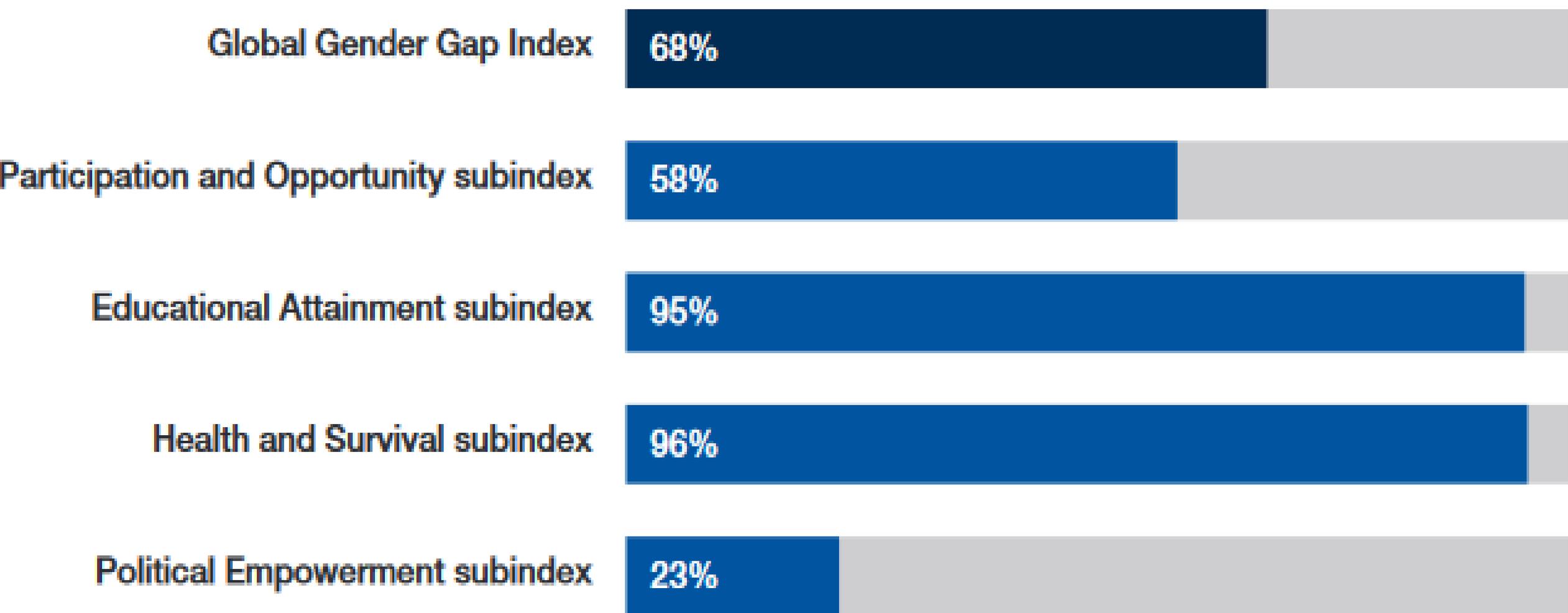




# Structural social and economic discrimination of women, its prevalence in the SDG and the relevant European feminist debate

Prof. Dr. h.c. Christa Randzio-Plath, Uganda,  
February 15<sup>th</sup> 2018

# Global performance, 2017



Global Gender Gap Index 2017.

Based on data from all 144 countries featured in the 2017 index.



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Political Feminism is needed



# Political Feminism is needed- why?

- **Political Feminism has to fight sexist society, sexist poverty, sexist education, sexist violence, sexist labour markets, sexist health, sexist political and economic participation and power processes.**
- **Women in Western countries because of Trump, right-wing populist movements, political and religious fundamentalism realise no further progress, but stand still and even regress in the daily reality of power, violence and work. Nevertheless, women do not any longer look upon themselves as victims. They react and act in public.**
- **MeToo, TimesUp, the Women's March, HeforShe, Planete 50:50 - these movements tell us like the many women` organisations and women`s networks that we need to have a critical discussion on women's rights, equality and power dynamics of gender. Sexual harassment, for example, in business and in government, is a systemic problem and it is unacceptable. Leaders must act!**



# Society is sexist

- **Gender issues are the epicentre of social developments. Ideal images of masculinity that gain the upper hand in a society, as the masculinity determine about the distribution of power, about being inside or outside, about the sayable and the feasible. The notions of masculinity come into crisis, are attacked and replaced by new ideals.**
- **The "Me Too" debate attacks old notions of masculinity and domination. The last possibility of physical abuse seems to have ended: For thousands of years in the Western culture, the masculine was the human, the right and the good. The famous sociologist Pierre Bourdieu explains 1998 in his text on "Male domination": „With sufficient certainty, male domination does not require any justification".**
- **Repeatedly, a change in the way the body is handled has contributed to the reorganisation of the sexes. In the world wars, for example, the excesses of violence and totalitarian ideologies meant that women were almost eliminated from politics. And the great surge of emancipation in the 1970s was accompanied by the birth control pill. This means autonomy.**



# Society is sexist

- **The sudden freedom of the female body from having children cannot be overestimated in its importance in Western countries like Europe and the US. In other respects, too, feminists saw emancipation primarily as liberation of the body. They ran into the streets, talked loudly and publicly, pulled themselves together, and breastfed their children in front of everyone. Women left their homes, and finally they could work in Europe without the husband's consent.**
- **But sexual coercion persisted, it continued to bear witness to power and its abuse. It took a long time for violence to be regarded as a crime in families too - and even longer until the most powerful were no longer excluded from the taboo of violence.**
- **For this, „Me Too“, was necessary. Does this spectacle not allow the dawning of a time in which the struggle for masterly masculinity slows down, because power and legitimacy no longer require aggressive manhood? Trump will always stay connected with the new political feminism from “Pussy” to “Me Too”: the attack on the last excesses of male tyranny.**

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The burden of poverty is heavy enough on entire families. Yet women, wrongly called the weaker sex, end up carrying a bigger burden of poverty than the men

OP-ED

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# Poverty is sexist

- **It's hard to put an exact figure on the gender breakdown of poverty. Although people and organizations have tried, the fact is that most of the data doesn't go into much detail. But nevertheless, poverty has a gender bias**
- **And that matters far beyond questions of fairness. Women invest much more of the money they earn into their families than men do, meaning that female economic empowerment can have a positive effect far beyond the individual. If women in rural areas would be endowed with the same resources like men you could count every year 150 Mio people more without hunger.**
- **If we want to eradicate poverty in all its forms – as the UN Agenda 2030 and the sustainable development goals claim - we need to recognize that poverty has not only a female face, but is sexist.**



## Poverty is sexist- especially in rural areas

- **Gendered threats to rural women’s rights are closely intertwined with the pervasive patriarchal norms and practices that discriminate against women and girls, as well as the current economic and development model, which is generally known to be rent-seeking, exploitative of people and natural resources, and highly growth-oriented. The current neoliberal trajectory of the global economy encourages an agribusiness-dominated food system, which views rural populations and their natural resources as production banks, results in rural-to-urban migration, and weakens the ability of States to hold third parties accountable for human rights violations within the economic sector.**
- **While women are involved in all aspects of production, processing and distribution of food, their voices have remained marginal in macroeconomic policy decisions in this area. Cuts in public spending has further aggravated rural women’s access to food and increased gender inequalities as key services and social protections became and remain unavailable.**
- **While the formal adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development marks the beginning of a new phase of monitoring development as all countries work to translate the SDGs – including Goal 2 on Zero Hunger and Goal 5 on Gender Equality – into their respective national contexts. Needed are monitoring systems to overcome the violation of human rights and the structural causes of hunger and malnutrition. The effective participation of women directly affected is crucial.**



# Education is sexist

- **130 Mio Girls do not attend schools and hundreds of millions of girls do not attend regularly school because of money, because of family duties, because of missing sanitary pads and toilettes.**
- **1/3 of Secondary School leavers only are girls**
- **2018 2/3 of illiterate people are still women**
- **Education of girls contribute to income and health in the family and society, facilitates family planning, family health and family-well-being.**



# Health is sexist

- **More women than men die because of violence.**
- **Women still have limited access to maternity health clinics and medical care**
- **Child marriage and teenager mothers are still a challenge in Africa as well as genital mutilation.**
- **In East Africa not even 50% of the women can decide themselves on family planning.**

# + Land and Water Distributions are sexist

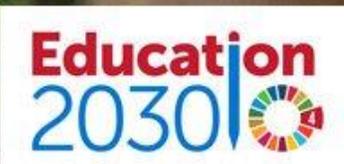
- **Only 10% of Land titles are in the hand of women, working in the rural areas**
- **Only limited access to clean drinking water or to irrigation for women in rural areas where the majority of poor women live**
- **Only limited access to resources in rural areas in comparison to men. FAO: if women would have equal access to the same resources like men the agricultural production would increase substantially and feed 150 Mio hungry people more every year.**

# UNESCO Prize for Girls' and Women's Education

Deadline  
**May 5**



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



©UN Photo/Marco Dormino



# EDUCATING GIRLS MAKES THEM HEALTHY



A CHILD WHOSE  
MOTHER CAN READ  
**IS 50%  
MORE  
LIKELY**  
TO LIVE PAST AGE 5<sup>1</sup>

OVER THE PAST 40 YEARS,  
WOMEN'S EDUCATION  
HAS PREVENTED MORE THAN  
**4 MILLION**  
CHILD DEATHS<sup>2</sup>

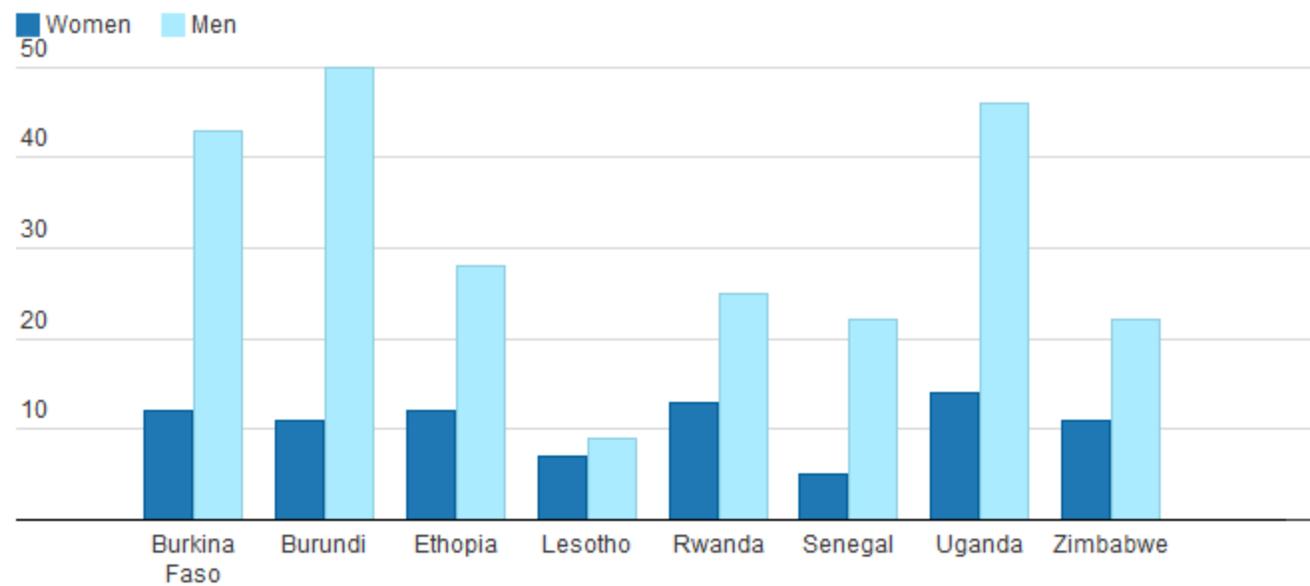


## #WORLDHEALTHDAY

<sup>1</sup> UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION (UNESCO) EDUCATION FOR ALL (EFA) REPORT, EDUCATION COUNTS BROCHURE, 2011  
<sup>2</sup> UNITED NATIONS GIRLS' EDUCATION INITIATIVE (UNGEI), ENGENDERING EMPOWERMENT REPORT, 2012

## Land ownership in Africa

Percentage of women and men (reproductive age) who own land (sole ownership only)



Source: [Oxfam Get the data](#)



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Feminism today



# Feminism Today

- **We are talking about a new feminism today, but most of the ideas of new feminism are old. As long as women lead very different lives, be they white, black or lesbian, feminism must be devoted to these different situations. Thanks to the Internet and the commitment of young people, these questions are now being brought back to light - because they are still relevant.**
- **Feminism is still a dirty word. Many women reject feminism, but are in favour of equal pay, demand the right to abortion or want to combine child and career. Yet feminism is not an identity. It's a tool, maybe even a weapon.**
- **If Women do not want to join the UN Campaign HeForShe or #Me too nevertheless we are in solidarity with all women having experienced sexual violence or having been happy not to be a victim.**
- **Feminists of today do not hate men. But they finally want to overcome the dominance of men, the patriarchal thinking and behavior, the gender stereotyping and their feelings being marginalized, inferior downgraded and exploited as women, mothers, partners.**
- **The term feminism makes it clear that women's rights are incredibly important. We are all oppressed by gender roles, including men - but women in particular.**

# + Feminism and violence

- **Violence against women is a fact. There are developments feminists deeply deplore. But changes are rarely visible despite the fact that feminists and women groups unite for “1 Billion rising“ every year.**
- **In Europe the Istanbul Convention protects women against all forms of violence and domestic violence and prevents, prosecutes and eliminates violence against women and girls.**
- **The convention recognises like the CEDAW convention and the CEDAW General Recommendations the structural nature of violence against women as gender-based violence and that violence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men. Violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of the full advancement of women. One of the early and famous European feminists, Simone de Beauvoir rightly put it: You are not born as woman, you are made a woman.**
- **The international conventions do not make anti-feminism illegal but make many aspects of feminism obligatory in law. As the conventions address a root cause against equality they contribute to women`s political and economic empowerment.**

# + Feminism and violence

- **The economic costs of Violence against women are known. They harm the women, the society and the economy.**
- **Spectacular were the successes of the feminist movements working together with female trade unionist and female politicians: All together achieved changes in the penal code of Germany. Men can be punished because of rape if a woman just says no to sexual intercourse. The Swedish government even reflects on asking from men explicitly to prove that the woman has said yes...**
- **The campaign „No means no“ thanks to law was a progress in achieving violence against women to be defeatd and thus substantial equality for women and will help to meet the SDG goal 5 with all the subtitles linked to the goal 5. Fighting violence against women is crucial to women`s empowerment.**



# + Feminism and the Economy

# + Economic life is sexist

- **The economy, the budget, the labour market are sexist: watch the gender gap**
- **in economic empowerment**
- **in economic decision- making**
- **in the quality of jobs**
- **in pay, promotion and pensions.**

# + Feminisms and the economy

- **Esther Boserup has been the first woman ever to address a feminist view on the world economy. But until today feminist economist thinking remains an outlet, not a substantial part of alternative economic models. The American economist and feminist Nancy Fraser actually confronts the neoliberal economic model to feminist alternatives but is not successful.**
- **Care economy is the main challenge to feminist economists.**
- **Gender Pay Gap for me is the more threatening aspect of women economic activities as well as precarious work in the formal or in the informal sector. 70% of the working poor worldwide are women.**



# Slowing down not speeding up

- **The UN Secretary General’s High-Level Panel on Women concluded, ‘Changing norms should be at the top of the 2030 Agenda.’ We all have a role to play in challenging adverse social norms and reshaping stereotypes.**
- **The ideal is a world in which every woman and girl can create the kind of life she wishes to lead, unconstrained by harmful norms and stereotypes. And a world too, in which men are also free from the confines of adverse social norms and stereotypes of manhood and masculinity, and in which economies are growing and creating opportunities for men and women alike. ‘Unstereotyping’ our value chain, with the aim of improving the lives of millions of women and girls is the challenge.**
- **Gender justice in the economic area has been an important issue in the G20 discussion last year and in the final declaration of the G20 leaders. But failing to overcome inequality and women’s discrimination for the G20 Civil society was clearly linked to the predominant economic model worldwide. The call for a transformation of the economic world order has not got a satisfactory response by the leaders.**

# + Gender Equality – an economic issue

- **The inclusive and sustainable economic growth in an interconnected world will not be achieved without the commitment to women's economic empowerment by means of the following targets:**
  - **full property rights, legal capacity, right to self-determination for women and girls and their effective protection from violence;**
  - **full access to quality education for girls and women, with special attention on technical and vocational education, e-skills and lifelong learning opportunities;**
  - **full access on equal terms to productive and financial resources for women;**
  - **full access to labour markets and decent working conditions for men and women;**
  - **equal pay and pension rights for equal and equivalent work;**
  - **GDP measurement and fair redistribution of unpaid domestic and care work, including more investment in the provision of infrastructure and public services, and;**
  - **equitable representation of women in decision-making positions with that of men.**



SPOTLIGHT ON

# WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

Women remain underrepresented in leadership and management level positions in the public and private sectors. While quotas have been implemented to boost women's participation in politics and corporate boards, parity is far from reality.

## Politics

Proportion of women in national parliaments (single or lower house) globally

2000

13.2%

2017

23.4%

39%

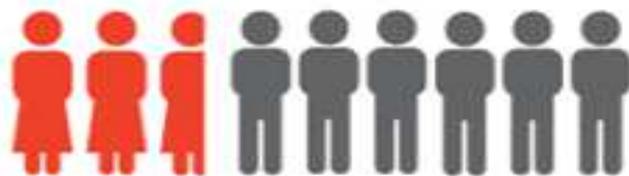
of countries worldwide have used some form of quota system to increase women's representation in politics.

## Management

LESS THAN

1/3

of senior- and middle-management positions are held by women.\*



47%

of world business leaders say they are in favor of gender quotas on corporate boards.



## Granting full property rights, legal capacity and right to self-determination for women and girls

- **Women around the globe are crucial for achieving the Un Agenda 2030 and economic, social and ecological sustainability. Equality of opportunities allows women to make the choices that are best for them, their families and their communities. However, opportunities for women are not equal where legal gender differences are prevalent. Such restrictions constrain women's ability to make economic decisions in a variety of ways, and can have far-reaching consequences. Moreover, they are associated with real economic outcomes, and these disparities in outcomes can persist throughout a woman's life. It is necessary for example:**
- **to consider the potential impact of all laws and standard settings on women, and bear in mind cultural traditions, structural inequalities and unconscious biases still contribute to pervasive barriers for gender equality in all domains must therefore actively be combatted.**
- **Enforce laws, policies, regulations and standards that grant women ownership and control over assets without the consent of others, and abolish barriers and biases inhibiting property rights and equal rights of participation.**

## + Ensuring full access to labour market and advancing decent working conditions

- **Work by women has to be paid, equal and valued. Working women are too often rewarded with poverty-level wages and precarious jobs, and they are subject to violence in the workplace. Women make up a much larger proportion of those working part-time than men, often not out of choice.**
- **Informal work is often the only option available to poor women. Even minimum wages, if existing, do not guarantee an income above poverty line. As in informal work, women are overrepresented among minimum wage workers. Therefore the feminisation of poverty persists. It is necessary to insure human working conditions and decent work also in view to social protection and pensions.**



SPOTLIGHT ON

# UNPAID CARE & DOMESTIC WORK

Women and girls perform the bulk of unpaid care and domestic work. Combined with paid work, this leaves women and girls working longer hours with less time for rest, self-care, learning, and other activities, such as political participation.

**3x** On average, women do three times as much unpaid care and domestic work as men.

What share of unpaid work do you do?



Unpaid care work benefits all of us, but women and girls carry the disproportionate share, curbing their economic potential.



# Measuring and fairly redistributing unpaid domestic and care work

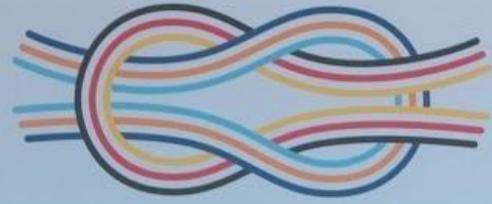
- **Women's disproportionate burden of unpaid care and domestic work, including caring for children, older persons, persons with disabilities and diseases has to be recognized. Unpaid domestic and care work cannot be ignored: it is socially and economically essential. Still it is undervalued and excluded from national accounting, resulting in a bias against its economic value. If one does not understand the ramifications of a policy on both the paid and unpaid sector, gender equality will endure.**
- **Furthermore, it is necessary to promote the shared responsibility of women and men for unpaid care and domestic work. The redistribution of this work from women to men will only be part of the answer, particularly for poorer households that are unable to afford paid services or to work part time. To remove the barrier to women's economic empowerment and meet SDG target 5.4 the disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work has to be overcome by social protection policies and infrastructure development. Significant investment in the care economy will reduce the barrier posed by women's unpaid care and domestic work.**



# Bridging the digital gender divide

- **A women anywhere in the world today is less likely to be online, is more likely to have low or no digital skills and is at greater risk of being socially and economically excluded by the digital disruption currently taking place.**
- **Due to cultural, social and economic barriers, women living in the world's least developed countries are 31 % less likely than their male counterparts to have internet access. In addition to the yawning social divide this reality reflects, it also represents a loss for the economy, as studies by the UN and the EU have revealed, as well as a loss for the women themselves, who are unable to fully realise their potential as economic, social and political actors in digital society.**
- **Without coherent, far-reaching and coordinated action to reverse these trends, the increasing rate of digital disruption risks a further exclusion of women from digital transformation, and disenfranchises them from the social and economic benefits and political discourse – already taking place without them – to which they are rightful parties. The additional risk exists that the need of these women go unheeded and the benefit of engaging them in the digitalisation of society go unrealised.**

+ Economic transformation  
needed



G20 GERMANY 2017  
HAMBURG



# + Economic Transformation – a necessity for sustainable development and equality

**We need a radical transformation of the present neoliberal economic system by:**

- **No longer treating the environment, oceans and the atmosphere as though they were limitless sinks for pollution and greenhouse gases,**
- **Regulating financial markets so that they are no longer a casino of speculation but serve the needs of the real economy,**
- **Strengthen public investment and social welfare by no longer tolerating a system of tax evasion and avoidance by multinational corporations and super-rich individuals, while encouraging progressive tax policies.**

# + Economic Transformation – a Necessity for sustainable development and equality

**After 35 years of neoliberalism as the general paradigm of a wild globalization, it is time for change. Governments signed the 2015 UN Agenda 2030 for sustainable economic, social and ecological development with the ambition leaving no-one behind. Its 17 Sustainable Development Goals can be achieved by the year 2030 – if the world works for them and if the necessary policy changes are adopted.**

- **Implementing rapidly the Paris Agreement by ambitious long term climate strategies, phasing out fossil fuel subsidies, setting effective and fair carbon price signals, shifting the finance flows to promote transformation and resilience as well as sticking to the promises to ramp up climate financing,**
- **Reforming trade agreements so that they facilitate fair trade in goods and services, benefiting the many rather than the few, and cancel provisions deregulating economies, securing intellectual property rights, liberalizing procurement, and shifting rights and wealth from states to investors,**
- **Ending the imposition of austerity policies and encouraging public budgets that promote development, poverty eradication and social justice, and**
- **Regulating labour markets in ways that secure working people's rights to decent work and a living wage.**



# Inequality

- **Overcoming inequality between nations, within societies and gender –biased inequality.**
- **Inequality affects Human Rights but also economic development. It is unacceptable that 42 of the richest persons in the world possess as much as the poor half of the world population. This wealth of the richest one percent is built on the backs of low-paid workers, often women. The winners of global inequality are mostly men of the global north, the losers mostly women of the global south.**
- **Rightly, SDG 5, 10 and related 16 goals underline the importance of overcoming inequalities. Without gender equality it will not be possible to achieve equality in political, societal and economic terms.**

# + International Feminism

- **European like African feminists have the understanding of feminism that places patriarchal social relations structures and systems which are embedded in other oppressive and exploitative structures at the center of our analysis. Our understanding of Patriarchy is crucial because it provides for us as feminists, a framework within which to express the totality of oppressive and exploitative relations which affect also European and African women.**
- **Patriarchal ideology enables and legitimizes the structuring of every aspect of our lives by establishing the framework within which society defines and views men and women and constructs male supremacy. Our ideological task as feminists is to understand this system and our political task is to end it. Our focus is fighting against patriarchy as a system rather than fighting individual men or women. Therefore, as feminists, we invest individual and institutional energies in the struggle against all forms of patriarchal oppression and exploitation.**

# + New Challenges for feminism

- **The right wing movements in Europe are clearly antifeminist movements. The Trump policy even threatens women`s rights. The Trump example invites for antifeminist policies in Eastern Europe but also in Africa when pregnant school girls are denied their rights for education like in Tanzania or when in Catholic Latin American Countries even rape is no justification to get the right to abortion?**
- **Feminism must defend women`s autonomy and emancipation to the achieve Goal 5 of the SDG on gender justice, gender equality and gender empowerment. We all aspire to the 17 goals of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), but if we are to achieve the world we want by 2030, it simply must be gender-equal. And it`s not just a matter of focusing on Goal 5, the specific target on gender. Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls must happen across all the SDGs to ensure their success, from poverty reduction to education and health, to water, land, sanitation and climate change, energy, sustainable economy, jobs and ending inequalities.**
- **Women are no longer victims. Working on the Human Rights Declaration Eleanor Roosevelt said in 1948: “No one can make you inferior without your permission.”**
- **In addition to the right to freedom and equality, the American Constitution enshrines the pursuit of happiness as a human right. What is greater happiness than being able to live self-determined? That's why feminism makes you happy and engages you for a transformative economic model.**

Another world is  
on her way. On  
a quiet day I  
can hear her  
breathing.

- Arundhati Roy

