



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

# GENDER WIRE



## EDITION 10

October - December 2017

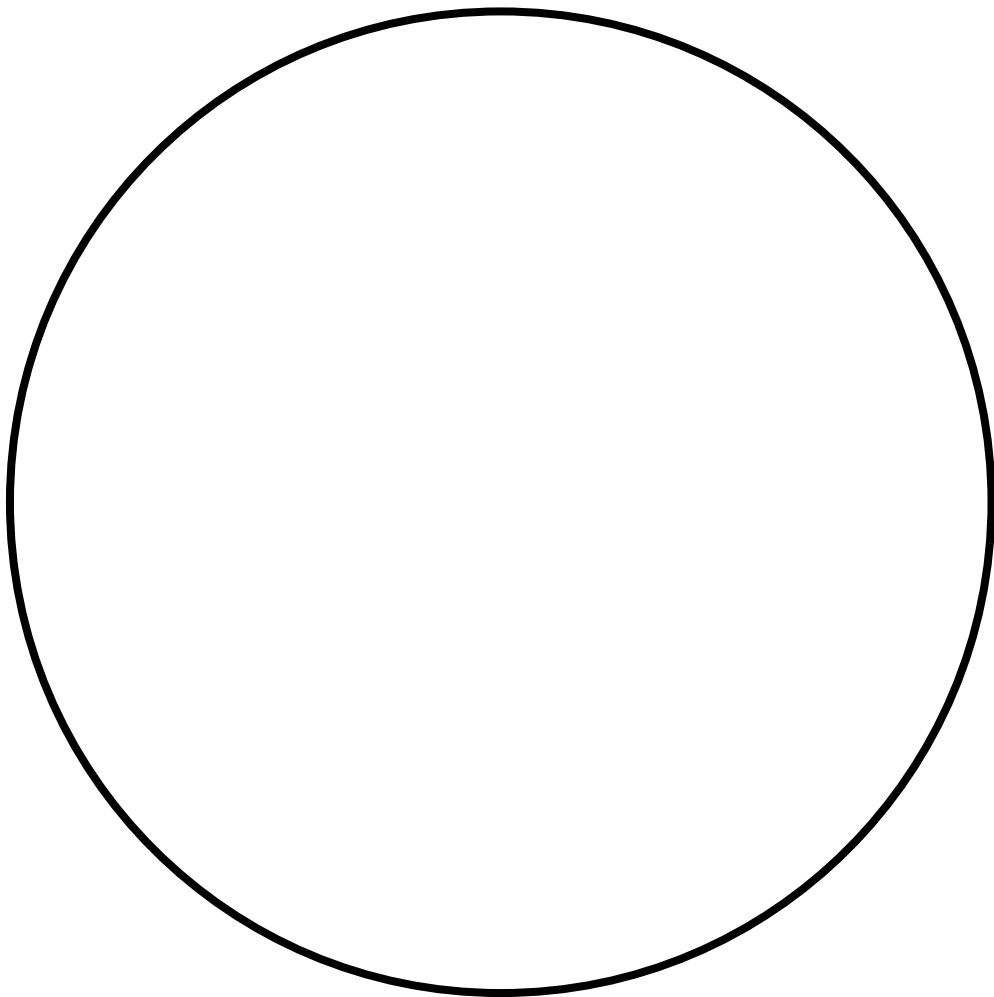
Division for Gender Equality  
October – December 2017  
Paris, France

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Gender Wire is an electronic newsletter informing the UNESCO Secretariat and UNESCO Member States of relevant facts and figures, events and news concerning the work of UNESCO for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.

Published online in February 2018 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,  
7, place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP, France

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# HIGHLIGHTS

## **Audrey Azoulay appointed as the new Director-General of UNESCO (Paris, France – 10 November):**



Audrey Azoulay at the 39th session of the General Conference

The 39<sup>th</sup> session of the General Conference [elected Audrey Azoulay \(France\)](#) to the post of the Director-General of the Organization. Ms. Azoulay is the 11<sup>th</sup> Director-General of UNESCO and the second woman to occupy this position after the previous Director-General Irina Bokova (Bulgaria). In her speech at the General Conference on November 10<sup>th</sup> Ms. Azoulay said:

*I now think of all the people I met in recent months, or had met in my various professional capacities, who have great expectations from UNESCO. I think of UNESCO's mandate, which is strikingly modern. I think of all of you who are aware of the difficulties of the Organization but who know that it is irreplaceable, that it is essential, in facing current global challenges and who aspire to the unity and serenity necessary to let it exercise its mandate to best effect.*

Born in 1972, Ms. Azoulay was France's Minister of Culture and Communication from February 2016 to May 2017. Having worked in the sector of culture since the start of her professional career, she has notably focused on the funding of French public broadcasting and on the reform and

modernization of France's film support system. She has also served the European Commission providing her expertise on issues concerning culture and communication. She is a graduate of the *Ecole Nationale d'Administration* and the *Paris Institut d'études politiques*. Ms Azoulay also holds a Masters degree in Business Administration from the University of Lancaster, UK.

\* \* \*

## **Meeting on Gender Equality with Field Office Representatives (Paris, France – 3 November):**

The Director of the Division for Gender Equality met with 26 field office representatives to reiterate the importance of Priority Gender Equality and provide updates on new policies and initiatives on Gender Equality. The Director explained the new Executive Board Decisions that call on UNESCO to implement gender transformative programmes in all of its sectors and the new budget tracking system for Priority Gender Equality that has been introduced starting the next biennium (2018-2020).



Representatives of Field Offices in UNESCO HQ

**“Cracking the Code: girls’ and women’s education in STEM” at the 39<sup>th</sup> session of the General Conference**  
(Paris, France – 10 November):

During the General Conference, the Education programme sector of UNESCO hosted the side event, [“Cracking the Code: girls’ and women’s education in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics \(STEM\)”](#), to share the latest findings on the factors hindering and facilitating girls’ and women’s participation, achievement and continuation in STEM education.

Director-General Irina Bokova opened the event by thanking Member States in their efforts to promote gender equality in education after which Ms. Heekyung Jo Min, Executive Vice President of the CJ Group, reflected on its partnership with UNESCO. Their commentary was followed by a panel discussion with Ms. Saniye Gülser Corat, Director of the Division for Gender Equality at UNESCO, Ms. Farah Ouechtati, UNESCO-L’Oréal International Fellow from Tunisia, Mr. Chris Hegadorn, Chargé d’Affaires a.i. of the US Mission to UNESCO, Ms. Anathe Brooks, Programme Specialist in the Science Sector, Ms. Keiko Bang, Founder and CEO of Bang Singapore Pte Ltd., and Mr. Renato Operti, Program Specialist at the UNESCO International Bureau of Education. They introduced various projects, tools, initiatives and partnerships on STEM, and explored future pathways for further outreach. In particular, Ms. Saniye Gülser Corat introduced the “EQUALS: Global Partnership for Gender Equality in the Digital Age” and emphasized the contribution of UNESCO in the EQUALS Skills Coalition to tackle the startling reality of the digital gender divide.



Click on the image to access the publication

**EQUALS Skills Coalition Workshop**  
(Paris, France – 21-22 November):



EQUALS Skill Coalition Working group meeting in UNESCO HQ

As the co-lead of the **EQUALS** Skills Coalition, UNESCO hosted a two-day interagency meeting at UNESCO headquarters with 18 colleagues from 8 agencies present both physically and virtually.

The teleconference was presided by the Director of the Division for Gender Equality at UNESCO, and together the group discussed concrete action plans as well as ways to engage with other coalitions in the EQUALS Global Partnership. It also finalized its workplan on “Defining, measuring and promoting gender-transformative skills for women and girls in the digital age” which is to be implemented starting January 2018.

As a follow-up to the previous Working Group on the Digital Gender Divide of the Broadband Commission led by UNESCO and GSMA, [EQUALS was launched in September 2016 by ITU and UN Women](#). It is a coalition of programmes dedicated to women and girls in technology with a vision of harnessing the power of modern information and communication technologies to accelerate global progress to bridge the gender digital divide.

**International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women  
(Paris, France - 25 November):**



Ms Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO

On Friday 24<sup>th</sup> November, the Division for Gender Equality organized an [Orange Zone](#) at UNESCO Headquarters in observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (25<sup>th</sup> of November). The day marked UNESCO’s strong commitment to eradicate violence against women and was a powerful tool for global activism.

Staff members of the Division were present in the Orange Zone throughout the day and distributed publications, infographics and postcards with key messages as well as facts and figures concerning violence against women migrants and refugees. The participation of staff at HQ and in the field offices was impressive, with many colleagues from the field joining their voices to this campaign by sending pictures carrying messages of non-violence and engagement. During the evenings of 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of November, UNESCO’s globe, a landmark in Paris, was illuminated in orange – the official colour of this Day – as a sign of UNESCO’s commitment.



Staff members of the Division for Gender Equality

**Ural Sub-Forum of the World Women University Presidents Forum, “Normal University and Leadership in Education”  
(Yekaterinburg, Russia – 4-6 October):**



Attendees of the Forum in Russia

The Ural Sub-Forum of the World Women University Presidents Forum on the theme “Normal University and Leadership in Education” was held in Yekaterinburg, Russia with over 50 academics present from Russia and China. Ms. Saniye Gülser Corat attended as a keynote speaker at the Opening Ceremony along with Ms. Alevtina A. Simonova, Rector of the Ural State Pedagogical University in Russia and Mr. Geng Liping, the Council General of the People’s Republic of China. She gave a keynote speech entitled “Women and Leadership: Challenges Ahead” which was very well received. During her visit, she visited a UNESCO ASPNet school in the city and held discussions with the officials of the University and the Chinese attendees for future collaboration.

## TeachHER Regional Teacher Workshop (Panama City, 21-26 October):



Middle school students attending the TeachHER Regional Workshop

The six day event was part of the [TeachHER Initiative](#) designed to address the gender gap in science, technology, engineering, arts/design and maths (STEAM) education by working with global, regional and local partners to provide countries with capacities to engage middle school girls in STEAM fields. Despite high global demand in the technology and engineering fields, women are still severely under-represented in the STEAM workforce across all regions of the world.

A growing number of girls and women are interested in STEAM fields yet we see the enrolment numbers decrease as they move up in the education system. UNESCO is a core partner of the initiative along with other organizations including the International Institute for Education (IIE), Microsoft, FitBit, the Higher Life Foundation, and others.



From left to right, First Lady of Panama, Participant, Director for the Division for Gender Equality at UNESCO, Minister of Education of Panama, and the Ambassador of Panama to UNESCO

This [training](#) brought together 70 educators, administrators, and policy-makers, including representatives from the Education Ministries of Panama, Costa Rica, Belize, Honduras, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, and Nicaragua. The event was opened by the First Lady of Panama, Ms. Lorena Castillo García de Varela, and the Minister of Education of Panama, Ms. Marcela Paredes de Vasquez, in front of 250 people, including 100 secondary school students. Speaking at the opening ceremony, the Director of the Division for Gender Equality of UNESCO, Ms. Saniye Gülser Corat thanked Panama for hosting the event and hoped the training would inspire a new generation of girls to pursue STEAM subjects in the region.

\* \* \*

## Boston University Dean's Symposium on "Understanding Commercial Sex Policy: A Global and US Perspective" (Boston, 29 November):

[Click on the image to access the website](#)

The Director of the Division for Gender Equality attended the Boston University Dean's Symposium along with Malika Saada Saar, Senior Counsel on Civil and Human Rights at Google, Audrey Morrissey, Associate Director of Justice Resource Institute and Bobbi Taylor, Chair of the Steering Committee of Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition. She gave the keynote speech for the session on "Gender Equality and Commercial Sex in the Global Context" specifically mentioning that:

*The [gender] issue is all about power, inequality and human rights. By empowering people through education, by challenging social norms and stereotypes that are detrimental to gender equality, we can begin to tackle some of the inequalities that threaten equal access to human rights, including in the commercial sex industry.*

# UNESCO's GENDER EQUALITY CHAMPION

## THE WORK OF UNESCO'S JUBA OFFICE ON SUPPORTING GIRLS' EDUCATION IN THE IMOTONG STATE

According to a recent study of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) there are more than 263 million children, adolescents and youth between the ages of 6 and 17 that are currently out of school. One of the reasons and barriers preventing children and youth from attending school are gender discrimination.

The Out of School Children Project supported by UNICEF through the Global Partner for Education (GPE) funds decentralized by UNESCO aims to prevent and reduce those numbers and barriers.

In recognition of its work on girls' right to education, the Division has chosen UNESCO's Juba Office as this edition's Gender Equality Champion. The UNESCO field office in Juba implemented the [Out of School Children \(OOSC\) project to support the Community Girls in Schools \(CGS\) program in the Imotong State.](#)

CGS is designed to accelerate equitable access to quality basic education for girls aged 8-12 in villages that have no established formal school.

CGS's program allows young girls and boys to complete a four-year program in three years which compensates for their 'lost time' when they did not have access to education. It offers flexible learning opportunities to learners in lower primary education, where girls are expected to constitute 70%, and boys constitute the remaining 30%. The CGS program is mainly characterized by a condensed syllabus, faster learning process and flexibility in the learning schedule and calendar, targeting marginalized female learners.

The Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralists (ABEP), a UNESCO partner, has been assigned to provide support and run the 93 CGSs in the three

counties of Torit, Magwi, and Nimule. ABEP has also managed to care for displaced children who left their homes in the regions of Pageri, Moli, and Kerepi. They are temporarily settled in Nimule.

ABEP has recruited 93 female CGS teachers, who have received capacity development orientation training in the writing of lesson plans and the use of the learners' attendance registrar. These teachers work hard to conduct classes for 2,731 students. As ABEP's goal was to enroll 2,790 students, they have achieved a 97.9% success rate in terms of enrollment. Regarding the breakdown between male and female students, 1,927 of the students are female and 804 male. The target for girls was set at 1,953 students while 837 was the target for boys; ABEP has reached 98.7% and 92.8% of their goals respectively.

The Alternative Basic Education for Pastoralists (ABEP) program is implemented by UNESCO's Juba Office in support for the Africa Education Trust (AET), the Help Education South Sudan (HESS) and the Windle Trust International (WTI), the OOSC project has provided learning opportunities to 6,084 pupils, 3,901 girls (64%) and 2,183 (36%) boys enrolled in 213 CGSs around the country.



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# LET'S MAINSTREAM

## NEW PROJECT TO IMPROVE EDUCATION OF INDIGENOUS GIRLS AND WOMEN IN GUATEMALA



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centers will be located in two municipalities (Santa Maria Chiquimula and San Andrés Xecul) where the indigenous population is over 98% and the illiteracy of young people is over 59%.

This [new project](#) builds on the “[Saqilaj B'e: A clear Path to Assert the Rights of Indigenous Adolescent Girls in Guatemala](#)” project, which was carried out by the education team of the UNESCO Guatemala Office between 2013 and 2017. Saqilaj B'e means “white path” in Mayan K'iche language and symbolizes a path without obstacles, which will be possible by the empowerment of their participants. This project was able to assist more than a thousand girls and indigenous women from Huehuetenango and Totonicapán in Guatemala to receive education.

Guatemala is a country where over 63% of the population is indigenous with over eight major ethnic groups and almost 7 million people under the age of 18, which makes it an extremely young and diverse country. Unfortunately, the Guatemalan government, like many other countries around the world entrenched in traditional or patriarchal traditions, does not have a gender equality policy supporting girls and young women in situations of subordination and undervaluation. Over 43% of women do not know how to read and write and 11% of those are aged between 11-19 years old according to the National Survey of Quality of Life. Indigenous women typically complete less than 2 years of schooling.

As of 2018, the [UNESCO Malala Fund for Girls' Right to Education](#) will support the creation of an educational model for the girls, adolescents and young women of Totonicapán in Guatemala, through the establishment of two UNESCO Malala Centers in Totonicapán. It aims to facilitate the right to education for adolescent girls and indigenous young women, especially those marginalized from education because of gender, ethnicity, rurality and poverty. These two



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## 2017 UNESCO PRIZE FOR GIRLS' AND WOMEN'S EDUCATION

In September 2017, the laureates of the second edition of the UNESCO Prize for Girls' and Women's Education were announced for their outstanding contribution to the field of girls' and women's education. First of its nature, the [UNESCO Prize for Girls' and Women's Education](#) honours outstanding innovation and contributions made by individuals, institutions and organizations to advance girls' and women's education.



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- **The Development and Education Programme for Daughters and Communities Center** in the Greater Mekong Sub-Region (DEPDC/GMS) is a community-based NGO in Northern Thailand, founded by Mr. Sompop Jantraka in 1989, committed to preventing child trafficking and exploitation through protection, education and life-skills training. DEPDC/GMS has been working for over 20 years to protect child rights and empower girls. It was awarded the UNESCO Prize for its “**Education and Life Skills Training Programme to Help Stateless Children and Women Migrating from Shan State to Thailand**”. This innovative programme uses education and life skills training to protect migrant girls and women from the risks of human trafficking and sexual or labour exploitation. It also works on the rehabilitation of girls and women who have fallen prey to these abuses. It is recognized as a model that can be replicated in the country and elsewhere in the world.

- **Mini Academy of Science and Technology** (MaCTec) is a non-profit in Peru which aims to create the first generation of Peruvian women scientists that can change the world and close the gender gap in STEM fields. The MaCTec model enables girls to attend workshops with established scientists where they can learn, create, and experiment and then return home to their peers and communities to share their experience and apply their learning. MaCTec Peru was awarded the UNESCO Prize for its “**Mobile MaCTec Bus Labs/Mini Academy of Science and Technology**” project. In its 5 years of operations, MaCTec has trained 200 girls from diverse social and economic sectors of Lima, Huancayo and Huaraz who have gone on to hold their own workshops in schools and reach out to their peers. It estimates that at least 20,000 children have been reached in 5 years, without counting the impact of MaCTec girls to their families and communities at large. MaCTec has been developed in partnership with state authorities, private donors and the academic community.

- **WomEng-GirlEng Programme** is a multi-award winning social enterprise working since 2006 to develop girls in STEM and women engineering leaders. The organization achieves its mandate by creating awareness of STEM careers for girls; providing women and girls with knowledge and skills to access and thrive in engineering including leadership, entrepreneurship and cognitive skills; trained mentors and innovative problem solving skills. **GirlEng Programme** is innovative as it uses a holistic approach to girl's education both in STEM skills, cognitive and behavioral skills. Its unique pedagogy of learning through play, through storytelling and through teaching helps students grasp concepts better. The GirlEng programme does not only help girls gain knowledge, but also help them with access to scholarship opportunities, mentors and jobs. It has been tested in South Africa and Kenya, and will soon reach out to 10 countries.

# IN THE NEWS

## 202<sup>ND</sup> SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD & 39<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE



Room 1, UNESCO, during the 39th Session of the General Conference

This year, the two most important governing body meetings of UNESCO were held barely a month away from one another – the Executive Board in October and the General Conference in November. The topics of gender equality and women’s empowerment were frequently discussed during many debates and Member States confirmed their on-going support for Priority Gender Equality.

**20** Member States out of **58** Board members (**34.5%**) made reference to gender equality and women’s empowerment. All those that mentioned Gender Equality, expressed their support for this Priority and emphasized the leading role of UNESCO in promoting SDG 5 in its fields of competence. They also thanked the then-Director-General, Irina Bokova, as the first woman Director-General in the history of UNESCO, for her personal engagement in and support for this Priority.

A particularly important Decision was adopted entitled “Implementation by UNESCO of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan (UN SWAP) on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women” which reads as follows: “Looks forward to the full

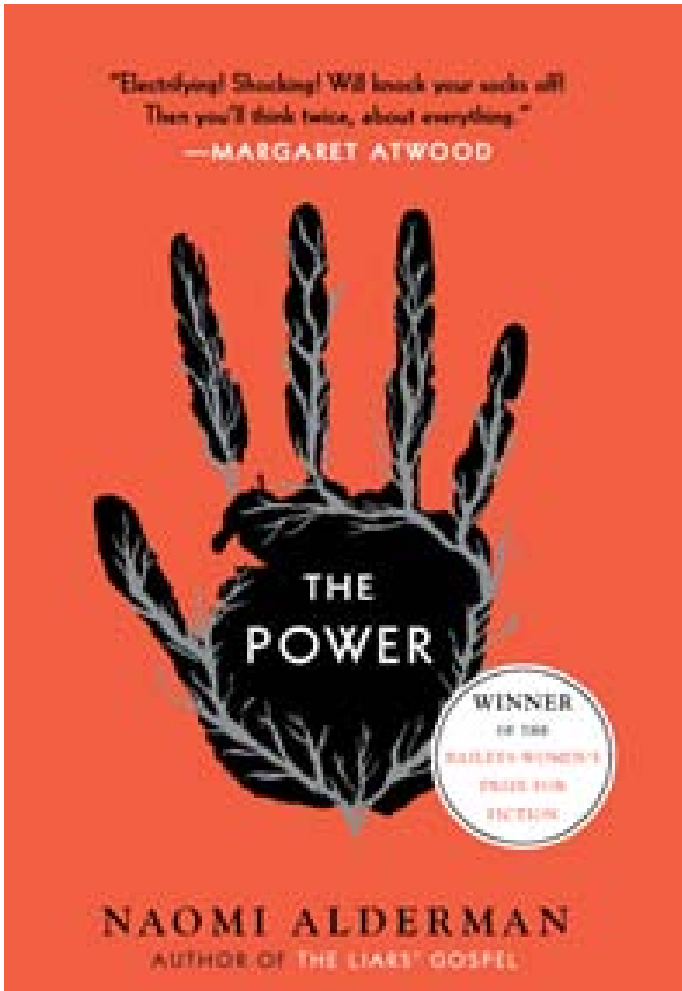
*implementation of the budget-tracking mechanism for the global priority gender equality consistent with the requirements of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan (UN SWAP) on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women” (202 EX/SR.11).*

In line with this, starting this biennium, UNESCO has introduced a budget tracking mechanism that gives a budget range for each GEM level: 0 to 10% for GEM 0, 10 to 30 % for GEM 1, 30 to 50% for GEM 2 and 50 to 100% for GEM 3. Still in its preliminary stage, this system will be the initial measure towards a more effective budget tracking mechanism for gender equality.

During the General Conference, **53** Members States out of **174** (**30%**) made reference to gender equality and women’s empowerment. All those that referred to Priority Gender Equality, expressed their support for this Priority, and commended UNESCO for its work - for consistent gender mainstreaming in all policies, programmes and initiatives, as well as for achieving gender parity in the Secretariat. They also welcomed the establishment of a budget tracking mechanism for Priority GE.

# GENDER WIRE'S SELECTION

## NAOMI ALDERMAN, *THE POWER*



What would the world look like if women were to be feared, and men to be afraid? Sunday Times Young Writer of the Year and Best of British Writer Naomi Alderman explores this question in her award-winning novel *The Power* (2016). This speculative-fiction book turns the power imbalance between men and women on its head as young women discover they have the ability to release electrical jolts from their fingertips – and therefore cause immense pain. Told as a story within a story, Alderman’s narrative follows the lives of four women from different parts of the world as they experience, for the first time, what it means to have the ability to inflict harm on another person. At first, their condition is considered to be an abnormal disease, or even witchcraft, requiring an antidote to restore the “normal” social order. Yet as more and more women uncover the full extent of their power, the society as a whole begins to accept that the changing power dynamic is unstoppable. Alderman’s work serves as a useful tool to explore complex sociological and philosophical topics spanning religion, politics, media, and science. Working off the assumption that unrestrained power ultimately leads to corruption and abuse, readers are left questioning whether a truly equitable society is attainable. *The Power* captivates its readers, gaining international recognition, and most recently has won the Bailey’s Prize for Women’s Fiction.

*“Power has her ways. She acts on people, and people act on her.”*

Naomi Alderman, *The Power*

# DID YOU KNOW?

## 2017 WAS A YEAR OF WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND GENDER EQUALITY!

Below you'll find some of the noteworthy moments from around the world for 2017:

- **#MeToo**

The activist, [Tarana Burke](#), started the “#MeToo” campaign ten years ago to launch the conversation about sexual assault. In 2017, the hashtag went viral after several Hollywood actresses spoke up about sexual misconduct by the American film producer, Harvey Weinstein, which unleashed into 1.7 million tweets across 85 countries in the first few weeks alone. More importantly, the movement exposed the frequency of sexual assault and harassment that women endure and gave people a sense of magnitude of the problem. TIME Magazine named the “[Silence Breakers](#)” its Person of the Year and Merriam-Webster announced “feminism” as its most searched word of the year.

- **“Women’s March on Washington”**

The [Women’s March on Washington](#) was held in the nation’s capital immediately following the inauguration of Donald Trump in January. An estimated 3.5 to 5.5 million people in at least 58 countries took to the streets for gender equality. It was named the largest single protest in American history as women, and those who supported them, joined together for a shared cause.

- **[Protest against gender-based violence at Peru’s Miss Universe Pageant](#)**

The contestants of Miss Peru of 2017 did something different this year when going through the traditional moment of introducing themselves; rather than given their body measurement, they highlighted the problematic situation of women and girls in their country and each one gave the statistics regarding violence against women.

- **[Women in Saudi Arabia can now get behind the wheel – at last](#)**

Formerly the only country in the world to bar women from driving, Saudi Arabia issued a decree in September allowing women to acquire driver’s licenses, a move set to go into effect in June 2018. Welcoming the decision, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres calls it an “important step in the right direction.”

- **‘Marry-your-rapist law’ abolished**

Several countries in the Middle East including [Tunisia](#), [Jordan](#) and [Lebanon](#) have scrapped controversial laws that allow rapists to escape punishment if they marry their victims. Tunisia’s move to eliminate impunity for perpetrators is part of its first national law passed in July to comprehensively tackle violence against women. The Tunisian law recognizes physical, economic, sexual, political and psychological forms of violence.

- **More female CEOs on the Fortune 500 list since its creation in 1955!**

In June 2017, the Fortune Magazine released its [2017 Fortune 500 list](#), which ranks major U.S. companies by their fiscal 2016 revenues, and 32 of the companies, or 6.4 percent, were run by female CEOs. The magazine said that number was the highest proportion yet seen in the 63-year history of the list. After dropping to 21 last year, the number of women CEOs on the Fortune 500 increased by more than 50%—from 21 to 32. That’s a new record: more female chiefs than any previous list since the first Fortune 500 ran in 1955, but still a far cry from parity.

- **Australia legalizes same-sex marriage**

After a non-binding national referendum showed public support for same-sex marriage, [Australia’s Parliament overwhelmingly voted to legalize it in December](#). The landmark law that has gone through 22 failed attempts since 2004 is hailed as a long overdue victory. [Germany](#), [Malta](#) and [Austria](#) also legalized same-sex marriage this year increasing the number of countries that do so to 26. In more wins for the LGBTQI community, citizens in Germany and Canada can now register as third gender in official documentation.

- **[Ana Carrasco became the first woman to win a world championship in motorcycle race](#)**

In September 2017, the Spanish Ana Carrasco became the first woman to win a solo motorcycle race, the Superbike World Championship, which took place in Portimao, Portugal, this year. Even though this sport was founded in 1988, it continues to be male-dominated.