

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

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EXTERNAL RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION 2020-01:

Title of proposed Motion	BPW making the achievement of the SDGs is essential
Proposed by	BPW International Past President – Sylvia Perry
Seconded by (optional)	
Supported by (optional)	

MOTION

Aware that natural disasters that have been on the increase due to climatic change

Mindful that human caused changes in climate have played a significant factor in bringing about an ecological emergency

Realising that if these factors are not recognised and acted upon, they will restrict and harm the lives of future generations

Recognising that the aims of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015 are targeted to be achieved by the year 2030 and this end date is only ten years away

Be it resolved:

- That BPW International and all its Affiliates recognises the achievement of the SDGs particularly those of particular relevance to women is essential for a better and more sustainable future
- That we are resolved to work towards reaching the targets by making the SDGs the lead momentum of our advocacy and action and in particular aim to reach net zero carbon across our communities
- That we consider our day to day activities and seek to minimise our carbon footprint, minimise waste and make other changes that will assist the achievement of these goals
- That we pledge to work with other organisations in encouraging support for these objectives

RATIONALE FOR THE RESOLUTION:

This resolution speaks for itself as the SDGs encompass all the aims and objectives of BPW. In making these high on our advocacy agenda, we will be addressing not only climate action but the key issue of gender equality, quality education, health and wellbeing and peace which are of prime importance for our mandate.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Suggestions for a practical action plan to be implemented by BPW International and its affiliates.

That all affiliates should ensure they adopt and undertake projects and advocacy on, if not all the SDGs but take action on those that are the most relevant in their country.

FINANCIAL IMPACT (if any) on BPW International:

None

RESOLUTION 2020-02:

Title of proposed Motion	Gender Responsive Budgeting
Proposed by	BPW New Zealand
Seconded by (optional)	
Supported by (optional)	

MOTION

Noting that Gender Responsive Budgeting has international support from the OECD, the United Nations, the ILO, and the IMF and some of form of gender budgeting is now undertaken in over 80 countries.

Recognising that gender budgeting can be a key driver in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (came into force January 2016):

- Goal 1 No Poverty Target
- Goal 2 Zero Hunger Target
- Goal 4 Quality Education Target
- Goal 5 Gender Equality Target
- Goal 17 Partnerships

Being aware that CEDAW (the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women), entered

Article 10:

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education and in particular to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women:

- (a) The same conditions for career and vocational guidance, for access to studies and for the achievement of diplomas in educational establishments of all categories in rural as well as in urban areas; this equality shall be ensured in pre-school, general, technical, professional and higher technical education, as well as in all types of vocational training;

Article 12:

- (e) The same opportunities for access to programmes of continuing education, including adult and functional literacy programmes, particularly those aimed at reducing, at the earliest possible time, any gap in education existing between men and women

Recognising - International Monetary Fund paper distributed March 2018

BPW International Resolves that all Affiliates:

1. urge their Governments to adopt a Gender-responsive budgeting lens, including advocacy, gender impact analysis, and gender responsive budget documentation in close collaboration with women's organisations and civil society.
2. strongly advocate for their Governments to identify those public spending lines that demonstrably and clearly advantage women and girls.

3. ensure a real-world gender budgeting approach focus on national and line ministry statistics agencies to ensure all government data is disaggregated by gender to allow for better spending analysis.

RATIONALE FOR THE RESOLUTION:

Gender responsive budgeting (GRB) provides a way of analysing government expenditure and fiscal policy to promote gender equality. A GRB is a budget which accommodates men and women across all age groups. In essence, gender responsive budgeting involves the analysis of proposed policy through a 'gender neutral' lens so as to ensure policies contribute to (as opposed to inhibit) the progression of gender equality.

While the Asia-Pacific region has made progress in terms of developing laws and policies on women's rights in recent decades, limited financing remains a key obstacle to closing the gaps between men and women, boys and girls. A recent 20-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action highlighted the stark insufficiency of annual budgets for national women's machineries in the region. Of 17 countries with available data, women's machineries receive annual funding ranging from 0.003 per cent to 3.12 per cent of national budgets.

- 1) Moreover, only 5 per cent of Official Development Assistance screened against the Development Assistance Committee's Gender Equality Policy Marker targeted gender equality as a principal objective, with marked funding gaps in the areas of economic and productive sectors, sexual and reproductive health, and peace and security.
- 2) While increased financing is imperative for the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), gender-responsive planning and budgeting is progressively being recognized as a catalyst for achieving not only SDG 5 on gender equality, but the 2030 Agenda as a whole.

Building on the principles of good governance related to transparency, efficiency and accountability, gender-responsive budgeting serves as a strategy to promote the goal of gender equality and gender mainstreaming by paying attention to revenue raising and spending of government finances. Gender-responsive budgeting is essentially both a political and socio-economic undertaking, with the potential to be a powerful tool for social transformation and progression towards gender equality amongst society.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Suggestions for a practical action plan to be implemented by BPW International and its affiliates.

Affiliates of BPW International implement both Clause 1, 2 and 3 of the Resolution and BPW International advocate on this issue through UN agencies.

FINANCIAL IMPACT (if any) on BPW International:

Administrative costs only

RESOLUTION 2020-03:

Title of proposed Motion	Financial Inclusion for Women
Proposed by	BPW International President Dr Amany Asfour
Seconded by (optional)	
Supported by (optional)	

MOTION

Acknowledging that women's financial inclusion is a top priority agenda for Economic Empowerment of Women and realizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in particular:

- SDG 1 No poverty
- SDG 5 Gender Equality
- SDG 10 Reduced Inequalities

Noting that the Group of Twenty (G20) recognizes that financial inclusion is a key enabler in the fight against poverty.

Be it resolved:

That BPW International adopts Financial Inclusion for Women as a major advocacy pillar for Economic Empowerment of Women and that BPW International and its affiliates:

- a) Promote awareness about Financial Inclusion indicators.
- b) Promote women's financial inclusion through developing tailored financial products that are responsive to women's needs
- c) Promote the use of technology and digitalization for access to financial services
- d) Advocate for collecting sex-disaggregated data
- e) Promote the development of a set of supply-side indicators on women's access to and use of financial services
- f) Promote Financial Literacy training programs
- g) Promote simple digital financial solutions for payment with the allover objective to harness the digital and innovative technologies to Empower Women through Digital Financial Inclusion, and to Promote Digital and Innovative SME Financing
- h) Promote Awareness campaigns for all sectors of Society about the importance of Financial Inclusion for Women

RATIONALE FOR THE RESOLUTION:

Increasing access to and use of quality financial products and services is essential to inclusive economic growth and poverty reduction. Research shows that when people participate in the financial system, they are better able to manage risk, start or invest in a business, and fund large expenditures like education or a home improvement.

Increasing women's financial inclusion is especially important as women disproportionately experience poverty, stemming from unequal divisions of labour and a lack of control over economic resources. Because of lack of collateral, women are more likely to be denied formal credit than men and often pay higher interest rates.

Providing low-income women worldwide with effective and affordable financial tools to save and borrow money, make and receive payments, and manage risk is critical to both women's empowerment and poverty reduction. However, the path to greater women's financial inclusion is dependent upon the creation of a more gender inclusive financial system that addresses the specific demand- and supply-side barriers faced by women, supported by an inclusive regulatory environment.

Financial services are a core enabler for consumption smoothing, risk mitigation, self-employment, SME growth, asset accumulation, and wealth creation. Lack of access to financial services reduces women's ability to climb out of poverty; increases their risk of falling into poverty; contributes to women's marginalization to the informal sector; and reduces their ability to fully engage in measurable and productive economic activities.

Financial Inclusion for Women is a Multi Stakeholder responsibility that include

- Banks especially Central Banks
- Financial Institutions
- Telecommunication Companies
- Women's Organizations
- Alliances, Partnerships and Organizations for financial Inclusion eg. Alliance for Financial Inclusion (AFI), Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion (GPFI)

The Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion (GPFI) has developed indicators which assess the state of financial inclusion and digital financial services, nationally and globally. Reliable data covering the major components of sustainable financial inclusion development is critical to inform these policies and to monitor the effect of initiatives. Data also provides a starting point on which to base ambitious financial inclusion targets.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Suggestions for a practical action plan to be implemented by BPW International and its affiliates.

BPW International and its affiliates implement the initiatives in clauses a) – h) of the resolution and BPW International advocates on this issue through Governments and global stakeholders for Financial Inclusion for Women.

FINANCIAL IMPACT (if any) on BPW International:

None

RESOLUTION 2020-04:

Title of proposed Motion	Gender Pay Gap at Retirement
Proposed by	BPW New Zealand
Seconded by (optional)	
Supported by (optional)	

MOTION

Noting that the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), was adopted and ratified in December 1966 and entered into force in January 1976, outlines under Article 7:

The State Parties recognise *the right of everyone to the enjoyment of just and favourable conditions of work which ensure, in particular:*

- (a) *Remuneration, which provides all workers, as a minimum, with:*
 - i. *fair wages and equal remuneration for equal value without distinction of any kind...*
 - ii. *a decent living for themselves and their families.*
- (b) *Safe and healthy working conditions*
- (c) *Equal opportunity for everyone to be promoted in their employment to a higher level...*

Being aware that CEDAW (the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women), entered into force September 1981, Article 11 states “*the States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment...*”

Recognising that under the UN Sustainable Development Goals (came into force January 2016):

- Goal 1: No Poverty
- Goal 5: Gender Equality
- Goal 8: Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all

Knowing that Women across the globe have 30-40% less money than men in retirement – despite often living longer.

BPW International Resolves that all Affiliates:

- 1) recognize the impact the gender pay gap has on women at retirement age.
- 2) urge their governments and states to identify factors that are involved and once identified put in place long term solutions so that women are no longer financially disadvantaged including but not limited to investigating the impact of unpaid and unrecognized work and its impact on the economy and solutions to address its contribution to the gender pay gap.

RATIONALE FOR THE RESOLUTION:

It is widely accepted that a gender gap exists. The World Economic Forum’s [2017 Gender Gap report](#) reveals that it will take 217 years to completely remove the disparity between the sexes around the world. Less well known is the looming \$400 trillion retirement crisis highlighted in the Forum’s 2017

paper, [We'll live to 100 – how can we afford it?](#) and 2018 paper, [“How We Can Save \(for\) Our Future”](#). These stats have not improved globally.

Typically, the financial balances of women in retirement are 30-40% less than men across the globe. Taking Europe as an example, the gender pension gap varies significantly between different countries, ranging from 4% to 49%, but more than half have a gap of 30% or greater.

A third more women are in poverty in retirement than men in European countries (16% vs 12%), with widows along with black and Latina women typically experiencing higher rates of poverty.

So why are women so much worse off in retirement than men? Because they face a perfect storm of challenges.

To start with, women typically need more money for their retirement than men, so have a bigger problem to solve when it comes to saving for retirement. To make things worse, women tend to accumulate fewer savings than men in the years before they retire, making the problem even harder to solve.

It's not news that women participate in the workforce for fewer years of their lives than men on average, as they are more likely to take breaks to start a family or care for sick relatives, or both. In the US, women participate in the workforce just 75% of the time that men do and are almost twice as likely to be a part-time worker. Given that most people set savings aside during their working years, gaps out of the workforce make it hard for women to keep pace when it comes to accumulating savings.

Planning for retirement should look different for women and men given the different life cycles. If women follow the same retirement plan as men, they will fall short in retirement. Retirement system providers should target women differently, give women confidence to handle their finances and consider different, perhaps riskier, investment strategies. Employers should review their benefits systems through a gender lens, to ensure options and communications meet the needs of both sexes.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Suggestions for a practical action plan to be implemented by BPW International and its affiliates.

Affiliates of BPW International implement both Clause 1 and 2 of the Resolution and BPW International advocate on this issue through UN agencies.

FINANCIAL IMPACT (if any) on BPW International:

Administrative costs only

RESOLUTION 2020-05:

Title of proposed Motion	Public Procurement for Women Owned Businesses
Proposed by	BPW International President Dr Amany Asfour
Seconded by (optional)	
Supported by (optional)	

MOTION

Acknowledging the principles of the 61st Commission for the Status of Women (March 2017) agreed by many UN members which focused on increasing the share of trade and procurement from women's enterprises, co-operatives and self-help groups

Recognising that Public Procurement policies for women's empowerment are a key driver of the following UN Sustainable Development Goals (came into force January 2016):

- SDG 1 No poverty
- SDG 5 Gender Equality
- SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth
- SDG10 Reduced Inequalities

Noting that the African Union Chair President Cyril Ramaphosa of South Africa pledged in the African Union Summit in February 2020 that the African Union Member States will work on implementing a Public procurement policy for women empowerment and to have at least 30 percent of Government procurement allocated for women owned businesses.

Be it resolved:

That BPW International promotes Public Procurement as a Tool to Boost Women's Economic Empowerment and that BPW Affiliates:

- a) Promote gender equality as "smart economics," and advocate that public procurement be used as a tool to achieve socioeconomic objectives through the government's regulatory and buying powers.
- b) Facilitate access to information regarding public procurement, promote women's participation in public procurement through policy recommendations
- c) Advocate that Governments redefine gender-responsive procurement policies and implement creative strategies that focus on women's workforce participation

RATIONALE FOR THE RESOLUTION:

Worldwide, compared to their male counterparts, women entrepreneurs face disproportionately complex, and interconnected barriers to accessing equal economic opportunities. These range from legal and regulatory hurdles to sociocultural norms and gender biases and lack of skills, networks, and finance. For instance, women own or manage only one in five exporting firms even though they own an estimated 38% of all small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). Women spend at least twice as much time on domestic and care work as men, which means the time they could spend on remunerated opportunities is reduced.

\$15 trillion dollar market opportunity that is, public procurement. It is estimated that only 1% of the market is catered to by women entrepreneurs, in part, due to the various aforementioned barriers. Women also face challenges in accessing procurement contracts, and procurement processes tend not to facilitate successful outcomes for women.

Studies show that women-owned businesses that are able to successfully obtain government contracts usually grow, and in return, contribute to increased GDP growth and an improved female labour force participation rate. After all, women-owned companies tend to employ more women than men-owned firms - in 40% of women-owned firms, the majority of employees are female compared to only 22% in men-owned and managed firms. Therefore, greater procurement for women-owned enterprises will provide a springboard for advancements in women's economic inclusion and labour market participation. It also makes sense that expenditure of public funds should go towards public benefit!

UN Women endorses gender-responsive procurement as a critical part of the solution for gender equality and women's empowerment. Gender-responsive procurement is the selection of services, goods and civil works that considers their impact on gender equality and women's empowerment. UN Women has implemented tools that will increase women vendors' business share in UN Women's procurement spending.

Women entrepreneurs are a growing economic force and represent a significant share of employment generation and economic growth potential. It is estimated that Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) with full or partial female ownership represent 31-38 percent (8-10 million) of formal SMEs in emerging markets (IFC, 2011). Public procurement spending accounts for approximately 10-15 % of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in developed countries and over 30 % of the GDP in developing countries (ITC, Empowering women through public procurement, 2014). Procurement, supplier diversity and inclusion can thus be used as a powerful tool to economically empower women and to combat poverty by increasing the income of women and ensure sustainable social and economic benefits.

In this regard, governments and international organizations recognize that empowering women and women owned businesses is a catalyst for achieving gender equality and the internationally agreed goals and commitments.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Suggestions for a practical action plan to be implemented by BPW International and its affiliates.

BPW International and its affiliates implement the initiatives in clauses a) – c) of the resolution and BPW International advocates on this issue through Governments, UN Agencies and at global level.

FINANCIAL IMPACT (if any) on BPW International:

None

RESOLUTION 2020-06:

Title of proposed Motion	Gender Equality in Sport
Proposed by	BPW New Zealand
Seconded by (optional)	
Supported by (optional)	

MOTION

Noting that the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), was adopted and ratified in December 1966 and entered into force in January 1976, outlines under Article 7:

The State Parties recognise *the right of everyone to the enjoyment of just and favourable conditions of work which ensure, in particular:*

- (a) *Remuneration, which provides all workers, as a minimum, with:*
 - i. *fair wages and equal remuneration for equal value without distinction of any kind...*
 - ii. *a decent living for themselves and their families.*
- (b) *Safe and healthy working conditions*
- (c) *Equal opportunity for everyone to be promoted in their employment to a higher level...*

Being aware that CEDAW (the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women), entered into force September 1981, Article 11 states “*the States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment...*”

Recognising that gender equality for women in sports comes under the following UN Sustainable Development Goals (came into force January 2016):

- Goal 5: Gender Equality
- Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
- Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities

BPW International Resolves that all Affiliates:

urge their Governments to recognise the role of gender inequality in sports,

1. such as with representation, leadership, the pay gap and media coverage;
2. and lead a public-private-NGO approach to address it through initiatives including but not limited to:
 - a) asking Government and sporting associations to research and provide statistics on the extent and impact of gender inequality in sports,
 - b) raising awareness of the value that sports has in developing girls and boys into resilient leaders,
 - c) questioning the structure and role of the media in sports from a gender perspective

RATIONALE FOR THE RESOLUTION:

The fight for gender equality is an ongoing battle despite the tremendous progress made in the past few decades. The world's finest female athletes lag behind their male counterparts in terms of earnings. Indeed, there is as much a gender pay gap in sports as there is in corporate America, and the discrepancy is glaring and unfair.

Several factors contribute to this gender pay gap in sports. These include sexism, mismatched media coverage, and most disconcerting, the lack of women holding governing positions in sports organizations. With no significant change being made to ensure equality in pay and representation, female athletes will remain on the short end of the pay scale for the foreseeable future.

In the ranking of the 100 highest-paid athletes, there is just one woman - tennis star Serena Williams. She's in position 51 and has an income that is \$66m (£50m) lower than Cristiano Ronaldo's, the world's top earning sportsman according to Forbes. For the US women's football team, their win in the 2015 World Cup got them a \$2m (£1.5m) reward. Meanwhile in the male version of the tournament, the winners were handed \$35m (£26.5m) just a year earlier. These are just a few examples of a massive gender pay gap in the world of global sports that has been the standard for decades.

Kiwi sportswomen at the top of their game have gone without financial reward for a long time. Like struggling musicians, they practise their craft for pure love, knowing it likely won't pay the bills. Apart from a selected few, women have been unable to claim sport as a primary career. They train, they play, and they travel around the world, taking time off their 'real jobs'. Sport, for most, has been a hobby. Even after cash injections from the NZ Government and a change of heart from sporting organisations over the past 12 months, pay disparity between the genders remains the elephant in every boardroom. For reasons such as earning power, crowd numbers, television viewers, sponsorship deals and player profiles - women's sport can often be the weakest link when it comes to company revenue, so the pay gap stays open.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Suggestions for a practical action plan to be implemented by BPW International and its affiliates.

Affiliates of BPW International implement the initiatives in clause 2 of the resolution and BPW International advocate on this issue through UN agencies.

FINANCIAL IMPACT (if any) on BPW International:

Administrative costs only

RESOLUTION 2020-07:

Title of proposed Motion	Skills Development for Migrant Women and Recognition of their Foreign Credentials
Proposed by	BPW International President Dr Amany Asfour
Seconded by (optional)	BPW Canada
Supported by (optional)	BPW International Taskforce Chair, Migrant Women and Global Citizenship, Jenny Gulamani-Abdulla

MOTION

Acknowledging that Objective 18, one of the 23 objectives in the Agreed Outcome document (July 13, 2018) from the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration deals with investment in skills development.

Noting that to achieve economic empowerment for migrant women and realize the Sustainable Development Goals the following SDG targets must be met:

- | | |
|--|---------|
| (i) Protect migrant workers' rights | SDG 8.8 |
| (ii) Access vocational training and affordable education | SDG 4.3 |

BPW International Resolves that all Affiliates:

- a) urge their governments to invest in skills development for migrant women
- b) facilitate mutual recognition of skills, qualifications and competencies for migrant women by reviewing education and credential assessments for immigration applicants and advocating for means to prove their contributions in the host country
- c) advocate and collaborate with immigrant serving organizations to recognize businesses and educational institutions that promote inclusion of migrant women in the workplace

RATIONALE FOR THE RESOLUTION:

Migrant women are considered to be one of the vulnerable groups of women left behind when it comes to economic empowerment and realizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This means that we must consider an inclusive approach when it comes to the implementation of the SDGs. The SDGs recognize that protecting the rights of immigrant women will advance their potential to become agents of development.

Studies have shown that an increasing proportion of women are economic or labour migrants. Not only do women spend their incomes in the host countries but they also send remittances to their home countries which go towards education, health and community development. In fact, studies show that migrant women remit a higher proportion of their salary than migrant men.

A key economic and employment barrier faced by migrants is a lack of recognition of international credentials and experience. Businesses are feeling the effects of labour shortages around the world and the

urgency to find solutions has become a top priority. However, there is a lack of understanding of the skills and credentials of internationally trained professionals.

Even with credential evaluation institutions that are reliable, credible, and trusted sources to ensure the qualifications of an internationally educated candidate are assessed adequately, there is the perception that not developing or acquiring the skills in the host country is a liability. Foreign study and work experience is not necessarily considered an asset especially in a host country that is focused on formal academic credentials and professional licensure rather than a skills-based approach to hiring.

It takes leaders, key influencers, and cross-sector collaboration to create systemic change. All BPW members have a role to play in leading discussions around diversity, inclusion, and recognition.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Suggestions for a practical action plan to be implemented by BPW International and its affiliates.

Affiliates of BPW International implement the initiatives in clauses a) to c) of the resolution and BPW International advocate on this issue through UN agencies and global stakeholders while understanding that BPW is in a position to shape the conversation on inclusion of migrant women in areas of education, training, assessment of credentials, employment and overall treatment in the workforce.

FINANCIAL IMPACT (if any) on BPW International:

None

RESOLUTION 2020-08:

Title of proposed Motion	Access for Rural Women to Technology
Proposed by	BPW New Zealand
Seconded by (optional)	
Supported by (optional)	

MOTION

Recognising that technology can be a key driver in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (came into force January 2016):

- Goal 1 No Poverty Target 1.4
- Goal 2 Zero Hunger Target 2.A & 2.C
- Goal 4 Quality Education Target 4B
- Goal 5 Gender Equality Target 5.B.0 & 5.B.1
- Goal 9 Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure Target 9.C & 9.0C.1
- Goal 16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions Target 16.10
- Goal 17 Partnerships for the Goals Target 17.6, 17.7 and 17.8

Being aware that CEDAW (the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women), entered into force September 1981, Article 11 states “*the States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment...*”

Noting that FAO founded in 1945 recognises the importance of the impact access to technology has on food security and FAO has produced many research papers on the topic.

- Knowing that technology can be the key to empowering rural women in their ability to take advantage of the benefits of new information technologies.
- “Despite the promises of the digital revolution, rural women still don’t have the same access and control of information and communication technologies as men,” said Sophie Treinen, FAO information and knowledge management officer.

BPW International Resolves:

That all Affiliates urge their governments to:

1. recognise the disadvantages that lack of access to technology has caused for rural women
2. introduce an initiative that will support community access to technology in a sustainable way

RATIONALE FOR THE RESOLUTION:

Technology can be key to empowering rural women. While the digital revolution is reaching rural areas in many developing countries, the rural digital divide continues to present considerable challenges. The problem is even more acute for women, who face a triple divide: digital, rural, and gender.

FAO's E-agriculture 10 Year Review Report on implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) of the Action Line C7. ICT Applications: e-agriculture concludes that while substantial progress has been made in making ICTs available and accessible for rural communities, challenges remain with respect to the following seven critical factors for success: content, capacity development, gender and diversity, access and participation, partnerships, technologies, and finally, economic, social, and environmental sustainability.

New information technologies are radically transforming the way that information and knowledge are disseminated and shared around the world. The technology revolution could accelerate progress towards gender equality, but it could also exacerbate existing inequalities. Much has been written about the digital divide between rich and poor countries: more than 70 percent of the world's Internet users are based in Europe and North America, where – in addition – more than 90 percent of the data on Africa are stored. Similar gaps persist between urban and rural areas and between men and women, especially in developing countries. Rural women usually have less access than men to information and new technologies. Consequently, they are at a disadvantage in making informed choices about what to produce. Lack of information also limits women's influence in their communities and their ability to participate in decision making. When assessing the opportunities and risks of new technologies, it is essential to give attention to gender differences and to ensuring that women's voice is heard so that technological developments can be exploited in the way that best prevents them from increasing inequalities.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Suggestions for a practical action plan to be implemented by BPW International and its affiliates.

Affiliates of BPW International implement the initiatives in clause 1 and 2 of the resolution and BPW International advocate on this issue through UN agencies.

FINANCIAL IMPACT (if any) on BPW International:

Administrative costs only

RESOLUTION 2020-09:

Title of proposed Motion	To Support Governments to Develop a Biodiversity Strategy
Proposed by	BPW New Zealand
Seconded by (optional)	
Supported by (optional)	

MOTION

Recognising the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is an international legally binding treaty with three main goals: conservation of biodiversity; sustainable use of biodiversity; fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of genetic resources.

Recognising the UN Environment Document Repository

Mindful of BPW International's commitment to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals (came into force January 2016) and in particular:

- Goal 13 Climate Action
- Goal 14 Life Below Water
- Goal 15 Life on Land

BPW International Resolves that all Affiliates:

Urge their Governments to commit with urgency to stem the loss of biodiversity by:

1. developing a comprehensive, nationally coordinated environmental monitoring system
2. developing a mandated strategy to
 - prioritise and incrementally fill data gaps.
 - prioritise protection of critically endangered ecosystems, species and genetic resources
 - report on progress annually to the populous with data, targets and information to ensure knowledge on their current situation and future plans is widely disseminated
 - promote sustainable use of their resources
3. allocating financial and other resources to Government Departments and other agencies to affect these recommendations

RATIONALE FOR THE RESOLUTION:

The Earth's biological resources are vital to humanity's economic and social development. As a result, there is a growing recognition that biological diversity is a global asset of tremendous value to present and future generations. At the same time, the threat to species and ecosystems has never been so great as it is today. Species extinction caused by human activities continues at an alarming rate.

Nature can provide more than 30 percent of the solution to climate change by holding global warming below 2 degrees Celsius — and biodiversity is an essential part of the picture.

The destruction of forest ecosystems is responsible for [11 percent of all global greenhouse gas](#) emissions caused by humans, so conserving forests would stop the release of these gases into the atmosphere. Trees and plants also store carbon in their tissue, making it even more necessary to protect them.

Some ecosystems, such as mangroves, are particularly good at storing carbon and keeping it out of the atmosphere — where it contributes to climate change. Forests and wetland ecosystems provide crucial buffers to extreme storms and flooding related to climate change. These ecosystems are complex, which means they function best, and are more resilient to the effects of climate change, when all the pieces of the ecosystem are in place — meaning the biodiversity is intact.

For a relatively small investment, high-biodiversity forests and other ecosystems can be conserved and restored as a powerful means to rein in climate change while also helping communities cope with associated storms, flooding and other impacts.

[At least 40 percent of the world's economy](#) and 80 percent of the needs of the poor are derived from biological resources. Altogether, the food, commercial forestry and ecotourism industries [could lose US\\$ 338 billion per year](#) if the loss of biodiversity continues at its current pace. Meanwhile [The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity \(TEEB\) initiative](#) estimates that global sustainable business opportunities from investing in natural resources could be [worth US\\$ 2 to 6 trillion by 2050](#). Millions of people also depend on nature and species for their day-to-day livelihoods. This is particularly true for struggling communities in developing countries, who often turn to high-biodiversity ecosystems as their source of food, fuel, medicines and other products made from natural materials for their own use and as sources of income. Nature-related tourism is also a significant income generator for many people as well.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Suggestions for a practical action plan to be implemented by BPW International and its affiliates.

Affiliates of BPW International implement all the Clauses 1, 2 and 3 of the Resolution and BPW International advocate on this issue through UN agencies.

FINANCIAL IMPACT (if any) on BPW International:

Administrative costs only

RESOLUTION 2020-10:

Title of proposed Motion	Alternatives to Detention for Women and Girls
Proposed by	BPW New Zealand
Seconded by (optional)	
Supported by (optional)	

MOTION

Recognising that reducing inequality can be a key driver in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (came into force January 2016)

- Goal 3 Good Health and Well-being
- Goal 10 Reduce Inequalities

Reaffirming the resolution adopted by the XXIX BPW International Congress in 2017 on Mental Health - Women in Prisons

Being aware that The [United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders](#) ('the Bangkok Rules') were adopted by the UN General Assembly in December 2010 and fill a long-standing lack of standards providing for the specific characteristics and needs of women offenders and prisoners.

Being aware that The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Non-custodial Measures (The Tokyo Rules) was adopted by General Assembly resolution 45/110 of 14 December 1990

BPW International Resolves that all affiliates:

Urge their governments to implement the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders and provide alternatives to detention for female offenders with a key focus of reducing the high number of indigenous women and girl detainees sentenced for minor crimes.

RATIONALE FOR THE RESOLUTION:

Globally more than half a million women and girls are in prison serving a sentence following conviction or awaiting trial and therefore to be presumed innocent. Criminal justice systems routinely overlook the specific needs of these women and girls, who represent an estimated two to nine per cent of national prison populations.

Treating women offenders in the same way as men will not achieve gender equality. The circumstances in which women commit criminal offences are different from men. The facts: -

- A considerable proportion of women offenders are in prison as a direct or indirect result of multiple layers of discrimination and deprivation.

- Women mainly commit petty crimes closely linked to poverty, such as theft, fraud and minor drug related offences.
- Only a small minority of women are convicted of violent offences, and a large majority of them have been victims of violence themselves.

Because women and girls represent less than a tenth of the prison population their characteristics and needs have remained unacknowledged and largely unmet by criminal justice systems. Prisons and their regimes – from the architecture and security procedures to healthcare, family contact and training opportunities – are usually designed for men.

One example of a gender-sensitive alternative to prison is counselling services with on-site childcare facilities. This provides a solution for women offenders who are mothers, enabling them to deal with the root causes of criminal behaviour whilst continuing to care for their children.

In some countries, individuals are sent to prison for very minor offences: from abusive language to unlawful trespassing. Imprisonment is not only a disproportionate response but contributes to serious prison overcrowding. In many countries, the number of people imprisoned exceeds official prison capacity and pre-trial detention contributes to overcrowding.

For many, a prison sentence is not an appropriate response. There are a number of non-custodial alternatives to imprisonment. At the pre-trial stage, alternatives include bail, seizure of travel documents, periodic reporting to the police, electronic monitoring and curfew. For those found guilty, courts can impart fines, community service orders or restorative justice.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Suggestions for a practical action plan to be implemented by BPW International and its affiliates.

Affiliates of BPW International advocate for alternative options for women and girl's detention by encouraging their governments to be signatories to both the Bangkok Rules and the Tokyo Rules and to adhere to these rules.

FINANCIAL IMPACT (if any) on BPW International:

Administrative costs only