

**Freshman #4**

TOPIC:Equal Access to Education for Girls


# SOCOMUN XXVII

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Hello, my name is Chloe Grubb, and I will be one of your co-chairs for this committee! Aside from being chair of this committee, I am also one of the CO-Under Secretary Generals of Technology for SOCOMUN XXVII. I am a senior at SMCHS and this year will be my fourth year of MUN. In the past, I’ve been blessed with the opportunity to travel with MUN and have attended three travel conferences including Gaucho MUN at UCSB, North American Invitational Conference (NAIMUN) at Georgetown University, and RRSMUN at the Royal Russell School in Croydon, United Kingdom. In January, I will be travelling to Prague to represent our MUN program. I’ve really enjoyed my times in MUN and felt that I’ve grown as a student and as a person from my experiences. MUN teaches you how to speak, listen, and research and brings light to the current issues plaguing our international community today. I encourage you to focus in this committee and absorb as much information as you can. It may not seem like it now, but the mere awareness-raising that MUN accomplishes makes a difference today. Use this conference to learn the basics and remember to have fun!

Hello delegates! My name is Sierra Breit and I will be your legal for this conference. I am currently a sophomore at SM and this is my 2nd year in the MUN program. MUN is a great program to be a part of and will offer you many opportunities throughout the time you participate in it. I hope all delegates will enjoy this conference and further grow their MUN journey!

 This conference is engineered to provide you with reliable information as to how future committees work while providing the opportunity to learn and grow in your first conference for the year. At the beginning of committee, we will start with debate where delegates will present a speech on their topic’s background, country position, and solutions for the topic. For your speeches, try to keep the speeches focused mainly on country position and solutions as this will help delegates determine which countries they can work with in forming potential resolution papers. After presenting speeches, we will periodically break into formal or informal caucus. To engage in formal caucus, a delegate may motion for a formal caucus for x number of minutes to discuss a specific subtopic of their choice. To engage in informal caucus, a delegate may motion for an informal caucus for x minutes with a specified purpose (i.e. discuss country policy, form working groups, etc.) After completing the first or second round of speeches and forming working groups and working papers. 1/3 of the working group will present the working paper (potential resolution paper) to the committee and the committee will vote to pass or not pass the paper. Once we have voted on all the resolutions, the committee will work to combine the passed papers into one paper. At this conference, it will be beneficial to know your country policy and solutions well. Try reviewing them ahead of time as it will help you caucus with other delegates more efficiently. Please direct any questions to socomunfresh4@gmail.com. Good luck! We can’t wait to see you in committee!

**Background:**

 The issue of providing girls with equal rights to education has been a recurring one as this issue spans all the way from the initial opening of the first public schools in the 17th century. Very few schooling options aside from home economics and other home-schooling were available to girls until the late 18th century. Nevertheless, biases towards education for men have existed and continue to exist today. And although there are educational institutions serving girls in many countries, some countries continue to refuse girls the right to education and restrict either the extension of all course types or any courses or materials to girls. In some nations, there are very limited educational services to begin with and biases promote the education of boys over girls. The stigma that girls do not need education as much as boys often stems from cultural practices and the traditional position of women within the domestic sphere to care for homes and watch children. This poses a major issue because women face issues like early pregnancy and difficulties with seeking employment along with greater probabilities of facing domestic violence when they do not receive proper education. As of today, 58% of all students not completing schooling are women, and many of those who do in developing countries often do not receive comprehensive educational opportunities while in attendance. The highest illiteracy rates for women are 95%, 78%, and 77% in Somalia, Niger, and Liberia as of 2017. This issue must be stopped to promote gender equality worldwide and provide women with all the opportunities they deserve.

 The international community has long been aware of the issue and has been working to make concrete steps in ending the issue at hand. In 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was drafted and passed with article 26 officially recognizing the rights of all people to adequate education. The Programme of Action of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development also addressed women’s education and their rights to seeking such education regardless of circumstance. In 1995, the Fourth World Conference on Women was held to bring light on the need to increase international women’s literacy to aid them in domestic and nondomestic tasks and decisions. The recent drafting and passing of the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have also been efficient in prioritizing equal rights to education among all people with specific goals and targets highlighted in each of the United Nations’ member states. Goal #4 specifically targets this issue and is currently working towards developing basic education systems among all states to ensure all children can seek education in the first place. Some of the other targets within this goal include: the eliminating gender disparities in educational systems and vocational training, raised integration of information and communication skills globally, and the development of primary and secondary educational training in all states along with reputable colleges and universities. Although these actions are enacting positive change on the issue and making the situation better, more states must collaborate on agreeing on the role of government on ensuring these rights within their states as many countries are still not taking concrete steps within their own domestic policies to enact tangible change.

**Possible solutions:**

 The subsequent section is devoted to some solutions aimed at improving the current situation at hand. However, these solutions are not wholly comprehensive in that they do not address all aspects of the problem. Delegates should work to develop solutions attacking most if not all aspects of gender inequalities in education. Delegates must ensure that their solutions coincide with their country policy and all their states’ former actions on the topic. Make sure that most of your solutions are also viable within your own nation as delegates must aim to attack the issue within their own state and the international community. Try to think of solutions that your own country would endorse to base your ‘resolution plan’. For example, nations with lower GDP are less likely to want solutions where their state pays for a massive international program. It is also important to note that delegates do not need to worry about addressing specific funding for each of their solutions. All funding questions for UN solutions are directed for the UN’s Fifth Committee and the World Bank. Delegates may recommend where funding should come from, but the exact answer is out of the authority of this committee.

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. “Basic Education and Gender Equality.” *UNICEF*, United Nations, 26 Oct. 2011,

[www.unicef.org/education/index\_access.html](http://www.unicef.org/education/index_access.html).

This source gives statistics on the number of children not in school and how many of those children are women. Also, this source states what UNICEF’s big picture on how to fix unequal education and what UNICEF has been doing around the world. This information on this source is very reliable because it comes straight from UNICEF who leads the statistics on this topic. However, this source has the least amount of information compared to the other sources on my list. This source will help you provide statistics to put in your paper and your speech and will help provide background on what the UN is doing about this topic.

1. “Girls' and Women's' Right to Education.” *UNESCO*, UNESCO, 23 Feb. 2014,

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002278/227859E.pdf>

This source lists several countries and provides statistic about education and measures each of these countries have taken to fix unequal education opportunities. This source is quite reliable as it comes from the UN committee UNESCO as a background guide for the 37th Session of the UNESCO General Conference. Although this source may seem long you will not be looking at each counties statistic and measures, you will only be looking at your country assigned to you and possibly the countries surrounding your assigned country. This source is a good source to look at for a summary of what measures your assigned country has taken in ensuring equal education and the statistics in your country about education.

1. Harrison, Zoe. “Equal Access to Education Helps You and the Community.” *Right for*

*Education*, Right for Education Foundation. , 1 Dec. 2017,

[www.rightforeducation.org/human-rights/access-education/](http://www.rightforeducation.org/human-rights/access-education/).

This source explains why equal education is important and why do women currently not have equal access to education. Also, the article provides some ideas on what can be done to solve the issue of unequal access to education. This source is reliable because it came from a website which provides articles on a wide range of subjects. This source is one of the shorter ones in my bibliography, but it will provide useful background knowledge on this topic. This source will give you background knowledge needed to fully understand why women and girls do not have equal access to education and will help you contemplate solutions.

1. Hollman, Daisy. “Why It's Important That Boys and Girls Have Equal Access to Education? by Lovepaws - Infogram.” *Infogram*, Prezi, <https://infogram.com/why-its-important-that-boys-and-girls-have-equal-access-to-education-1g90n2o997r924y>

This source will supply statistics about the differences in education between genders at elementary, middle, and high school grades. Also, this source will present the countries where access to education is less equal between genders. Even though this source is not the most reliable on this bibliography because it is written by an unofficial source, I feel that this source will assuredly help you to immerse yourself in this topic. This source will help you to provide correct statistics in your paper and your speech and will assist you in your research about this topic.

1. Loke, Atul. “Women and Girls.” *Right to Education Initiative*, Right to Education Initiative , 2011, [www.right-to-education.org/issue-page/marginalised-groups/girls-women](http://www.right-to-education.org/issue-page/marginalised-groups/girls-women).

This source will teach you about the right to education of women and girls at a international, national, and regional level; education as a ‘multiplier right’; and barriers to girls education. This source is reliable because it was written by professionals who work the Right to Education Initiative. Also, this source is one of the longer, more complex sources, but if you read carefully and annotate you should fully understand. This source will prepare you fully on the background on this topic and will contribute to your full understanding of it.