
GENDER WIRE

5th Edition (April-August, 2016)

"A feminist is anyone who recognizes the equality and full humanity of women and men."

—Gloria Steinem

HIGHLIGHTS

- **UNESCO launches the book, *What Works: Gender Equality by Design* (UNESCO HQ – 20 April):** ODG/GE organized an event to launch the book, *What Works: Gender Equality by Design* with the participation of the author, Harvard Professor Iris Bohnet. [The event](#) was attended by representatives of Member States, UNESCO staff and the general public and opened with a keynote address by the Director-General. The book builds on new insights into the human mind and shows how behavioral design can help improve our societies for the benefit of all.
- **Trieste GenderInSite Steering Committee meeting (Trieste, Italy – 20-22 April):** Dir/ODG/GE, Ms. Saniye Gülser Corat, represented UNESCO at the GenderInSITE (GIS) Steering Committee meeting. GIS is an international initiative to raise awareness of the importance of the role of women in science, innovation, technology and engineering and is supported by the Organization for Women in Science for the Developing World (OWSD). You can find Madame Corat's interview [here](#).
- **International Conference, Global Women Leaders Forum (Sofia, Bulgaria – 18-20 May):** Women leaders from around the world gathered together for [the Global Women Leaders Forum](#) to address issues concerning women in politics, business, education, peace and security, and the media. The forum was co-organized by UNESCO and the Council of Women in Business in Bulgaria (CWBB) and concluded with the adoption of the [Sofia Declaration](#) to advance



Prof. Bohnet and the DG speaking at the launch of her book © UNESCO



Dir/ODG/GE (far right) speaking at GenderInSITE Steering Committee meeting © GenderInSITE



The Director-General, Dir/ODG/GE and distinguished guests at GWLF © UNESCO

women's leadership in all spheres and to inspire young generations.

- **The World Women University Presidents' Forum (Tampere, Finland – 23-25 May):** The Women Leadership Academy (China) and the University of Tampere (Finland) co-hosted the Nordic Sub-Forum of the World Women University Presidents' Forum (WWUPF) to discuss women's position in China and the Nordic countries. The theme of the Forum focused on, "Women's Leadership: Potentiality, Ability, Authority". Among the key note speakers was Dir/ODG/GE, Saniye Gülser Corat.



Dir/ODG/GE with all the participants of the Forum © UNESCO

- **TeachHer Initiative launch (UNESCO HQ – 14 June) and inauguration of TeachHer Masterclass (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia – 29 August-2 September):** TeachHer is a new public-private partnership (PPP) spearheaded by the United States, UNESCO, the Institute of International Education (IIE), Microsoft, Fitbit, and other NGO and private sector partners. The initiative is designed to work with governments and educators to ensure teachers have the training they need to prepare girls to pursue careers in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts/Design, and Math (STEAM). During [the launch of the initiative](#), Dr Jill Biden, Second Lady of the United States, and Mercedes Peñas Domingo, The First lady of Costa Rica, gave keynote speeches. The occasion also allowed to showcase innovative and hands-on learning tools designed to engage girls in STEAM fields. From August 29 to September 2 in Addis Ababa the first ever TeachHer Masterclass brought together 58 teachers, school administrators, and education ministry officials from six countries across Africa: Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania, and South Africa. By participating in TeachHer, these countries are committing to implement STEAM programs both in their formal curricula, as well as in after-school programs designed to inspire, equip, and sustain girls' interests in STEAM careers. The second pilot is scheduled to take place in mid-November in Costa Rica.



Dr Jill Biden and DG during the launch © UNESCO

- **Conference "Counting (on) Women in Politics: Experiences from Morocco and Tunisia" (UNESCO HQ – 28 June):** The conference was the culmination of a project, financed by the Japanese Funds-in-Trust (JFIT), that the Division for Gender Equality conducted with local partners and the UNESCO Office in Rabat, to assess political participation of women in both countries. During the conference, local partners, experts, civil society representatives and UNESCO staff members and the Ambassadors of Japan, Morocco and Tunisia gathered

together to discuss the results that emerged from the extensive research. The Director General joined the final discussion and gave the closing remarks. A synthesis report based on the final reports from each country and the Conference will be published in October 2016 to release the findings and recommendations.



DG giving closing remarks at “Counting (on) Women in Politics” Conference © UNESCO

- **Chatham House International Policy Forum “Empowering Women for Economic Growth” (London, UK – 11-12 July):** Dir/ODG/GE represented UNESCO at the Forum where several sessions focusing on legal and structural barriers, the role of technology, investments and women’s participation in politics were organized. Ms. Corat talked about the importance of investing in education in the session entitled “Investing in women and for women”.

- **Commonwealth Women Leaders’ Summit (London, UK – 14 July):** Dir/ODG/GE represented UNESCO at the first Commonwealth Women Leaders’ Summit. The event brought together female leaders from all parts of the Commonwealth to agree on practical steps that address three specific issues: violence against women and girls, women in leadership and women’s economic empowerment. Ms. Corat spoke as a panellist at the session entitled, “Women in Leadership”.



From left to right: Dir/ODG/GE, RT Hon Linda Reid, Speaker of the British Columbia (Canada) Legislative Assembly; Dr. Jiko Luveni, Speaker of the House of Parliament in Fiji; and Nikita Alamango, Member of the Commonwealth Youth Gender Equality Network © UNESCO

- **32nd Triennial Conference of Graduate Women International (GWI) (Cape Town, South Africa – 24-26 August):** Co-organized with the South African Association of Women Graduates (SAAWG), this conference reunited stakeholders in education, gender and human rights to share experiences, target best practices and propose new ways forward to help governments, education institutions, agencies, business and civil society fulfil the Education 2030 goals. Dir/ODG/GE gave the opening keynote address on behalf of the Director-General, highlighting the importance of Gender Equality in education as a human right. Dir/ODG/GE also made a presentation in the session “Educating for Gender Equality” focusing on the links between gender equality and education within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

UNESCO's Gender Equality Champions

Amman Office: Supporting Gender Equality trainings in the Field

In April 2016, the Division for Gender Equality launched a new round of Priority Gender Equality Trainings in the field, starting with the Arab region.

In collaboration with the Amman Office, training was provided to all staff members of Amman and Iraq offices as well as selected program specialists from the offices of Beirut, Doha and Ramallah. In total, 47 staff members participated to the GE training in Amman, including the Directors/Heads of Amman (and Iraq), Doha and Ramallah offices. Upon request, special sessions were also organized for the Gender Focal points of other UN agencies and principals of the UN agencies present in Amman.



Participants at the Amman Training sharing ideas © UNESCO

Led by Dir/ODG/GE, Saniye Gülser Corat, participants were able to get a refresher on key Gender Equality concepts; on the understanding and application of the Gender Equality Marker (GEM); on gender mainstreaming and work plan analysis; on UNESCO's approach to Priority Gender Equality; and on advocacy tools for Gender Equality. The new Priority Gender Equality training mixes theoretical approach with practical and contextual exercises, allowing interactive and dynamic discussions around Gender Equality.

All participants showed commitment and enthusiasm and qualified the training as extremely informative and relevant. One comment stood out among all the feedback: 'We need longer trainings'.

The Division would like to give a special thanks to the Amman office for hosting and their generosity in accommodating staff from Doha, Beirut and Ramallah in this round of GE training in the region. We would especially like to thank our colleague, Costanza Farina, Director of UNESCO/Amman and Acting Director of UNESCO/Iraq, for her advocacy with other FOs in the region.



Dir/ODG/GE and Constanza Farina (center, front) with colleagues from UNESCO, Amman Office © UNESCO

In the news: A new step towards Gender Equality at UNESCO

The 199th session of the Executive Board took place in April and two key decisions were adopted related to Priority Gender Equality. The first ([199 EX/5 Part II \(E\)](#)) is related to the performance indicators and targets for presenting the Performance Indicators (PI) and targets relating to the Global Priorities Africa and Gender Equality.

It stresses, “in particular the need to identify, in all relevant activities, appropriate gender equality-related performance indicators, as well as the need for increased ambition regarding the gender equality perspective in target-setting, given the transversal nature of this global priority, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and in particular with Sustainable Development Goal 5 to “achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”, for which UNESCO plays a leading role.” It underlines, “the importance of ensuring that the gender equality perspective is reflected equally in the programmes and in the organizational culture of UNESCO, for example regarding human resources policy.”

Last, but not least, it “requests the Director-General to establish, as part of the ongoing work towards the modernization of core administrative and budgetary systems, a budget-tracking mechanism for the Global Priority Gender Equality consistent with the requirements of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan (UN SWAP) on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women indicators on financial resource tracking, as well as a budget-tracking mechanism for Global Priority Africa, both to be piloted within the framework of document 39 C/5.”

The Executive Board also adopted a new decision ([199 EX/26](#)) acknowledging UNESCO’s role in encouraging girls and women to be leaders in the science, technology, engineering, art/design, and mathematics fields. The STEAM/TeachHer programme, led by the Delegation of the United States draws on the April decision by the UNESCO Executive Board and will build on UNESCO’s work in promoting science education to eliminate all biases discouraging girls from STEAM careers. The STEAM/TeachHer initiative is a public-private partnership to help bridge the gender gap in education, with a focus on Science & Technology, Engineering & the Arts, as well as Mathematics (STEAM).

It also, “requests the Director-General to provide it at its 202nd session with an update of UNESCO’s efforts to promote gender equality in science, technology, engineering and mathematics education, as well as, where possible, demonstrated best practices in art and design, as part of her regular report on the follow-up to decisions and resolutions adopted by the Executive Board and General Conference at their previous sessions (EX/5 document).”

Let's Mainstream: The Division has a new website!

In the past few months, ODG/GE has done a complete overhaul of [the Gender Equality website](#). In doing this, we have fine-tuned our website to make it user-friendly and easier to navigate. There are “tools” and “resources” buttons to help colleagues mainstream Gender Equality into their work plans and throughout the project cycle, from planning to monitoring and evaluation. [The eLearning programme for Gender Equality](#) is located within the “tools” section of the new website. Please note that the Gender Equality website is the sole link for the eLearning programme for Gender Equality. All other links are obsolete, so if you have saved other links in the past, please update your records by accessing the link via the new website.



The full eLearning programme is divided into 6 modules. In order to access the next module, you must finish the current module to be able to go back to the [table of contents page](#). There is no certificate issued for this particular training and you do not need a login to access the course, you can complete it at your own pace. We invite you to browse our new website to learn more about Gender Equality as a global priority of UNESCO.

Gender Wire's movie selection

2016 Ghostbusters movie: The new Ghostbusters film is a remake following the release of *Ghostbusters II*, which originally debuted in 1989. The Sony production company decided to replace the original male cast with an all-female one. The 2016 version stars Melissa McCarthy, Kristen Wiig, Kate McKinnon and Leslie Jones. They are the lead roles who play scientists and engineers instead of supporting characters like love interests. The decision to feature an all-female cast created some controversy among media outlets; however, there has also been acclaimed praise for innovating the roles women play in mainstream films. This is a win for [the Bechdel test](#), featured in [the last edition](#) of Gender Wire, which measures whether a work of fiction features at least two women who talk to each other about something other than a man. *Ghostbusters II* shows a promising change in the right direction, let's see how 2016 goes for women in the film and entertainment industry.

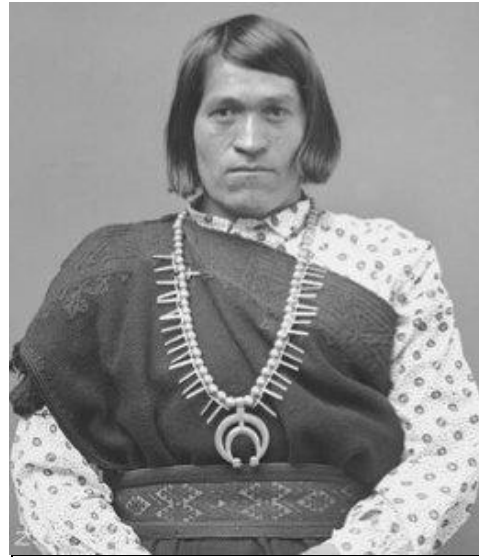


From left to right: Melissa McCarthy, Kristen Wiig, Kate McKinnon and Leslie Jones © Sony Productions

?!?! Did You Know ?!?!

Multiple gender roles documented among Indigenous groups in North America

Gender roles are constructed by history, but many cultures have strong traditions of viewing gender as a multi-dimensional subject. Among Native Americans in the United States, the role of third, fourth, or even fifth genders have been documented. Children, who were born biologically male or female and showed a tendency for the opposite gender, were encouraged to live out their lives in the gender role that fit them best. The term used by Europeans to describe this phenomenon is Berdache. In the traditional sense, these roles were often associated with great respect and spiritual power. Rather than being viewed as an abnormality, the role



We'wha (various spellings), a Zuni berdache of New Mexico, USA © First People



Scene from *Two Spirits*, documentary
© Public Broadcasting Station

was seen as fluid, which bridged the gap between the temporal and spirit worlds.

The spiritual aspect of the berdache role was valued within indigenous society more than the gender role identity among individuals. As Native Americans were forced to convert to Christianity, internal pressure developed to disown the berdache tradition within the Indigenous Nations. Although pockets of traditional berdache practice survived, these were seen primarily among the older generation. As these people began to die off, the tradition, which had been rooted in oral history for the most part, was lost to forthcoming generations. To learn more about berdache,

there is an online documentary, *Two Spirits*, that you can find [here](#).