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to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly
entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and
peace for the twenty-first century”

Statement submitted by Rose Academies, Inc., a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being
circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council
resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



Statement

A Call to Action

In 2015, global leaders from 193 countries adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – a blueprint design that calls for aggressive action to address the world’s most grievous problems of poverty, inequality and deprivations of impoverished societies.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals has given us a well-planned guideline with specific targets aimed at improving faulty health and education systems, reducing inequalities and encouraging economic growth in both developed and developing countries. Each of the goals is significant and must be considered. But as countries struggle to race ahead to meet the goal date, the question remains: who is being left behind?

800 million disabled women

Uganda is a low income country in Eastern Africa. Three quarters of the population live in rural areas and exist on a mere \$1.90/day. Poverty at such levels is the driver of huge inequities in living standards, education and healthcare services.

Unfortunately, rural areas have more cases of disabled persons with women being 3 times more likely to be disabled than men as a result of pregnancy, childbirth, violence and abuse.

According to the latest statistics, women constitute approximately 50 per cent of the global population, or 4 billion persons. World Bank states that 1 out of 5 women in the world have some form of disability, which translates into a mere 800 million women that suffer not only discrimination due to their gender but also as a result of their disability. Eight hundred million women is a substantial number of persons that cannot and should not be ignored.

Poor education and healthcare

Uganda, like many low income countries has extremely poor education and healthcare services. Education is considered appropriate for the male child while the girl is expected to fulfill her role as a mother and homemaker. Health facilities in rural areas often lack supplies and manpower to handle the overwhelming number of children in need of healthcare services.

The lack of financial resources prevents the woman from pursuing appropriate maternal medical care before and after pregnancy which has contributed to the number of stillborn, preterm and low weight births.

As a result of the woman’s lack of healthcare knowledge, malnutrition, diarrheal diseases, malaria, and poor sanitation are taking the lives of innocent children. Now, due to the pandemic, cases of rape, incest and early pregnancy have all increased substantially. Until the disabled woman has improved access to healthcare services the number of preventable deaths will continue.

The time is now

With less than 6 years remaining, it’s imperative that funders and financial institutions increase their support for improved education and healthcare programs in low income countries. Years of teaching by rote in over-crowded and inadequate facilities have shown over and over again that children are not learning and drop out in significant numbers by the time they reach 10-12 years of age. Healthcare systems must include preventative education and classes on nutrition; facilities need better

equipment, supplies and manpower. Significant change in the treatment of the disabled woman must be addressed.

Until education and healthcare change their approach, the Sustainable Development Goals of 3 – Health and Hygiene and 4 – quality education will never be reached.

800 million disabled women need our voice. It's time to put our commitments into action backed by solid and meaningful programs to make significant change for the disabled woman.

As the priority theme states it best: The time is now to accelerate our actions to assure the world's most oppressed disabled woman will achieve equality and empowerment in her lifetime.
