



Economic and Social Council

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Commission on the Status of Women

Sixty-eighth session

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**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and 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 Street Business School, 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

Our team at Street Business School is writing to express deep support for the central theme of the upcoming session, which aims to “accelerate the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective.” The importance of entrepreneurship as a means of empowering women living in extreme poverty cannot be overstated, and we wish to emphasize its significance as you review the agreed conclusions of the 68th session, particularly on “social protection systems, access to public services, and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.”

Extreme poverty disproportionately affects women across the globe, despite significant strides in promoting gender equality. Disparities remain in terms of income, education, healthcare and economic opportunities. Entrepreneurship, especially when tailored to address the unique challenges faced by women, represents a powerful solution to these disparities and offers a tangible path towards the empowerment of women and girls.

Entrepreneurship offers women in extreme poverty an avenue to economic empowerment, enabling them to create and manage their businesses and take control of their financial futures. We have seen first-hand how with access to training, resources and mentorship, women can develop the skills needed to establish sustainable and profitable enterprises. This economic empowerment transcends mere income generation, fostering financial independence, bolstering self-esteem, and enhancing the ability to provide for their families.

By initiating their own businesses, women can contribute to local economies, create jobs and support community development. Investments in women’s entrepreneurial endeavors enhance social protection systems, ultimately benefiting women and girls and promoting gender equality. Women who become entrepreneurs enhance their roles as leaders and decision-makers within their families and communities.

We also know how giving women the tools to control their income creates ripple effects that positively impact the entire range of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Our network of over 250 non-governmental partners is leveraging the Street Business School curriculum to amplify the impact of the services they provide to some of the most marginalized communities, whether their focus is climate resiliency, public health, education access or other vital services.

We urge the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women to recognize the pivotal role of entrepreneurship in accelerating gender equality and empowering women and girls, particularly those living in extreme poverty. When approached with a gender perspective, entrepreneurship becomes a transformative force that not only addresses poverty but also strengthens institutions, financing and social protection systems. By investing in women’s entrepreneurial potential, we take a significant step towards creating a more inclusive, just and equitable world for all.
