

CONFERENCE REPORT

Using Women's Power for Change:

A Festival of Ideas, Experiences & Strategies to Advance Gender Equality in and through Education Unions

13 – 16 June 2022



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Acronyms

Education International	EI
4 th Education International World Women's Conference	WWC4
BTA	Bahrain Teachers Society
CAUT	Canadian Association of University Teachers
CNTE	Confederação Nacional dos Trabalhadores em Educação, Brazil
CSQ	Centrale des syndicats du Québec, Canada
CTERA	Confederación de Trabajadores de la Educación de la República Argentina
CTF-FCE	Canadian Teachers' Federation/Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants
EIS	Educational Institute of Scotland
FENPROF	Federação Nacional dos Professores, Portugal
FGEB	Fédération générale de l'enseignement de base, Tunisia
GEW	Gewerkschaft Erziehung und Wissenschaft, Germany
INTO	Irish National Teachers' Organisation
JTA	Jamaica Teachers' Association
KTU	Korean Teachers and Education Workers' Union
NAGRAT	National Association of Graduate Teachers, Ghana
NAPTOSA	National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa
NASUWT	National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers, United Kingdom
NEA	National Education Association, United States of America
NEU	National Education Union, United Kingdom
NTEC	National Teacher Elected Council, Afghanistan
PPSTL	Public Primary Schools Teachers League in Lebanon
SET	Syndicat des Enseignants du Tchad
SINDI-2	Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores N°2 de Integra, Chile
SNUipp	Syndicat national unitaire des instituteurs, professeurs des écoles et PEGC, France
SYPROS	Syndicat des Professeurs du Sénégal
TUESWU	Trade Union of Education and Science Workers of Ukraine
UIL-Scuola	Unione Italiana Del Lavoro – Scuola, Italy

Using Women's Power for Change

A Festival of Ideas, Experiences & Strategies to Advance Gender Equality in and through Education Unions

Under the theme “Using Women’s Power for Change: A Festival of ideas, Experiences and Strategies to Advance Gender Equality in and Through Education”, the 4th Education International (EI) World Women’s Conference (WWC4) offered women education unionists a space for reflection, information sharing and exchange, and strategising across regions to advance gender equality in and through education, as well as in education unions.

The Conference stressed the urgent need to counter the alarming developments of the last few years. From worsening gender inequalities and increased gender-based violence caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, to sexual violence used as a weapon of war against women in Ukraine or the Democratic Republic of Congo, from the alarming rates of femicide in parts of Central and Latin America, to the gendered impacts of the climate crisis, the world is backsliding when it comes to women’s rights and gender equality. Women’s leadership at all levels is critical to turning the tide.

During the four Conference days, participants explored a wide range of topics and had the opportunity to hear from a variety of women leaders, from those occupying formal positions of power in governments and unions, to the young women who are leading the global movement for climate justice.

Purpose of the Conference

- To mobilise participants for change that will advance gender equality in and through education, and within education unions;
- To motivate participants to take action by building new or strengthening existing platforms within their unions and with allies outside of their unions.

Conference Format

The 4th World Women Conference took place virtually, due to restrictions caused by the global Covid-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, from the 13th to the 16th of June 2022 participants from all over the world had the chance to engage in conversations about women’s power, gender equity, the gendered effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, gender-based violence, and climate justice.

This year, the sessions were organised in different categories, such as research panels, storytelling, high-level conversations, cultural performances, and more. Participants could engage in conversations in the Zoom chat box and ask questions to panelists through the Q&A tool. The Conference also had a visual artist & graphic scribe, Leslie Saree, in attendance to create artistic summative representations of each session. Their art is featured throughout this report.

In the lead up to the Conference, participants were encouraged to take an online course on EI's work for gender equality. Participants had the opportunity to learn about the most important concepts related to gender, EI's policy on gender equality, EI's Status of Women Committee, regional women's networks, relevant resolutions, and much more. The course equipped participants with the knowledge they needed to fully engage in Conference discussions and make the most of this opportunity to be together as a movement.

Attendance

1,358 participants from 89 countries attended the conference. This is a fivefold increase in participation compared to the 3rd EI World Women's Conference which was attended in person by 273 participants from 69 countries. While the online format of the 4th World Women's Conference did not allow for deeper, more personal interactions, it did remove many financial barriers, allowing more women unionists to participate remotely.

Region	Participants	Countries
Africa	285	34
Asia Pacific	159	14
ACCRS	26	4
Europe	168	20
Latin America	650	11
North America and the Caribbean	96	10
Caribbean	27	7
Total	1,358	89

Of the 141 participants who responded to the Conference feedback survey, over 95% were satisfied or very satisfied with the event. Over 70% of respondents were very satisfied.

Programme and speakers

Monday June 13th

Using Women's Power for Change: Leadership & Decision-making

Conference Opening & High-Level Conversations

Opening Speech: Susan Hopgood | EI President

High level conversations on 'Using Women's Power for Change: Women Leading in Politics'

- Honourable **Jan Tinetti** (Minister of Internal Affairs, Minister for Women, and Associate Minister of Education, New Zealand) in conversation with **Susan Hopgood** (EI President)
- Mme **Nouzha Skalli** (former Minister of Social Development, Family and Solidarity, Morocco) and **Honourable Margaret Rwabushaija** (Member of Parliament, Uganda) in conversation with **Johanna Jaara Åstrand** (EI Vice President, Europe)
- Honourable **Fayval Williams** (Minister for Education and Youth, Jamaica) in conversation with **Lily Eskelsen Garcia** (EI Vice President, North America & the Caribbean)

Using Women's Power for Change: Women Leading in Education Unions I

Moderator: **Aoife Mullen** | INTO, Ireland

Speakers

- **Hélène Nekarmbaye** | SET, Chad; EI Executive Board
- **Heeyeong Jeon** | KTU, Korea; EI Executive Board
- **Mary Bousted** | NEU, UK; EI Executive Board
- **Jalila Al Salman** | BTA, Bahrain; EI Executive Board

Using Women's Power for Change: Women Leading in Education Unions II

Moderator: **Haldis Holst** | Deputy General Secretary, EI

Speakers

- **Nadine Molloy** | JTA, Jamaica; EI Executive Board
- **Maike Finnern** | GEW, Germany; EI Executive Board
- **Sonia Alesso** | CTERA, Argentina; EI Executive Board
- **Marjolaine Perreault** | CSQ, Canada; EI Executive Board

Tuesday June 14th
Using Women's Power for Change in a Time of Covid-19

Building the Evidence for Gender Equality in Education Unions I

Moderator: **Pamela Rogers** | CTF-FCE, Canada

Speakers

- **Emna Aoadi** | FGEB, Tunisia
- **Tracey Konstant** | Research consultant, South Africa
- **Michele Ford** | University of Sydney, Australia
- **Kirsty Ward** | University of Sydney, Australia

Building the Evidence for Gender Equality in Education Unions II

Moderator: **Pamela Rogers** | CTF-FCE, Canada

Speakers

- **Selma Augestad** | EIS, Scotland
- **Carol Miller** | Gender at Work, Canada
- **Houda Sabra** | Independent researcher, Canada
- **Ana Carcedo** | Independent researcher, Costa Rica

Fireside Stories: Gender, Power, and Everything in Between

Moderators: **Antonia Wulff** | EI Secretariat

Storytellers

- **Kalyani Menon Sen** | Gender at Work, India
- **Nina Benjamin** | Labour Research Service, South Africa

Gendered Impacts of the Covid-19 Pandemic in Unions & in Education

Moderator: **Mbali Thethani** | South Africa

Speakers

- **Manal Hdaife** | PPSTL, Lebanon
- **Marième Sakho Dansokho** | SYPROS, Senegal; EI Executive Board
- **Rosella Benedetti** | UILSCUOLA, Italy
- **Yobana Salinas** | SINDI-2, Chile
- **Brenda Austin-Smith** | CAUT, Canada

Wednesday June 15th
Eradicating Gender-based Violence: A Call to Action

Eradicating Gender-based Violence is Union Business

Moderator: **Marie Clarke Walker** | Canada

Speakers

- **Rebecca Ocran Abaidoo** | NAGRAT, Ghana
- **Alexandra Bojanic** | SNUipp, France
- **Fatima Da Silva** | CNTE, Brazil

Fireside Conversation: Women, Peace & Security in Times of Conflict

Moderator: **Samidha Garg** | El Consultant, UK

Speakers

- **Fahima Saleh** | NTEC, Afghanistan
- **Kateryna Maliuta-Osaulova** | TUESWU, Ukraine

***Meet the Experts: Facing anti-gender, anti-LGBTQ+,
anti-critical race theory backlash in education***

Moderator: **Cameo Kendrick** | NEA, USA

Speakers

- **Elzbieta Korolczuk** | Poland
- **Sonia Corrêa** | Brazil

Thursday June 16th
Looking to the future

Meet the Movement Movers: Young Women Power Climate Justice

Moderator: **Michelle Codrington-Rogers** | NASUWT, UK

Speakers

- **Laura Verónica Muñoz** | Colombia
- **Vanessa Nakate** | Uganda
- **Phoebe Hanson** | UK
- **Mitzi Jonelle Tan** | Philippines

Conference Closing

Moderator: **Antonia Wulff** | EI Secretariat, Brussels

Speakers

- **Manuela Mendonça** | FENPROF, Portugal; EI Executive Board
 - **Lorvica Matthews** | NAPTOSA, South Africa
 - **Dianne Woloschuk** | CTF-FCE, Canada; EI Executive Board
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Conference closing remarks: **Susan Hopgood** | EI President

Conference Outcomes

Key Issues

The following key conference priorities are based on the recurring issues identified by conference participants. The priorities are mainly aimed at action that education unions can take:

- Create and strengthen women's networks in unions to provide members with a safe space to support each other and acquire skills and knowledge about gender equality and unionism. Networks help build women's collective power to effect change.
- Make adjustments to allow women's full participation in union meetings, including adjusting the time of meetings and consulting women regarding the location.
- Support women's leadership through quotas, capacity building, and legal instruments.
- Promote mental health campaigns.
- Keep track of cases of gender-based violence and act to ensure justice.
- Promote climate justice to diminish the gendered impact of the climate crisis.

Conference Proceedings

Conference Opening

The Conference opening remarks were delivered by Education International President Susan Hopgood, whose inspiring words set the tone of the next four days. Since 2020, women across



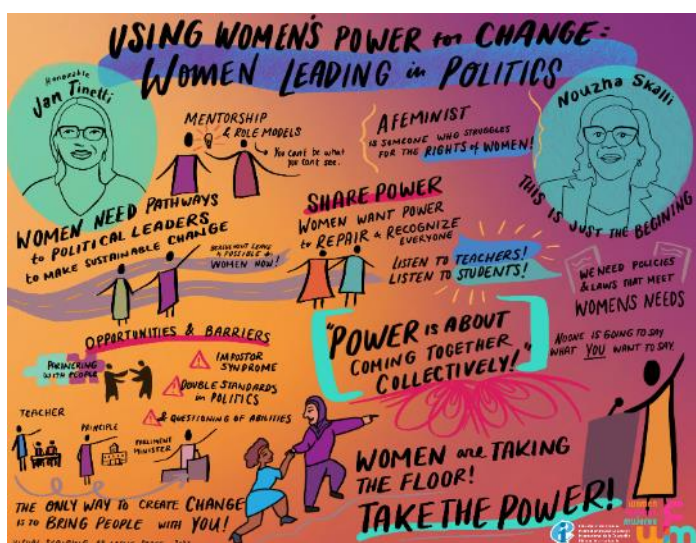
the world have been facing new challenges brought about by the global Coronavirus pandemic. These new challenges demand urgent action to protect women's rights and to defend and advance gender equality. Drawing on recent reports on the [deepening gender gap](#) caused by the pandemic, Ms. Hopgood highlighted the [alarming data](#) on increased inequalities and gender-based violence linked to the pandemic.

Ms. Hopgood also highlighted the importance of unions and of their work to build solidarity among workers and create pathways to protect and advance women's rights. It is through the collective power of unions that women can feel represented and aspire to lead transformative change.

"Education unions' power is women's power."

Susan Hopgood

Participants had the opportunity to hear and learn from high-level women political leaders in different regions. Honourable **Jan Tinetti** (Minister of Internal Affairs, Minister for Women, and Associate Minister of Education, New Zealand), Honourable **Nouzha Skalli** (former Minister of Social Development, Family and Solidarity, Morocco), Honourable **Margaret Rwabushaija** (Member of Parliament, Uganda), and Honourable **Fayval Williams** (Minister of Education, and Youth, Jamaica) engaged in insightful conversations with EI's President **Susan Hopgood**, **Johanna Jaara Åstrand** (EI Vice President, Europe), and **Lily Eskelsen Garcia** (EI Vice President, North America & the Caribbean). These powerful women spoke about the challenges they faced on their journey to leadership, including misogyny, impostor syndrome, double standards for men and women, a constant questioning of their abilities, and strong discouragement from their loved ones to pursue power.



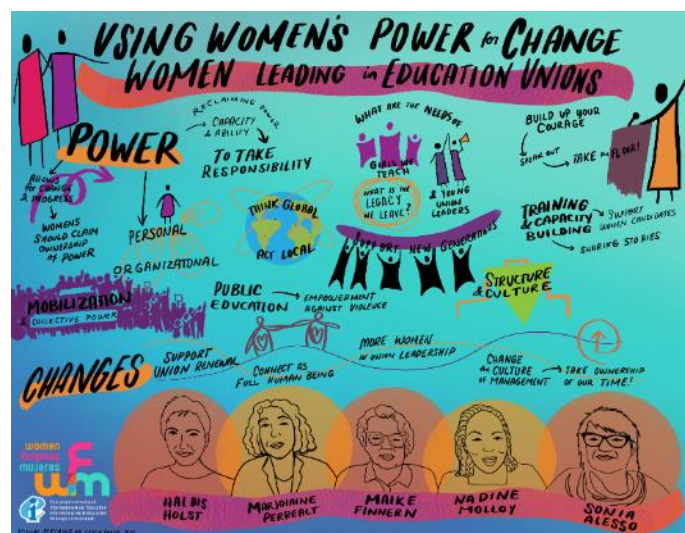
Despite these challenges, they discovered important mechanisms which have supported them along their path to leadership. The speakers stressed the imperative need for women to have confidence in themselves and to research and take advantage of the opportunities presented to them. Stressing the value of collective power and support networks, Hon. Jan Tinetti's emphasized that *"power is about coming together collectively for a greater good, that is why the union was so important"*.

The message that shone through each conversation was that, despite all obstacles, women can achieve leadership. Furthermore, all successful women leaders play an essential role in building the next generation of women leaders by opening new doors and becoming role models whose footsteps younger women and girls can follow.

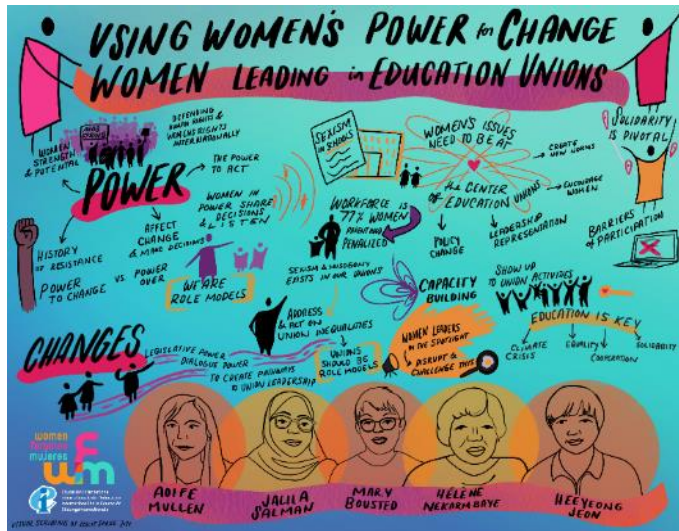
Day 1: Using Women's Power for Change: Leadership & Decision-making

On the first day of the Conference, **Aiofe Mullen** (INTO, Ireland), moderated a discussion between EI Executive Board members **Hélène Nekarmbaye** (SET, Chad); **Heeyeong Jeon** (KTU, Korea), **Mary Bousted** (NEU, UK) and **Jalila Al Salman** (BTA, Bahrain). In the following session, EI Deputy General Secretary **Haldis Holst** moderated a discussion between EI Executive Board members **Nadine Molloy** (JTA, Jamaica), **Maïke Finnern** (GEW, Germany), **Sonia Alesso** (CTERA, Argentina) and **Marjolaine Perreault** (CSQ, Canada).

Speakers reflected on 'power' – what it means to them as leaders, what it means in relation to gender inequality, to women's leadership, and to effecting transformative change in and through education, and in unions. Among the many challenges faced by women seeking to occupy positions of leadership and power within unions and beyond, the deeply rooted roles historically attributed to women stand out as one of the main drivers of discrimination and the unfair questioning of women's abilities. As a result, overcoming gendered power disparities is a massive challenge on a woman's journey to leadership. At the individual level, the lack of self-confidence among women and the need for further capacity building contribute to women's unequal access to power.



In addition, the Covid-19 pandemic has played a significant role in increasing gender inequality. All over the world, the pandemic and associated lockdowns increased the [triple workload](#) borne by women. However, the shift to online work and the use of online meeting platforms did lead to a certain increase in the number of women joining their unions' online activities. Speakers shared valuable lessons of resistance and highlighted some simple actions that education unions can take to increase women's participation and unblock pathways to leadership. These include adjusting the schedule of union meetings to female-friendly timings, consulting female members on the location of the meetings, and providing technical support for their participation.



In the aftermath of the pandemic, women must rally to resist the rolling back of hard-won rights. It is essential that unions role model gender equality in order to support transformative societal change. Institutions – and society – must implement practical actions to advance gender equity, which include supporting female leadership, defending girls' right to education, as well as combating social media attacks against women. Education unions should also ensure their constitutions and regulations are gender

responsive; make efforts to collect solid evidence; provide capacity building; create support networks; guarantee spaces for discussions; provide childcare during union meetings to facilitate women's participation; and introduce quotas to increase the number of women in union leadership positions.

In these inspiring conversations, the high-level guests spoke strongly in support of women's rights and empowerment, highlighting the critical role of education. It is through the collaboration of different people - with different skills and experiences and from different backgrounds - that collective power can be harnessed, and much needed change can be achieved. Education unions must use their power to ensure women are able to strengthen their knowledge and skills and can access the support networks they need to reach for their dreams.

Day 2: Using Women's Power for Change in a Time of Covid-19

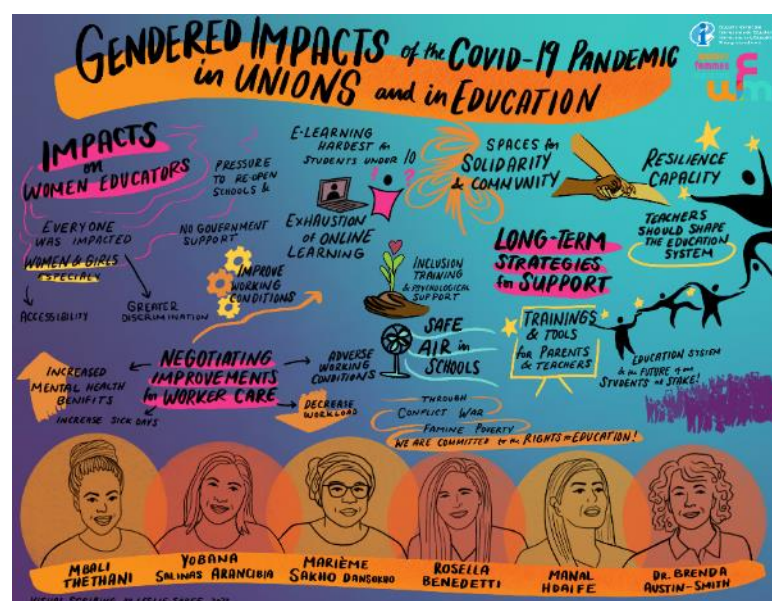
Drawing on many years of work supporting women's rights organisations and working women in unions in India and South Africa, respectively, **Kalyani Menon Sen** (Gender at Work, India) and **Nina Benjamin** (Labour Resource Service, South Africa) shared some moving stories of women identifying and using their own power, during the first 'Fireside Conversation' on Day 2 of the Conference.



From young women defying courts of law to women risking their jobs to report sexual abuse, these inspiring stories had much to teach participants. The stories demonstrated the importance of recognising our own internal power, especially in difficult situations. The stories also showed how context-specific unequal power distribution can be disastrous in women's lives. Most of all, the stories demonstrated an imperative need to change competition between women into cooperation.

Those inspirational stories gave participants an opportunity to reflect on the importance of gender equity from a personal perspective and complemented the debate on empirical evidence.

On the research panels of the Conference, **Pamela Rogers** (CTF-FCE, Canada) joined international researchers to discuss the effects of Covid-19 on female education workers. **Emna Aoadi** (FGEB, Tunisia), **Tracey Konstant** (EIRAF, South Africa), **Michele Ford** (SSAC, Australia), **Kirsty Ward** (SSAC, Australia), **Selma Augestad** (EIS, Scotland), **Ana Carcedo** (CEFEMINA, Costa Rica), **Carol Miller** (Gender at Work) and **Houda Sabri** (independent researcher, Canada) shared the findings of their investigations.



In addition, unionists also presented the gendered impacts of Covid-19 in their regions. In this session, Mbali Thethani was joined by **Manal Hdaife** (PPSTL, Lebanon), **Marième Sakho Dansokho** (SYPROS, Senegal), **Rosella Benedetti** (UILSCUOLA, Italy), **Yobana Salinas** (SINDI2, Chile), **Brenda Austin-Smith** (CAUT, Canada).

During the second day of the Conference, participants learned Covid-19 has revealed some

valuable lessons around gender equity. During this period, unions increased training and

created networks to respond to women's demands. Overall, female attendance in meetings has increased due to remote formats, with online platforms enhancing real time information sharing. On the other hand, although more female workers were able to connect, most of them needed to multitask housework during the meetings. Thus, attendance did not necessarily mean participation, with many women not fully engaging in debates.

Moreover, the Covid-19 pandemic has caused other significant negative impacts on women worldwide. First, it has influenced female professional prospects by increasing unemployment and precarious work conditions. Furthermore, remote teaching raised questions around teachers' entitlement to remuneration which created fear and uncertainty. This forced many teachers to return to classes before vaccines for Covid-19 became available, which resulted in alarming data: [In Latin America, national rates of infection among educators are much higher than in the general population](#). More specifically, 13x higher in El Salvador, 7x in Honduras, 4x higher in Paraguay, and 2x in Brazil, Costa Rica and Argentina.

In addition, the experts argued that challenges for women go even further: patriarchy, sexism, the lack of representation, and the constant need to prove themselves are some of the difficulties female workers face every day. Apart from external challenges, women must also deal with internalised patriarchal stereotypes which portray women as submissive, less intelligent than men, and far too emotional for leadership positions. These preconceived ideas result in an unbalanced distribution of housework, which have been leading women to burnout.

When it comes to mental health, female educators have also been extremely affected by the pandemic. [In Scotland, 21% of education workers were ill; 93.5% of them experienced increased stress and/or depression during the Covid-19, and 71.5% had no access to health or emotional support during this period](#). While considering this daunting scenario, the speakers proposed several alternatives women and unions worldwide can implement.

Regarding structural changes, the experts stressed the need for unions to mainstream a gender perspective across their work. A shift in union culture is necessary to condemn sexual harassment and attacks based on gender. For capacity building and education purposes, institutions should invest in women's development and gender education for all. Training should be reformulated to equip female workers with tools for leadership, such as innovative technology networking and mentoring opportunities.

In terms of legal mechanisms, the implementation of affirmative actions can support gender equity. Those include electing female representatives, enacting parity policies, and enlarging budgets. Further actions include the ratification and implementation of [Convention 190](#) and Convention 156 of the International Labour Organization, allowing flexible working options and offering equal leave entitlement for both men and women.

Finally, in terms of mental health, the experts recommended:

1. Risk assessments for education personnel;
2. Incentivise mental health campaigns and promote support;
3. Offer support for psychotherapy sessions;
4. Improve number of sick days;
5. Increase the number of staff to cut down their workload
6. Improve salaries.

Regarding Covid-19, the use of online tools (such as WhatsApp, Zoom, Teams) and the incentive for protective measures (use of masks and social distancing) have been considered beneficial. Actions can also include the provision of technology and infrastructure; reduced number of students per class; the creation of a contract repository and websites (for FAQs and updated information), as well as support for educators with chronic illness and mental health issues.

Day 3: Eradicating Gender-Based Violence: A Call to Action

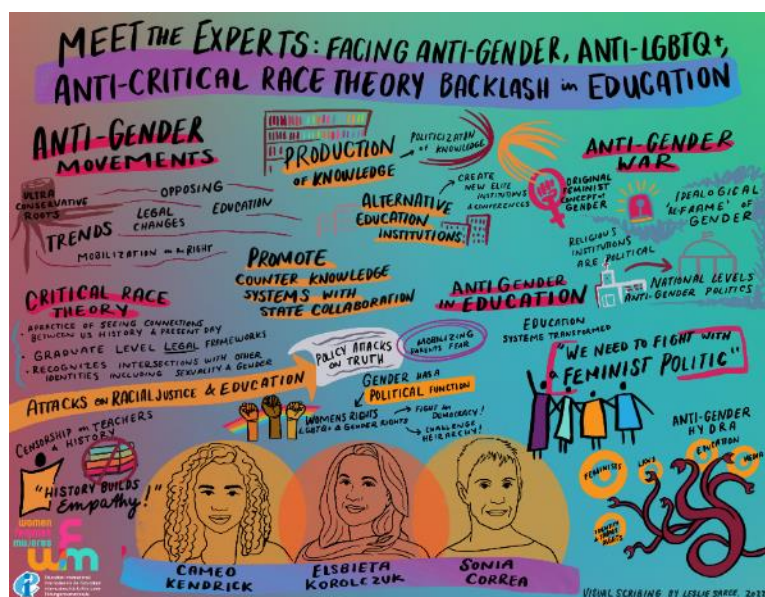
On the third day of the Conference, participants focused on gender-based violence and the backlash against minority rights.

In the first session, **Marie Clarke Walker** (Canada) joined **Rebecca Ocran Abaidoo** (NAGRAT, Ghana), **Alexandra Bojanic** (SNUipp, France) and **Fatima da Silva** (CNTE, Brazil). Next, **Samidha Garg** (UK) discussed gender-based violence in crisis contexts with **Fahima Saleh** (NTEC, Afghanistan) and **Kateryna Maliuta-Osaulova** (TUESWU, Ukraine). Finally, **Cameo Kendrick** (NEA, USA) joined **Elzbieta Korolczuk** (Poland) and **Sonia Corrêa** (Brazil) for a conversation on minority rights.



During the pandemic, gender-based violence increased significantly. Panelists shared with participants the alarming situation their regions face. In France, for example, 1 out of 3 women states that she has been a victim of sexual harassment in the workplace and only 3 out of 10 cases of violence are reported to employers. Similar trends emerge in Latin America, where 4,640 femicides were reported in 2020, with Honduras and El Salvador presenting the highest rates.

In addition, the rise of conservatism has resulted in backlash against minority rights. Conservative interests are working in increasingly sophisticated ways to promote their ideology, creating and funding organisations and disseminating (at times false) information to legitimise their ideas and attack essential rights.



For example, Critical Race Theory (CRT) has been constantly questioned in the United States. White supremacists have promoted color-blind theories and labeled debates on racism as “divisive”. They have also been incentivising conservative families to “resist” CRT with attacks on school board members. Since parenthood is an institution that bypasses the public/private divide, conservative institutions work to persuade parents to oppose CRT and sex education in schools.

In Poland, schools are considered important spaces for mobilisation for ultra-conservative organisations. They work with parents, encouraging them to interfere in schools. According to the speakers, this is especially problematic since it prevents access to anti-discrimination education and curriculum reforms.

In Latin America and several other regions, ultraconservative backlash to LGBTQ+ rights is based on religion. Politicians tend to use it strategically as a decoy to create polarisation. Their discourse mirrors doctrinal views on sexuality, gender, and abortion, which often appeal to “biology-based” arguments. In addition, the conservative discourse often relies on the thin line between freedom of speech and denying essential rights. Panelists provided participants with powerful insights on how to differentiate between opinion and fact. Freedom of speech requires no credibility, on the other hand, academia requires very transparent processes of thinking, leaving no room for unfounded opinions or low bars of credibility.



In one of the most powerful conversations of the day, panellists Kateryna Maliuta-Osaulova (Ukraine) and Fahima Saleh (Afghanistan) shed light on the reality of educators in emergencies.

Conflicts raise a wide range of challenges to education and educators, from the violation of human rights within schools, to decreased attendance and lack of interest in education caused by the fear of violence. Moreover, schools remain targets of attacks and

many are destroyed. When teaching persists, it continues under extremely precarious conditions.

"Some teachers are still teaching from their basements, and some from the frontlines. It takes heroism."

Kateryna Maliuta-Osaulova

Against all odds, unions continue to play an important role in maintaining education in emergencies. When possible, unions have done everything to ensure that the rights of education staff are respected and have provided financial assistance to those in need.

In response to the rise in gender-based violence and backlash against essential rights, unions worldwide have implemented several measures to support their affiliates, creating special courses on gender-based violence, prevention campaigns, and local capacity building. In addition, many unions monitor information at local and regional levels; advocate for gender equity legislation, such as ILO Convention 190; give visibility to cases of gender-based violence and build alliances with social movements.

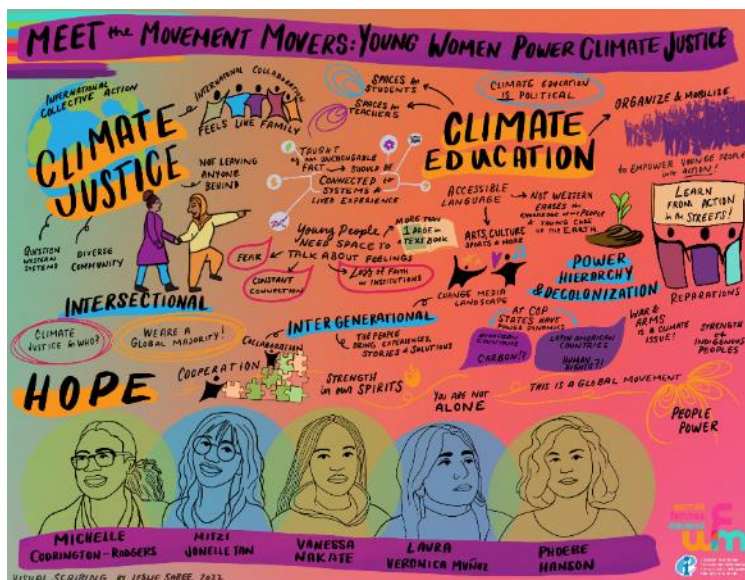
"C190 means upholding my dignity as a woman in the workplace. It means my talents and qualifications are the only aspects taken into consideration in order to be at work."

Marie Clarke Walker

Speakers made further practical suggestions for resistance stressing that unions have the power to negotiate and resist cases of censorship. Mobilisation, understanding litigation, empowering students and nourishing their ability to think freely and independently have proven to be powerful tools for transformative change.

Day 4: Looking to the future

On the last day of the Conference, participants had the opportunity to learn from the young women leaders who are driving the global movement for climate justice. **Michelle Codrington-Rogers** (NASUWT, UK) joined **Vanessa Nakate** (Uganda), **Phoebe Hanson** (UK), **Mitzi Jonelle Tan** (the Philippines), and **Laura Verónica Muñoz** (Colombia) for a conversation on leadership, climate education, and climate justice. Panelists shared some of the challenges they face as activists and their vision for a sustainable future.



Panelists stressed that transformative change that can effect climate justice requires a climate education is contextualized, that acknowledges local knowledge, and that takes into account the power asymmetries between the Global North and Global South. To bring this vision of education to life, teachers must be equipped to advocate for climate justice, education systems must ensure teacher training, spaces for discussion to learn from one another, and informative materials.

Engaging communities is essential to achieving climate justice. In the words of Vanessa Nakate, “with people come stories, with people come solutions.”

Closing Remarks

After four inspiring days, EI's Director of Research, Policy, and Advocacy - **Antonia Wulff** - joined **Manuela Mendonça** (FENPROF, Portugal), **Lorvica Matthews** (NAPTOSA, South Africa) and **Dianne Woloschuk** (CTF-FCE, Canada) for a concluding conversation reflecting on the Conference discussions and highlighting women's power, the need to repair gender related injustices, and the power of representation. Women unionists and educators have the power to deconstruct stereotypes, support one another, and change the historically patriarchal structure of unions through their collective power. Panelists also stressed that leadership means leaving no one behind, warning that policy debates often marginalise women in the most vulnerable of situations.

Susan Hopgood's closing speech reflected on treating unions as our homes: “How can we use women's power to strengthen our homes to make sure girls can enjoy their fundamental rights, starting with the enabling right to quality education?”. EI's President emphasised that unions must

be models for gender equality, opening up union structures and enabling women to reach higher.

In order to encourage and reward engaged participation in the Conference across sessions, the Conference website, and the ALMA platform, EI offered the most engaged participant in each region a full assistance package to attend the 5th EI World Women's Conference.

Participants' Impressions

"The platform was a perfect example of intergenerational and intersectional leadership of powerful women across the world."

- Participant from South Africa

"Beyond geographical distances and cultural differences, I felt that we are connected in the same fight, facing the same challenges."

- Participant from Argentina

"I want to express my gratitude to you and to your entire team for this most wonderful Conference. It had everything. The music, dance and artwork were just wonderful additions, something I think you should think about retaining for future World Women's Conferences. The quality of the speakers, the communication of women's lived reality, the wisdom of age and of youth, incredible research analysis combined with on-the-ground activism, the Conference covered all of this in such an inspiring way. Many, many thanks!"

- Participant from Canada

"It was my first Conference and I loved everything. Thank you and congratulations!"

- Participant from Brazil

"I appreciated the high quality of the research reports and the sustained pace of the fascinating contributions, as well as the energy of the interaction between all of the women!"

- Participant from France

"The information which was shared by educators from across the world resonated with me from South Africa. Our experiences were very similar if not identical in some instances. It was a good learning experience. I felt very empowered. The music and the band were great."

- Participant from South Africa

"This 4th World Women's Conference opened up the possibility of unrestricted participation worldwide for all affiliated women educators. It allowed us not only to listen to speeches and presentations from panelists accompanied by various performances, but also to engage in debates through the chat, with a dynamic of continuous strengthening and coordination."

- Participant from Argentina

"The virtual platform was very well organised. The sessions were all very relevant. I liked the young women who shared their ideas and gave us a lot of hope. Even though some of the topics were rather heavy, we always ended on a positive note. Fantastic!"

- Participant from Quebec, Canada