

2023 Report BPW International main representative to UNESCO Dr Marie-Claude Machon-Honoré

Following the 2022 December ICNGO and after serving as elected representative to UNESCO on the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee on behalf of BPW International for the second time (2021-22) elected for the seat of Europe and North America region in the first ballot, after a first mandate (2017-18) and as Chairperson of the ICNGO and President of the Liaison Committee (2019-2020), and serving as representative to the CCNGO-Ed 2030 coordination group (2017-2022), I have had the opportunity to strengthen BPW International's engagement and advocacy for Gender Equality in a bilateral mode and in coalitions across UNESCO sections –Education & Inclusion, Gender Equality, UNESCO- WWAP as well as SHS section about AI and Transforming Mentalities to accelerate Gender Equality.

Since COVID 19, UNESCO has engaged in a multistakeholder approach and global coalitions through digital platforms. Along this line, the Global conference on the Internet of Trust (21-23 February, 2023) was convened in a hybrid mode enabling debates in person and a vast online multistakeholder consultation BPW international contributed to regarding the **Guidelines for the Regulation of Digital Platforms for Information as a Public Good**.

As customary, BPW International was invited by the UNESCO Education, Inclusion and Gender Equality section to share the call for nominations of the [2023 UNESCO Prize for Girls' and Women's Education](#) (8 March 2023) among its network and supported the application of three candidates from Nepal, Biratnagar on Literacy and two from Nigeria (SHEcodesAJ and MIRAISHA project in STEM). As BPW International permanent representative to UNESCO and focal point for Education I facilitated their applications with UNESCO Education section (from April to June 2023). UNESCO and BPW International are grateful for their hard work which shows how active and committed to accelerating gender equality in and through Education, in STEM and for Lifelong learning, BPW Federations across regions are. UNESCO is deeply appreciative of our work on gender equality and encourages us to apply for the next GWE prize.

Aligned with my activity of representing BPW international to the UNESCO-CCNGO-Education2030 and Global Education Coalition, and as Lead of IFBPW-UN SC group for Education & Advocacy, I was a panelist on « the Role of Transforming & Inclusive Education for Rural Women in a Digital Era », in the CSW67 parallel virtual event organised by BPW International UN Standing Committee on 13 March 2022 and contributed to the CSW68 draft regarding Transforming Education as key to empower girls and women.

As member of STEM Taskforce and representing BPW International to the WWAP global multi-stakeholder coalition for accelerating gender equality in the Water Action Agenda, I facilitated Tess Mateo (BPW NY representative)'s participation in the side event organized by UNESCO WWAP and WfWP at UN HQ, Thursday 23 March while I was attending online and connecting with Tess who made a commitment to empower more women in Africa. In August 2023, to accommodate the growing Global 'Call for Action for Accelerating Gender Equality in Water', and the critically-important Multi-stakeholder Coalition which forms the backbone of the Initiative, WWAP was working to establish a new digital platform and update webpages. [current page dedicated to the Initiative](#)

As focal point for Education and participating in the webinars series on Education for Sustainable Development, I liaised with Turkey clubs, after the devastating earthquake to reflect on continuing education solidarity, resilience and recovery via online conversations with the clubs' presidents and members, connecting them with UNICEF working on the ground and through UNESCO. I presented their project of solidarity for Turkey to Brussels' Presidents' Meeting, as per invitation of Europe Regional Coordinator to get the support of BPW International.

Adopted in 1974 at the 18th session of the General Conference, the Recommendation on Education, human rights, peace and international understanding was the first normative instrument of its kind. Its revision process started in September 2022 and included a comprehensive and consultative global technical consultation phase, which brought together a wide range of stakeholders, governments, educators and academics, non-governmental organizations, civil society actors, young people and women-led organizations among which BPW International.

The revision exercise aimed to improve the effectiveness and relevance of the Recommendation to better address challenges of the 21st century, such as those relating to environmental protection and digital technologies, with a view to strengthening education for global citizenship, sustainable development, peace and international understanding between and within societies.

I was invited on behalf of BPW International to participate as Observer in the Intergovernmental Special Committee meeting on the Revision of the Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Cooperation and Peace and Education relating to Human rights and Fundamental Freedoms, from 30 May to 2 June 2023 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris and was one of the few NGOs to take the floor. A second session took place from 10 to 13 July 2023 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris to discuss the remaining paragraphs, the preamble and the Appendix (items 6 and 7 of the Agenda) and thus to finalize the review of the text in view of its submission to the 42nd session of the General Conference in November 2023 and the Revision was adopted by the Education Commission..

By August 4 I had filled in the thematic questionnaire on behalf of BPW International and with the support of IP and UN VP to update our details for the Unit for Civil Society Partnerships.

I followed the [217th Session of the Executive Board](#), 4-18 October and took the floor on behalf of BPW International to present our current actions and strategy on **6 October 2023 – Committee on Non-Governmental Partners of the Executive Board (217th session)**.

After a virtual meeting with the UNESCO-UNICEF stakeholder coalition for coalition in July 2023, BPW International was included as member of the Advocacy group and its logo posted on the Global Platform' "Global Accountability Dashboard". Then with the support of UN VP and BPW International UN SC members and colleagues, we organized a webinar to call for contributions from federations and countries across regions working on the empowerment of girls and women in and through education. I followed up and wrote an article as per request of IFBPW President Catherine Bosshart to be shared on our website.

Global Platform for Gender Equality and Girls' and Women's Empowerment in & through Education

" A Call to Action on advancing Gender Equality and Empowerment of Girls and Women in and through Education was made at the UN Transforming Education Summit last September in New York. The Global Platform for Gender Equality in & through Education was launched on 8th November in the Partnerships Hub during the 42nd session General Conference of UNESCO.

BPW International logo has been included as partner of the multistakeholder coalition and member of the Advocacy group [TES Call to Action on Advancing Gender Equality in and through Education](#)

The [Evidence for Gender and Education Resource](#) (EGER) is an interactive, online platform designed to help the global gender and education community make informed decisions about their programming, investments, and policy and research priorities.

BPW members can each create an account for BPW by signing up at egeresource.org/signup and register their projects. They can select BPW as their organization from the drop down menu during the signup process. They will then be taken to a screen with a red button that says "add program". By clicking on that button, they can enter the information into the EGER database. Your project should also be registered on BPW International website. I am available for assistance." Dr Marie-Claude Machon-Honoré- BPW International main representative to UNESCO CCNGO-Education2030 focal point -UN SC Education & Advocacy Lead- STEM TaskForce

The 42nd session of the General Conference took place from November 7 to 22, 2023, at UNESCO headquarters, Place Fontenoy. The General Conference takes place every two years, like the International NGO Conference and alternately. It determines the programs and budgets and elects the Director General every four years, which will be the case in 2025.

The general policy debate took place from December 8 to 13 in plenary session and Member States and Observers including BPW International were able to speak for 3mns. I was the last speaker of the morning 13 nov 2023. <https://www.unesco.org/en/general-conference/42>

A forum for partnerships took place from November 7 to 17 in a dedicated space, allowing interventions of collectives of NGO partners in sessions 14-11 and 15-11. As BPW International representative I intervened in the collective group **Voix des Filles** (Girls' Voices) to present the advocacy and actions of BPW in CI and French-speaking Africa (Burkina Faso and Senegal). **Voix des Filles** presented the official event in cooperation with the UNESCO National Commission in Ivory Coast, with the active contribution of the President of BPW Bassam-Impérial club, member of **Voix des Filles** Executive Bureau. BPW International also intervened for the collective NGOs group **Danse et Paix en Partage-Sharing dance for Peace** to celebrate the International Day of Peace in 2024 – with BPW International participation and presentation, reminding the audience of the commitment of the founder of BPW International for Peace and the key role of women in the resolution conflicts and negotiations for Peace (UN 1325) as well as for the maintenance and construction of Peace.

On 14 December 2023 I was invited and attended the [Formal Dialogue on the evolving right to education in a lifelong learning perspective](#) meant to discuss the findings to date, foster a global consultation, and explore how to take this Initiative forward. Read about it [here](#).

