physical access to employment difficult. Some may not be able to afford the daily travel costs to and from work.<sup>69</sup> There may also be physical barriers to job interviews, to the actual work setting, and to attending social events with fellow employees.<sup>70</sup> Access to information can be a further barrier for people with visual impairments.<sup>71</sup> These statistics highlight the emotional, mental, and physical barriers that advertently or inadvertently discriminate against individuals with disabilities in the workplace. These unique barriers faced by people with disabilities in general are ones that this committee should seek to address specifically through the development of solutions that promote inclusion and equality in order to promote the empowerment of women and girls with disabilities.

## Leadership and Political Participation of Women with Disabilities

Despite the efforts to support women with disabilities through the Sustainable Development Goals, UN Women's Strategic Plan, and The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, there still remain significant gaps between commitments and action to empowerment of women and girls with disabilities.<sup>72</sup> Consequently, women in disabilities are still largely underrepresented within national and international legislative bodies, organizations that pertain to people with disabilities that work toward gender equality. As a result, the voices of women with disabilities are frequently left unheard and their needs unaddressed. The lack of representation and general support of leadership from women with disabilities points to the beginning of the cycle of invisibility and vulnerability for women with disabilities. Therefore, improving bills and legal framework to support and increase the number of women with disabilities who hold leadership roles is, therefore, a necessary step in order to bring women with disabilities to the forefront of the issues and their solutions.

## Conclusion

In sum, women with disabilities face the unique intersectional challenges of discrimination as both a woman or girl and as an individual with a disability, and unfortunately, due to this intersectionality, they are more likely to face situations of physical and economic violence that cement them within the circumstances they are born into. The social immobility of women with disabilities thus prevents them from contributing to their societies within their capacities and leads to their lack of representation on local, national, and international levels. Should UN Women, in seeking to represent women and marginalized groups from all walks of life, aim to help women with disabilities find a seat at the table, addressing the underlying social and economic issues that pin them down is key to the advancement of this goal.

## Questions to Consider

1. How can UNW create a more equal representation of women with disabilities in leadership positions?

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid

<sup>72</sup> UN Women. "Leadership and Political Participation of Women with Disabilities." Accessed November 13, 2020. <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2019/brief-leadership-and-political-participation-of-women-with-disabilities-en.pdf?la=en&vs=5219>

2. What are some of the main challenges or barriers that women with disabilities face in finding work, in ensuring a sense of security in their day-to-day lives and in stepping up to positions of power?
3. Given the current international framework, are there any changes that must be made to the status quo to ensure the empowerment of women with disabilities? If so, how can these changes be successfully integrated to pre-existing frameworks and how will these changes be reflected in the lives of women with disabilities?
4. What are your country's current policies on empowering women with disabilities, if any? How can your country's policies, or lack thereof, improve the international policy framework presented above?

## Topic C: Supporting Women in The Sports Industry

"By shining a light on gender discrimination in the sport workplace we are raising awareness of specific problems so that we can work together with the sector to create positive change."<sup>73</sup>

### Introduction

According to the National Partnership for Women and Families, women make 80 cents for every dollar paid to men.<sup>74</sup> This infamous statistic represents the general wage discrimination women face throughout a large number of industries, but this is only the tip of the iceberg. Beneath the wage gap lies a large number of barriers that perpetuate the sexist narratives that subsequently fuel the wage gap that pays women 20 cents less. In light of these considerations, it is important to examine other discriminatory factors women face in the working world, particularly in male-dominated industries such as the sport industry. Within the sports industry, women are represented in extremely low numbers. This is often justified by the claim that women inherently hold "a lack of interest" in occupying jobs in this profession. However, this justification does not explain the underrepresentation of women in the sports industry accurately, as it uses veiled sexism to conceal the barriers they face in maintaining their employment.

### Gender Discrimination in Sports

A study published in a report by Women in Sport revealed that 40 percent of women experience gender discrimination in the sport industry.<sup>75</sup> The report, titled Beyond 30 per cent - Workplace Culture in Sport, unveils the extent to which women with careers in sports experience prejudice by compiling the data gathered through a survey of 1,152 women and men working in the sport industry between September 2017 and March 2018.<sup>76</sup> As part of the study, 42 in-depth interviews were carried out in conjunction with the survey to gain further insight into its results. The researchers found that there were large discrepancies between the experiences of men and women finding that 38 percent of the women stated that they have experienced gender discrimination in the workplace, in comparison to a fifth of the men.<sup>77</sup> Moreover, 40 percent of the women felt that their gender can have a negative impact on the way that they are valued by others at work, while 30 percent have experienced inappropriate behaviour from someone of the opposite sex in comparison to a tenth of the men.<sup>78</sup> When asked whether men and women in their workplace are treated equally and fairly, 72 percent of the men believed

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73 Barr, Sabrina. "40% Of Women in Sport Face Gender Discrimination, Report Finds." The Independent. Independent Digital News and Media, June 20, 2018. <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/women-sport-industry-gender-discrimination-sexism-jobs-leadership-report-a8407476.html>.

74 Whalen, Kelsey, "Discrimination Against Women in the Sport Industry." Honors Theses. 2017. 433. [https://encompass.eku.edu/honors\\_theses/433](https://encompass.eku.edu/honors_theses/433)

75 Barr, Sabrina. "40% Of Women in Sport Face Gender Discrimination, Report Finds." The Independent. Independent Digital News and Media, June 20, 2018. <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/women-sport-industry-gender-discrimination-sexism-jobs-leadership-report-a8407476.html>.

76 Ibid.

77 Ibid.

78 Ibid.



that they were.<sup>79</sup> However, when asked the same question, only 46 percent of women agreed.<sup>80</sup> Such a study helps to establish the big picture for the status quo, highlighting an ignorance of prejudice and the discrimination against women with careers within the sports industry, for both athletes and management alike. This leads to the low representation and ultimately alienation of women in the “good ole’ boys club,” referred to as the sports industry.<sup>81</sup>

## Case Study: USWNT

With a 2020 record of eight wins, zero losses, 31 total goals the United States women’s national team (USWNT) ranks first in the FIFA Women’s Ranking worldwide.<sup>82</sup> Despite their evident success within the world of soccer, the United States women’s national team claimed that they were not being treated as an equal to the men’s and such inequality was reflected in their earnings. The team filed a class action lawsuit in 2019 against the U.S. Soccer Federation, in an attempt to challenge “institutionalized gender discrimination”. The case argued that the discrepancy in the wages between the men and women’s teams highlighted an inherent misogynistic view of the value of the women’s team, with the women’s team making 38 percent of what the men’s team made. But, to see the large discrepancy in pay between the women’s and men’s teams, a comparative look into the structures of the USWNT and the United States men’s national team (USMNT) must be made.

The first structural difference that impacts the pay of players on the USWNT is the differentiation between full-time and contract players. For the USWNT, 17 players (dropping to 16 in 2021) are signed to full-time contracts with the United States Soccer Federation (USSF), the federation that oversees both the men’s and women’s leagues. The “signed” players are paid irrespective of their actual participation in the games, tournaments, or training camps, and they are even paid if they are injured. These players also receive benefits such as parental leave. The remaining women’s players are called “non-contract players,” and they are paid only when they are called up to the team. The players on the men’s team, on the other hand, do not have such a complex contract system. They simply operate on a “pay-for-play” basis in which the male players are paid only when they are called onto the team. If they are injured with their club teams and miss a national team game, they do not get paid like their “signed” female counterparts will. While the guarantee of pay that comes with being a “signed” player seems to be a positive thing, it masks other structural differences that heavily affect the payment of the players on the women’s team.

In addition to the differences in contracts, the institutional structure of the National Women’s Soccer League and the Major League Soccer, the men’s professional league, is different, which results in a difference in monthly and yearly salary. From U.S. Soccer, the National Women’s Soccer League pays the club salary and the athletes then draw a second salary for their national play, which is a departure from the men’s team. Considering that athletes on the USWNT are employed to play at the competitive club level through the National Women’s Soccer League that has an annual salary cap at \$421,500, the minimum salary for a player in the league is

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79Barr, Sabrina. “40% Of Women in Sport Face Gender Discrimination, Report Finds.” The Independent. Independent Digital News and Media, June 20, 2018. <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/women-sport-industry-gender-discrimination-sexism-jobs-leadership-report-a8407476.html>.

80 Ibid.

81 Whalen, Kelsey, “Discrimination Against Women in the Sport Industry.” Honors Theses. 2017. 433. [https://encompass.eku.edu/honors\\_theses/433](https://encompass.eku.edu/honors_theses/433)

82 “The FIFA Women’s World Ranking - Ranking Table.” www.fifa.com, 2020. <https://www.fifa.com/fifa-world-ranking/ranking-table/women/>.

\$16,538 and the maximum salary at \$46,200, which rose in 2019.<sup>83</sup> Considering the minimum wage, USWNT players are being paid roughly \$1,300 a month, which means that the minimum salary for National Women's Soccer League players is currently failing to meet the living wage. Meanwhile, the minimum yearly salary for the first 24 players on each Major Soccer League roster rose from \$67,500 in 2018 to a comfortable \$70,250 in 2019.<sup>84</sup>

In the terms of their second salary of national pay, which may theoretically compensate for their below minimum-wage salary, USWNT athletes are still underpaid. The 2019 lawsuit argued that if both the men's and women's team won all of the 20 non-tournament games required by their contract, the pay gap between the teams would still be prevalent, with the men's team earning more than double than that of their counterparts per game. The lawsuit stipulates that "Players on the women's team would earn a maximum of \$99,000 or \$4,950 per game, while similarly situated male players would earn an average of \$263,320 or \$13,166 per game."<sup>85</sup>



"Over the past year, soccer fans across the globe have been vocal about equal pay for female players, particularly before the 2019 Women's World Cup." (Robin Alam/Icon Sportswire via. ESPN)<sup>86</sup>

While it is almost impossible to calculate an accurate average income of a USWNT player due to the varying sources of information and the differences in pay coming from other sources of income like sponsorships and brand deals, it is clear that the players on the U.S. men's and women's national teams are treated differently, and the justifications for underpaying the successful female athletes of the USWNT reflects the underlying discrimination occurring solely based on gender. As the current deal for the women's team is set to expire at the end of 2021, the USWNT has the upcoming opportunity to attempt to renegotiate their contract agreement to produce a more comprehensive and just pay scale.<sup>87</sup> However, based on the responses from U.S. Soccer during

83 Siregar, Cady. "USWNT Player Salaries: USA Women's Soccer Pay vs. Men's Team during World Cups." Sporting News Canada. Getty Images, June 28, 2019. <https://www.sportingnews.com/ca/soccer/news/uswnt-player-salaries-usa-women-soccer-pay-vs-men-world-cup/k5quxwslc5yz8gi1c2b69s4>

84 Ibid.

85 Hess, Abigail J. "US Women's Soccer Games Now Generate More Revenue than Men's-but the Players Still Earn Less." CNBC. CNBC, July 10, 2019. <https://www.cnbc.com/2019/06/19/us-womens-soccer-games-now-generate-more-revenue-than-mens.html>.

86 Image can be accessed at [https://www.espn.com/espn/story/\\_/id/23382605/espn-leads-way-hiring-practices-sports-media](https://www.espn.com/espn/story/_/id/23382605/espn-leads-way-hiring-practices-sports-media).

87 Lapchick, Richard. "The 2018 Associated Press Sports Editors Racial and Gender Report Card." ESPN. ESPN Internet Ventures, May 2, 2018. [https://www.espn.com/espn/story/\\_/id/23382605/espn-leads-way-hiring-practices-sports-media](https://www.espn.com/espn/story/_/id/23382605/espn-leads-way-hiring-practices-sports-media).

the 2019 lawsuit, it appears as though significant change focused on diminishing the wage gap for women's team players will not arise without external support for the fair payment of female athletes worldwide. UN Women can seize this opportunity to produce resolutions that recognize the lack of action to fix the wage gap and provide solutions to ameliorate the issue.

## Gender Discrimination in Sports Media

In 2018, contributing writer to ESPN, Richard Lapchick, published a racial and gender "report card" through the Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sports (TIDES), highlighting how the media covers and chooses to cover topics of professional and college sports. The 2018 study evaluated over 75 newspapers and websites and intended to measure the changes in racial and gender hiring practices from the 2014 results of the racial and gender report card to determine whether significant changes were being made by stakeholders in the sports industry to make their field of work more "equal."<sup>88</sup> Unfortunately, the study found little improvement and the leaders of the sports media industry remained largely undiverse in its population, consisting of mostly white and male individuals.<sup>89</sup> For 2018, the grade for racial hiring practices for newspapers registered as members of the Associated Press Sports Editors (APSE), a U.S. organization for sports media, and websites was a B, which indicates 17 to 19.5% of those within the business were people of colour.<sup>90</sup> The APSE newspapers and websites received the fifth consecutive F for its gender hiring practices, which indicates less than 24 percent of those employed identified as female.<sup>91</sup> The combined grade for 2018 was a D-plus, the lowest of all the reports issued by TIDES.<sup>92</sup> This report shows that 85% of the sports editors, 77% of the assistant sports editors, 80% of the columnists, 82% of the reporters and 78% of the copy editors and designers were white. The percentages of males in those positions this year are 90%, 70%, 83%, 89%, and 80% respectively.<sup>93</sup> These statistics highlight an overwhelming lack of both racial and gender diversity within those employed in production and leadership positions within these sports media companies. This lack of diversity poses a large problem for the representation of women's sports as those who are determining what content is considered "newsworthy" are making decisions based on a series of unchecked subconscious biases shaped by a sexist, male-dominated industry that would not consider women's sports to be a topic worth placing on the front page. The subsequent result of this lack of diversity is the underrepresentation of women's sports in sports media and lower levels of viewership.

## Case Study: WNBA

Like their soccer counterparts, the WNBA faces a disparity in pay and benefits and sought new Collective Bargaining Agreement's (CBA) with the league's Board of Governors which resulted in a new eight-year CBA that presents progressive steps in acknowledging, and rectifying, the issues facing women as athletes in sport. The two most contested issues that were part of these negotiations were low salaries and a lack of maternity benefits, and the results of their negotiations set a positive, almost hopeful, precedent for the USWNT

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88 Lapchick, Richard. "The 2018 Associated Press Sports Editors Racial and Gender Report Card." ESPN. ESPN Internet Ventures, May 2, 2018. [https://www.espn.com/espn/story/\\_/id/23382605/espn-leads-way-hiring-practices-sports-media](https://www.espn.com/espn/story/_/id/23382605/espn-leads-way-hiring-practices-sports-media).

89 Ibid.

90 Ibid.

91 Ibid.

92 Ibid.

93 Ibid.

and for all future female athletes.

In the 2019 season, the average pay for a WNBA player was roughly \$116,000 in comparison to the salary of men in the NBA who were paid almost 65 times the amount of their counterparts at \$7.5 million.<sup>94</sup> Such a stark difference in the wage gap between the two leagues brought forth similar reasonings to those provided by the court in the legal battle between the USWNT and the USSF which attempt to justify the difference, citing that women's teams simply bring in less revenue than that of the men's.

The NBA viewership is one of the major sports populations in the world. Almost 27% of Americans tune in to the NBA on a regular basis, with that amount peaking during the playoffs and the NBA Finals.<sup>95</sup> In the 2019 NBA Finals, an average of 15.14 million people watched.<sup>96</sup> That number does not include the Canadian television audience.<sup>97</sup> While the numbers for the WNBA season have not been made available yet, they are trending in a positive, upward direction with viewership for WNBA increasing by 35% on ESPN in 2017 and 2018.<sup>98</sup> With 231,000 viewers in 2018, the WNBA had not seen this level of viewership since 2013.<sup>99</sup>

For the viewers who prefer the real court to their T.V. screen, an average NBA ticket during the 2018-2019 season cost approximately \$89 USD, an increase of 14% from 2015, and likely increasing as the league heads into 2021.<sup>100</sup> However, the disparity between their male counterparts is astounding. In 2018, the average reported ticket price for the WNBA was a marginal \$17.42.<sup>101</sup> 196 countries across 8 continents broadcast the NBA.<sup>102</sup> From Canada to the Philippines, Andorra to South Africa, the NBA's reach is a truly global phenomenon.<sup>103</sup> The WNBA is broadcast in 24 different countries outside of the United States, on top of four different pan-regional channels.<sup>104</sup>

These three factors of viewership, ticket sales, and globalized broadcasting are main factors in determining the overall revenue generated by both leagues, with WNBA that brought in roughly \$26.5 million in comparison to the NBA's \$7 billion.<sup>105</sup> However, disregarding the paying of proportional salaries to revenue, the WNBA was able to negotiate salaries and benefits that paid them fairly—not equally—to create livable salaries to that of their counterparts and receive the earnings they deserve.

The new negotiations did a complete overhaul in the framework of benefits and salaries for players

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94 Delmore, Erin. "'We Didn't Back down': How Women's Basketball Players Scored Major Wins for Equal Pay." NBCNews.com. NBCUniversal News Group, February 11, 2020. <https://www.nbcnews.com/know-your-value/feature/we-didn-t-back-down-how-women-s-basketball-players-ncna1131561>.

95 Jope, Christian. "NBA vs WNBA: Revenue, Salaries, Attendance, Ratings." World Sports Network, October 21, 2020. <https://www.wsn.com/nba/nba-vs-wnba/>.

96 Ibid.

97 Ibid.

98 Jope, Christian. "NBA vs WNBA: Revenue, Salaries, Attendance, Ratings." World Sports Network, October 21, 2020. <https://www.wsn.com/nba/nba-vs-wnba/>.

99 Ibid.

100 Ibid.

101 Ibid.

102 Ibid.

103 Ibid.

104 Ibid.

105 Ibid.

in the WNBA in order to fix inconsistencies or loopholes within the system, firstly with renegotiations of their collective bargaining agreements. With the new proposed WNBA contract, top players would be able to receive a salary of more than \$500,000, which is triple the original maximum from the most recently completed season. This compensation would include a maximum salary of \$215,000, an increase of 83 percent.<sup>106</sup> Along with the raise, the new agreement includes several key benefits that acknowledge some of the difficulties female athletes face as women in the male-dominated industry including the lack of motherhood and family planning, career development opportunities, and resources for mental and physical health.<sup>107</sup>

All of these benefits, coupled with the raise in salary for the WNBA athletes, includes an additional promise to include sharing of the WNBA's revenue with the team. Such an inclusion is new for the team, but has been part of the NBA's agreements for years. The NBA shares revenue nearly down the middle with its players, but the WNBA only shares between 20–30 percent of its league revenue with players.<sup>108</sup>

The case study of the WNBA reflects how media representation for women's teams can be severely impacted by the underlying issue of sexism and the detrimental impact it has on the way players are paid when operating only under a system of meritocratic proportional pay rather than on both proportional and equal pay. However, the new negotiations of the WNBA players' contracts shows that the just and fair payment of players can still be fulfilled and it sets the precedent for the operations of other national and international leagues, holding them to the standard that just and fair pay is not optional, it is an expectation.

## Focus Points for Empowering Women in Sports

The issue of gender discrimination and representation of women in sports media are indicative of underlying sexism that pervades the male-dominated sports industry, and the cases of the USWNT and WNBA are only two of several instances of how this discreet sexism undermines the legitimacy and significance of the accomplishments made by the women in this field. The necessity to overcome the barriers set before female athletes is evident and there are areas that UN Women can focus on improving in order to support female athletes in the process of breaking their glass ceiling.

Firstly, developing policies that fulfil female athletes' rights to fair, livable wages is critical, not only because doing so is required under the United Nations Human Rights Declaration, but because it establishes the statement that there is equal value in women's sport as there is in men's. The underpayment of female athletes undeniably sends a subversive message that the energy invested into the game by these women is worth—monetarily and in actuality—less than that of their male counterparts for the various reasons explored in the case of the USWNT. While there is legitimacy in the argument of paying athletes proportionally to their total contribution to the organization of the sport at large, it does not justify paying female athletes at a disparagingly

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106 Levine, Carole, Juli Adhikari, Thomas Waldrop, Malkie Wall, Steve Dubb, Betsy Beaumon, and Kristen Munnely. "WNBA Takes on Sports Gender Inequities in Union Negotiations." Non Profit News | Nonprofit Quarterly, January 22, 2020. <https://nonprofitquarterly.org/wnba-takes-on-sports-gender-inequities-in-union-negotiations/>.

107 Megdal, Howard. "W.N.B.A. Makes 'Big Bet on Women' With a New Contract." The New York Times. The New York Times, January 14, 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/14/sports/basketball/wnba-contract-collective-bargaining-agreement.html>.

108 Megdal, Howard. "W.N.B.A. Makes 'Big Bet on Women' With a New Contract." The New York Times. The New York Times, January 14, 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/14/sports/basketball/wnba-contract-collective-bargaining-agreement.html>.



low rate in comparison to their male counterparts. Therefore, instating, within UN Women, policies that ensure proportional wages based on both merit and equality is an essential step forward in supporting female athletes.

Additionally, on top of paying female athletes living wages, following in the precedent set by the new contract negotiations of the WNBA, UN Women should seek to champion the integration of child-care benefits and mental health services into the contracts of female athletes and working women, seeing as these factors are often not taken into consideration when evaluating the challenges facing the working woman, especially those in the sports industry. It is undeniable that women, regardless of their profession are still largely designated the roles of child care and are expected to maintain their full-time job as they do so without any support from their employer. For working women, this is an unattainable standard that wears away at their mental and physical health. As a result, many women are forced to choose between these two “full-time” jobs. Unfortunately, giving up on a career is often seen as the only option when given a choice between caring for their family or maintaining a career. Therefore, providing female athletes with benefits that recognize and support the multi-faceted lives of female athletes should be an additional focus point for Member states in addressing the issue of the discrimination of women within the sports industry.

In sum, by giving women in sports proportional pay and benefits that recognize the unique challenges of being a female athlete in a male-dominated industry, UN Women sets the precedent of bridging the gap of inequality between the treatment of male and female athletes at the local, national, and international levels.

## Conclusion

The case of the WNBA is one of optimism that highlights the potential for changes in the systemic structures that underpay female athletes, like the USWNT for example. But, as UN Women aides other international organizations in decreasing the wage gap, considerations on how players should be paid in the future should be discussed. Are the future wages of athletes to be based on merit—like through performance in games, investments into the leagues, franchise deals, and advertisements—and maintain the status quo? Or, is the future of decreasing the wage gap going to be based on equal pay, or at least proportional pay? Irrespective of the path, a change is necessary in the world of sports and in the misogynistic belief of the superiority of men’s games. So, female athletes in the industry need to be given the spotlight and the court to prove them wrong.

## Questions to Consider

1. How can this committee work to reduce institutionalized discrimination reflected in wage gap, benefits and general respect for women’s sports teams?
2. Although individual leagues and teams can fight for increased pay, does this change the view towards the “work” that these teams do?
3. How can this committee work to reduce the disparity seen in wages for professional sports teams on a local, national and international level?
4. What policies can this committee implement to balance pay equity and performance? How can these policies be used to develop a short term strategy that uplifts female athletes?
5. Are there any long term strategies that UN Women can produce to provide women in sports equal pay and representation?
6. How can the case studies of the USWNT and WNBA provide insight into labour and workforce changes that can be implemented at the international level?

## Advice for Research and Preparation

As mentioned previously, the background guide merely serves as a starting point for a delegate's research. It introduces the topics of debate and highlights the issues residing within the status quo that should be addressed within the committee session. By first beginning with reading the background guide, delegates get a sense of what issues they should be looking to address collectively and conduct the appropriate research to understand these issues within the context of the countries they represent and how the precedent set by their countries can be applied to the global solution.

To prepare for this committee, begin by reading through resources that provide a clear understanding of the country's social, economic, and political stances, which serve as the foundation for its foreign policy. The "foreign policy" of a country is the set of political values and beliefs that delegates operate on when collaborating with other countries. Understanding the foreign policy of your country will be useful in addressing the topics of debate in this committee and are the compass for determining your position in committee. Some beginning resources can be found in the "suggested resources" page of this background guide and I would highly recommend using them for this first step in the research process.

After reading the background guide and conducting elementary research, you have hopefully gained a general sense of the global issue and your country's perspectives on it. The next step is determining how the issues translate to your country's national and local levels. Learn about what the issues pertaining to the debate at hand look like within your respective country, as a country's social, political, economic, and even religious positions can affect how the issues reveal themselves within the population. Then, assess the advantages and disadvantages of the current solutions derived by the state to address the issues. Thoroughly researching the current solutions to find out what works and what does not reveals the areas for potential improvement within the country's current policy infrastructure.

Finally, based on the current solutions, create some solutions of your own that could potentially address the gaps within your respective country's policies and be beneficial if applied on a grander scale in UNW through a working paper or resolution in the committee. These ideas do not need to be technically flawless or even close to perfect, but they should be realistic solutions that reflect a genuine understanding of your country's position on the topics in this committee. Understand that these are difficult issues to tackle, as there are many nuances to addressing issues pertaining to marginalized groups in society, so bring forth any potential solutions you may have, as every attempt to uplift these groups is another step forward to UNW's success.

Good luck!

## Topic A Key Resources

Avert. "Sex Workers, HIV and AIDS," July 20, 2015. <https://www.avert.org/professionals/hiv-social-issues/key-affected-populations/sex-workers>.

Sex workers face an increased risk of contracting HIV/AIDS and this resource explains the underlying social and legal reasons as to why this is the case. Knowing how sex workers have become more vulnerable to HIV/AIDS is critical if UN Women seeks to better occupational health and safety for them.

Mathieson, Ane; Branam, Easton; and Noble, Anya "Prostitution Policy: Legalization, Decriminalization and the Nordic Model," Seattle Journal for Social Justice: Vol. 14: Iss. 2, Article 10 (2016). Available at: <http://digitalcommons.law.seattleu.edu/sjsj/vol14/iss2/10>

Provides an extensive explanation for four of the five mentioned legal systems for sex work, specifically legalization, decriminalization, criminalization, and the Nordic Model.

NSWP. "Briefing Note: Social Protection" Accessed November 13, 2020. [https://www.nswp.org/sites/nswp.org/files/briefing\\_note\\_social\\_protection\\_nswp\\_-\\_2019\\_0.pdf](https://www.nswp.org/sites/nswp.org/files/briefing_note_social_protection_nswp_-_2019_0.pdf)

Note that this is a biased source as the NSWP is a "pro-decriminalization" organization. However, this source provides some guiding solutions on how to improve the social protection of sex workers which may be useful in helping build comprehensive solutions.

NSWP. "Policy Brief: Sex Work as Work." 2017. Accessed November 13, 2020. [https://www.nswp.org/sites/nswp.org/files/policy\\_brief\\_sex\\_work\\_as\\_work\\_nswp\\_-\\_2017.pdf](https://www.nswp.org/sites/nswp.org/files/policy_brief_sex_work_as_work_nswp_-_2017.pdf)

Once again, the NSWP is a "pro-decriminalization organization." However, it addresses some of the social challenges that sex workers face that are important to understand should this committee wish to remedy those issues

## Topic B Key Resources

UN Women. "Issue Brief: Making SDGs Count for Women with Disabilities." UN Women. Accessed November 13, 2020. <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2017/making-sdgs-count-for-women-with-disabilities.pdf?la=en&vs=731>

Presents some beginning facts and statistics that could be beneficial to getting a sense of the bigger picture.

Koistinen, Mari et al. "Five facts to know about violence against women and girls with disabilities" World Bank Blogs. December 5, 2019.

Also presents some beginning facts and statistics that could be beneficial to getting a sense of the bigger picture.

"United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) Strategic Plan 2018-2021." Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, 2017. <http://undocs.org/en/UNW/2017/6/Rev.1>.

Read on UN Women's full plan on empowering women with disabilities. This source can be beneficial in providing a foundation that delegates can later reference and build upon to create new resolutions that further the cause.



## Topic C Key Resources

Siregar, Cady. "USWNT Player Salaries: USA Women's Soccer Pay vs. Men's Team during World Cups." Sporting News Canada. Getty Images, June 28, 2019. <https://www.sportingnews.com/ca/soccer/news/uswnt-player-salaries-usa-women-soccer-pay-vs-men-world-cup/k5quxwuslc5yz8gi1c2b69s4>.

Presents the full case of the USWNT and the lawsuit filed against the USSF for gender discrimination.

Megdal, Howard. "W.N.B.A. Makes 'Big Bet on Women' With a New Contract." The New York Times. The New York Times, January 14, 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/14/sports/basketball/wnba-contract-collective-bargaining-agreement.html>.

Reveals the full case of the WNBA's contract negotiations and the changes made to their agreement.

Lapchick, Richard. "The 2018 Associated Press Sports Editors Racial and Gender Report Card." ESPN. ESPN Internet Ventures, May 2, 2018. [https://www.espn.com/espn/story/\\_/id/23382605/espn-leads-way-hiring-practices-sports-media](https://www.espn.com/espn/story/_/id/23382605/espn-leads-way-hiring-practices-sports-media).

The 2018 "Racial and Gender Report Card" that graded U.S. sports media corporations on their overall representation and diversity, which pointed to a lack of gender and racial diversity amongst individuals in leadership at sports media companies

Whalen, Kelsey, "Discrimination Against Women in the Sport Industry." Honors Theses. 2017. 433. [https://encompass.eku.edu/honors\\_theses/433](https://encompass.eku.edu/honors_theses/433)

Incredibly useful for gaining general insight into the issue of the gender wage gap for women in sports.

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