

**Freshman #4**

TOPIC:Equal access to education for girls



# SOCOMUN XXVI

Freshman Committee #4

Equal Access to Education for Girls

Hello my name is Chloe Grubb and I will be one of your co-chairs at the SOCOMUN Conference this year! I am also one of your Under Secretary General Directors of Technology for this SOCOMUN conference. I am a junior here at SMCHS, and this will be my third year participating in the program. So far, I have been blessed with the opportunity to travel with MUN in both my freshman and sophomore years. In my freshman year, I attended Gaucho MUN conference held at UC Santa Barbara. And in my sophomore year, I traveled to Washington D.C. to participate in the North American Invitational Conference (NAIMUN) hosted by Georgetown University. In October, I will be traveling to London to attend the Royal Russell MUN conference. For me, MUN has been a major learning experience as I developed the skills to better understand the issues with sufficient research and learned to better articulate my points. Aside from MUN, I actively participate in Talon Theatre at SMCHS, and I am a varsity thespian.

Hello! I am Halie Kang, and I will be your legal for this committee. This upcoming school year (2017-18) will be my third year as an MUN student. I was in Mr. Remmell’s (one and only) freshman MUN class, and I am in AP World/MUN this this year (2017-18). I was a secretary for the 2016 SOCOMUN conference, and attended the 2017 Berkeley trip, on top of all of the other mandatory conferences that we have been required to attend these past two years.

Hello, my name is Olivia Molfetta and I am a sophomore at Santa Margarita. I will be your secretary for this committee. Through MUN I have already seen an improvement in both my public speaking and my research abilities. MUN helps me become more aware about today’s conflicts, improves my critical thinking, and educates me about life around the world.

MUN is a truly rewarding experience and I hope you enjoy this conference. I anticipate that this committee will help you learn about and better understand MUN. In committee, we will start with debate where delegates give speeches featuring background information, their country policies, and solutions for the problem at hand. After some speeches, a delegate may motion for an unmoderated caucus where delegates can discuss their country policies and solutions in more depth to determine which nations they should work with in resolution groups. In these resolution groups, delegates will work together in drafting working papers entailing possible resolutions. And once these working papers are finished and all speeches are finished during debate, a certain number of delegates will present these working papers. Once the working papers are presented, the committee will vote on which papers will be passed and become resolution papers. In this committee, it will benefit you to know both your solutions and country policy well. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to email me at [socomunfresh4@gmail.com](mailto:socomunfresh4@gmail.com). I look forward to meeting all of you and I wish you the best of luck in this SOCOMUN conference!

**Background:**

The lack of equal access to education for girls has been a recurring issue since the public opening of schools worldwide. Nearly 58% of all peoples not completing primary school are young women, and around 34 million female adolescents do not complete lower secondary school. This obvious lack of equal educational opportunities pose major issues to women in finding work, avoiding early pregnancies, and ensuring good health for themselves and their children. Lack of education oftentimes causes these issues in early pregnancies, health deterioration, malnutrition, and work simply because these women lack the proper education to develop the skillsets and knowledge required to avoid such issues. Three countries with some of the highest female illiteracy rates are Nigeria with over 5.5 million illiterate women, Pakistan with over 3 million illiterate women, and Ethiopia, with over 1 million illiterate women. However, reigning over them all in terms of female illiteracy are Somalia, Niger, and Liberia with illiteracy rates of 95%, 78%, and 77% of women within their countries. Less developed nations are more susceptible to high female illiteracy rates due to recurring domestic female gender roles, and the lack of accessibility to proper schooling facilities for both boys and girls. As a result, boys are often prioritized above girls due to the beliefs that men will already have the advantage over women in employment with the global pay gap between men and women. Some of the major factors that contribute to the lack of quality education for women are lasting traditional gender roles, sexual harassment, gender biased teaching and educational materials, early marriages and pregnancies, and lack of accessible schooling facilities. On top of this, traditionally women are expected to do domestic work on top of the responsibilities of nondomestic schooling, making prioritizing schooling a problem to many young women.

In order to improve the dire situation, the global community has been making major steps toward providing quality education to women. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Programme of Action of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development were two of the major documents which discussed the importance of education for all and how education can severely impact lives. This message was continued in The Fourth World Conference on Women held in 1995 which opened discussion on the importance of women’s literacy and noted how essential literacy was to developing a generation of well informed and involved women for both domestic and nondomestic decision making. Most recently, the UN has issued the 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) in January of 2016 after adopting the original SDGs in September of 2015. The fourth goal is for improved education by the year 2030. Highlighted in this SDG is the acquirement of equal education for both boys and girls in all nations. The United Nations plans to have this goal accomplished by 2030 with the regulation of schooling worldwide by developing schooling centers and ensuring that no discrimination will prevent individuals from obtaining such schooling. However, to fully accomplish this goal, the UN must look toward both the domestic and public aspects of the issue and safeguard rights for all girls to education without infringing on any nation’s rights to sovereignty.

**Possible Solutions:**

The following are solutions aimed at alleviating the issue. However, these solutions do not cover all facets of the issue. It is important to form your own solutions and collaborate with other delegates in solutions and resolutions to best represent your country and its position on the topic. Make sure that you research your country’s policy and position on the topic when creating solutions to make sure that the solutions are viable and applicable to your own nation. For instance, if your country has a low GDP and a bad economy, your nation is less likely to be forming a solution where your nation helps subsidize the development of schooling worldwide. Also, it should be noted that this committee does not have to form solutions entailing where the money for solutions will come from. That is the job of the UN’s Fifth Committee and the World Bank. However, you still can recommend where funding for some efforts can possibly come from.

One of the major issues with providing equal access and quality education for girls is the lack of legal backing to secure women’s rights to education. The Right to Education Project (RTE) was established in 2000 by the first UN Special Rapporteur on the right to education and works to provide research and legal analysis on the topic of education. With this research and legal analysis, the team uses human rights mechanisms to strategically enforce the rights to education. As this group has already worked with the UN in securing rights to education, this group would be useful as a continued source of research and legal support because the UN is not currently working with the group because it was launched as an international initiative in 2008. However, since the group has worked with the UN and has proven itself competent in handling these legal matters, a UN sponsorship and partnership could be beneficial.

Another group actively working to end the issue is CamFed the Campaign for Female Education, an organization that has worked in Sub-Saharan Africa to provide sufficient educational needs for girls such as uniforms, examination fees, textbooks and other materials necessary to securing a proper education. In some instances, room and board have been provided to African girls through this organization. This group has proven capable and efficient in its abilities to seek and provide education for rural housed girls. If this organization were to be applied at a global level with the support of the United Nations, CamFed could easily defend education in all continents and work toward securing rights worldwide.

In Zimbabwe, the Improving Girls' Access through Transforming Education (IGATE) initiative is a multifaceted three-year program that works toward transforming education to provide equal access to quality education for girls. This program uses a combination of social and legal action to combat this major issue. With sublevel programs like their educational facilities’ Power Within Girls clubs and other social clubs, they work toward female empowerment while working to provide school-related materials legally and financially. This initiative stands out because it does not simply target getting school supplies, but empowering the girls to stay in school and value an education. One of the major issues facing the global community and preventing girls from going to school is the fact that in many cases, schooling for girls is not valued in traditional cultures. Though it is difficult to fully abolish gender roles, teaching girls that their education is worthwhile can greatly help the percentage of girls who drop out of school because of social issues. Many lack the motivation to finish school because of domestic responsibilities, so if IGATE and its female empowerment programs were to applied at a global level with the sponsorship of the United Nations, then a much higher percentage of girls would have the access to a proper education and the motivation to pursue the said education.

**Questions to consider:**

The following questions are provided for you to consider as you research, but are not necessary to explicitly answer at the conference.

1. Regarding the issue, what is your country policy? Does your country value education for girls or not? To what degree do they value this education?

2. What can the United Nations do to provide equal opportunities to women in terms of education without infringing on any nation’s sovereignty?  
3. How can the United Nations or other intergovernmental bodies provide education to rural areas who lack the infrastructure to provide such education?

4. How do we secure the rights of girls to seek education and not be denied?

5. Are there any national or international bodies or organizations, or non-government organizations (NGOs) that would be useful in combatting this issue?

6. What are some of the factors stopping girls from receiving equal access to sufficient schooling?

7. How can some of the traditional gender roles be altered so that women are treated equally in terms of education?

8. How can we ensure that other discriminatory factors such as race or religion do not stand in the way of a girl’s right to quality education?

9. What kinds of issues prevent girls from attending public schooling? Can the privatization of schooling aid in securing such schooling?

Works Cited

1. "United Nations Girls' Education Initiative." N.p., n.d. Web. 7 Apr. 2017.

<http://www.ungei.org/>

The United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative (UNGEI) is an organization that focusses on improving and ensuring girls are empowered through quality education so girls can help transform societies so that “gender equality becomes a reality.” The UNGEI partners with NGOs and governments to increase access to quality education for girls and promote gender equality. The website provides a list of other website links to global advisory committees and partners, and individual countries that are facing and addressing inequality in education. If your country is listed it will provide you statistics and background information regarding the problem in that country and what that country is doing to combat the problem. There is a “Resources” tab that allows you to search from over 650 resources that address subtopics of inequality in education for girls. This website is a great starting point to researching the problem and individual countries that are addressing this problem.

2. "Pursuing Equal Access to Education for Girls and Women." World Vision. N.p., 22 Dec. 2016. Web. 07 Apr. 2017.

<https://www.worldvision.org/gender-equality-news-stories/world-vision-educating-women-girls>

Around the word and particularly in developing nations, most girls are illiterate and lack basic education due to both economic and cultural reasons. In poorer communities, girls must work to help support their families, cultural norms force them into child marriages and there are fewer schools. The lack of education impacts young girls often increasing their risk of becoming victims of sex trafficking, and other gender-based violence. World Vision is a NGO that is trying to solve this problem. This website is helpful for learning about some of the different approaches to addressing the problem of inequality of education for girls. It provides global statistics and identifies the problems facing girls, the lack of access to education in different countries, and the consequences of this problem. When writing the position paper, this website can provide key statistics reflecting the problem, and also generate ideas for possible solutions.

3. "Making Room for Girls." The Economist. The Economist Newspaper, 05 Nov. 2013. Web. 07 April. 2017.

<http://www.economist.com/blogs/freeexchange/2013/11/gender-inequality>

The Economist is a magazine and online source that publishes research and articles on various topics that affect the world. The Economist has concluded based upon its research that reducing inequality in education will result in greater economic growth in the developing world. One article published provides an overview and graph with statistical data showing how developing countries are making progress in closing the gap between girls and boys attending primary, secondary and tertiary education. Though this graph only reflects the progress from 1999 to 2010, it discusses why certain countries or regions are more successful than others and possible solutions to reducing the inequality in education in poor countries. This website provides a search function to locate articles on inequality in education for girls and statistics and information on specific countries and their policies. This website provides great research based articles drawing information from various primary sources.

4. Jayachandran, Seema. "“The Roots of Gender Inequality in Developing Countries”." N.p., Nov.2014. Web. 7 Apr. 2017.

<http://faculty.wcas.northwestern.edu/~sjv340/roots_of_gender_inequality.pdf>

Despite progress and efforts towards equality in education, there are many social, economic and political biases in some societies that prevent girls’ access to education. “The Roots of Gender Inequality in Developing Countries” is a published article by Seema Jayachandran at Northwestern University in November 2014. This article explores the causes of inequality in education in developing countries, not necessarily the effects. It examines in detail these different causes and identifies specific facts that support the author’s conclusions. The author also discusses issues faced by specific countries and how their cultural norms or religious values contribute to the inequality. Also, the article addresses economic underdevelopment, gender imbalances, health, among the many other issues developing countries face that prevent girls from accessing education. This resource will assist in writing a position paper because it gives an extensive and detailed discussion of the causes of inequality in education for girls and can help with creating proposed solutions.

5. Farzaneh Roudi-Fahimi and Valentine M. Moghadam. "Empowering Women, Developing Society: Female Education in the Middle East and North Africa." . N.p., n.d. Web. 07 Apr. 2017. <http://www.prb.org/Publications/Reports/2003/EmpoweringWomenDevelopingSocietyFemaleEducationintheMiddleEastandNorthAfrica.aspx>

The Population Reference Bureau is a website that provides publications containing facts about the world’s population, health, the environment, and other issues of global importance. One of the agencies focus is on inequality. One publication on this website, “Empowering Women, Developing Society: Female Education in the Middle East and North Africa,” examines education for girls in the “MENA”. This article provides statistics and other data that shows the different countries in this region and their illiteracy rates and educational levels by gender. In writing a position paper this website is a good source for facts and statistics and provides cites to other sources of information.

6. Education For All Global Monitoring Report. Girls’ Education – the Facts (n.d.): n. pag. Education for All Global Monitoring Report. Web. 7 Apr. 2017.

<http://en.unesco.org/gem-report/sites/gem-report/files/girls-factsheet-en.pdf>

There are fewer than 4 million boys out of school than girls. This website talks about all the facts and the impact it has on the world because of the inequality of women being educated. On the last page, it also has a table that shows the countries rating for who has the poorest females that have never been to school. This article would be perfect for the background because of its many facts and consequences that happen because of girl’s lack of education. This article was published by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization.

7. "Why Girls?" Plan International. N.p., n.d. Web. 08 Apr. 2017.

<https://plan-international.org/research-policy-insight>

By 2030 “Because I am a Girl” is dedicated to making sure gender equality and rights of all girls is ensured. “Because I am a Girl” is a global movement driven by Plan International to ensure all girls can learn, thrive, decide, and lead. This website talks about “Because I am Girl” and their position and steps they are taking protect women’s rights to be educated. You can also click the ‘countries’ tab which will let you pick many countries and learn about what they are doing to help with their education. This website would help with different solutions to help girls thrive in their education and if a person needed information on their countries’ policy and actions they are taking.

8. "About Us." Right to Education Project. N.p., n.d. Web. 08 Apr. 2017.

<http://www.right-to-education.org/page/about-us>

Pregnancy and child marriage cut girls’ schooling before they complete secondary school. The threat of violence and school fees are also many reasons why women do not go to school. The “Right to Education Project” was established in 2000 by the first UN special Rapporteur on the right to education. This website not only gives you information about the topic but also shows you their framework in many different regions and different organizations. This would be perfect for UN’s involvement and depending on your country the Countries Policy.

9. Fund, The Malala. "Girl's Education." The Malala Fund. N.p., n.d. Web. 08 Apr. 2017.

<https://www.malala.org/>

“The Malala Fund” is an organization that is advocated for resources and policy change so all girls complete 12 years of school. They invest in developing country education leaders and organizations and in most regions where girls miss out on secondary school. This Fund talks about the basic needs all girls need and helps when trying to find organizations that a country can work with to help educate their girls in the country. This website can also help when trying to find different solutions and organizations for funding for girl’s education and help the lesser developed countries get help.

10. "Top 10 Facts You Don't Know About Girls' Education." ABC News. ABC News Network,

n.d. Web. 08 Apr. 2017.

<http://abcnews.go.com/International/10-facts-girls-education/story?id=20474260>

Globally, 65 million girls are not in school and 31 million girls of primary do not attend school. “ABC News” lists 10 facts and statistics about the inequality for girl’s education and the causes it has on the world. The article also talks about how educating girls will break the cycle of poverty in one generation. This article has many good facts and background on the situation which could be found interesting to be put in the paper.

11. "Girls' Education - the Facts." UNESCO. UNESCO 2017, Oct. 2017. Web. 6 Apr. 2017.

<http://en.unesco.org/gem-report/sites/gem-report/files/girls-factsheet-en.pdf>.

This resource provides a basic overview of what the current situation for education is, statistics on how education has a positive impact on society, and the transformative powers that education can have on the future. It also provides an overlook of the 10 countries who have the least amount of progress in giving females access to education. This source is fact-based and objective, and provides a visual element that can be used in concordance with the written details. This website would be informative and helpful for the topic synopsis, and could also be incorporated into coming up with solutions, because it could provide specific areas of improvement to concentrate on.

12. Bokova, Irina. "From Access to Equality - Empowering Girls and Women through Literacy and Secondary Education." UNESCO. UNESCO 2012, n.d. Web. 4 Apr. 2017.

<http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Documents/unesco-from-access-to-equality-2012.pdf>.

This resource provides a comprehensive outlook of the topic of providing education to women across the world. There is a focus on not just providing education, but also an overview on the topic of gender equality in general. Uniquely, this resource provides examples of cases all over the world of countries creating solutions to providing education to females. This resource could be helpful in coming up with new solutions based on the ones already implemented in nations worldwide.

13. "B. Unequal Access to and Inadequate Educational Opportunities." B. Unequal Access to and Inadequate Educational Opportunities. Linkages, n.d. Web. 05 Apr. 2017.

<http://enb.iisd.org/4wcw/dpa-021.html>.

This resource provides a short summary of education for women, especially concerning gender awareness in general and what can be done to combat this. This website is subjective, as it states what should be done and therefore states the author’s opinion. However, aside from this, the website still provides solid facts that can be incorporated into many parts of one’s research paper.

14. "UNGEI At 10: A Journey to Gender Equality in Education." UNGEI. United Nations Girls Education Initiative, May 2010. Web. 6 Apr. 2017. <https://www.macfound.org/media/files/UNGEI\_at\_10.pdf>.

This website constitutes an overview of the plans and background of UNGEI, the branch of the United Nations which is dedicated to providing quality education for all females around the world. This resource is completely objective, as it provides fact-based information and has solutions and plans for initiating a movement worldwide. The link would be helpful for providing details about UN involvement, as well as creating solutions based off of the ones provided in in the document.

15. "The Importance of Educating Girls and Women --The Fight Against Poverty in African Rural Communities." UN Chronicle. United Nations, Dec. 2007. Web. <https://unchronicle.un.org/article/importance-educating-girls-and-women-fight-against-poverty-african-rural-communities>.

This website is one which provides a United Nations perspective on why educating women, especially those in the African region, would be beneficial to not only them but also to all of society. This resource is objective because it provides opinion, but it is directly sourced from the UN, and could also lead students to other articles on the UN Chronicle which could provide them with more fact based opinion and real world perspectives. The link itself could be beneficial for coming up with region-based solutions, but the entirety of the UN Chronicle itself would be beneficial for all sections of the research paper.