ALL TESTS NEGATIVE!
No Women Contracted HIV Last Year

BY SADOF ALEXANDER, ONE STAFF WRITER

In days past, gender equality seemed like an impossible ambition. The very notion of “gender equality” was met with scoffs and hesitance. From those who did not recognize the problems, to those who considered the problems insurmountable, such an achievement would have seemed too far out of reach, perhaps even laughable.

Today, every person who viewed equality as a pipe dream is proven wrong. Celebration and unbridled joy sparked around the world as the UN announced these seven momentous achievements, effectively closing the world’s gender gaps:

■ All women are testing negative for HIV.
■ Every woman in the world now has access to banking and financial services.
■ Half of the world’s elected leaders are women.
■ Sexual harassment and assault rates are at an all-time low.
■ Every woman has access to the internet.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WORLD LEADERS
It will take 108 years to achieve gender equality globally at the rate we’re going. We urgently need concrete action.

A3

OPEN LETTER DEAR WORLD LEADERS
Over forty inspiring activists from fifteen African countries have co-signed a powerful letter to world leaders demanding progress, not promises for women everywhere.

A4

TAKE ACTION SIGN THE OPEN LETTER
We won’t end extreme poverty until we break down the barriers holding girls and women back. Stand in solidarity with women. Sign their letter and join the global movement for equality.

A5

DIGITAL NEWS NIGERIA’S AREWAMETOO MOVEMENT
Survivors of sexual abuse and harassment are sharing their experiences on social media, using the #ArewaMeToo hashtag.

A9

Continue to page A8
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- Every woman is now in charge.
- World’s Women Now Banking

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Take a photo of this newspaper headline and share with your world leader using #progressnotpromises #gender7 @G7

WWW: WOMEN’S WIDE WEB
All Women Now Have Internet Access
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Wondersing why we
 need gender equality?
 There are seven issues that are still
cutting short the potential — all tied
together. We're waiting for.

The front page news you just read
obviously isn’t real. But, imagine what the
world might look like if
that story was real. What
are we waiting for?

We want to show the world what kind
of women and girls worldwide.

Visit Gender7.com for additional information
and solutions for the seven issues tied
together.

TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE?

Adopt progressive laws
All governments should commit to in-

troducing two, new progressive laws by
2025, and to the abolition of sexist laws.

Track commitments to
completion
Leaders should support the creation of a
Global Alliance for Gender Equality
that holds governments and the private
sector to account for any commitments
they make on gender equality, starting
with those made at the G7 Summit.

Finance the fight
All governments need to make signifi-
cant financial commitments in order to
fully fund the fight for gender equality,
and in particular to provide women with
digital access to financial services, to
get more girls into school and to support
women entrepreneurs and activists.

Partner with Africa
The G7 should forge an equal partner-
ship with Africa that leads the way in
focusing on driving gender equality.

Policy

Recommendations
for World Leaders

It will take 108 years to achieve gender equality globally at the rate we’re going. We urgently need concrete
action. 26 of the 27 poorest countries are in sub-Saharan Africa, where poverty is actually on the rise. If we hope
to deliver the most ambitious goals humankind has ever set - the SDGs - we urgently need concrete action. That
means policy change and putting money behind the fight.

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Dear World Leaders,

We are the women at the frontlines of the fight against gender inequality and global poverty. Every day we see the determination and dignity of girls and women facing down the toughest challenges. We see real advances and the power of people to achieve change. We won't surrender the toughest challenges. We see progress, this will take 108 years. This year cannot be a halfway point.

You promised to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls by 2030, but at the current rate of progress, this will take 108 years. This is unacceptable. We need genuine progress, not grand promises.

Across the globe, women are equal until all of us are equal. No matter where you live or what gender you are, you have a voice in this fight. Now is the time for you to use it and make sure we leave no woman behind.

To accelerate progress men must demand change with us so that we rise united not divided. And women must have a seat at the decision-making table - because you can't change what you don't see. We're not looking for your sympathy, we're demanding your action. Because none of us are equal until all of us are equal.

Across the globe, gender inequality continues to make it harder for women to escape extreme poverty. Despite the urgent need for change, at the current rate of progress it will take 108 years more to achieve gender equality. That means inequality will likely outweigh every single person who reads this. This is unacceptable.

If we want equality, we need to step up now and demand real progress for women everywhere.

Open Letter

Now is the time to stand in solidarity with women everywhere

BY SADOF ALEXANDER, ONE STAFF WRITER

108 years. That's how long ago the first international Women's Day took place. On March 18, 1911, over a million people worldwide called for equal rights. They demanded that women have the right to work, receive vocational training, hold public office, and vote.

A lot has changed in 108 years, but we've still got a long way to go. Across the globe, women are still legally prevented from having the same economic opportunities as men. In some places, women are barred from having a bank account, or can't own the land that they farm. 1,000 young women are still infected with HIV every single day, and millions of girls are still out of school. These are some of the realities that make it harder for women to escape global poverty.

If we don't speed things up, it will take 108 years more to achieve gender equality. That means inequality could likely outweigh every single person who reads this. Every girl born this year may face inequality throughout her whole life. This is unacceptable.

This year cannot be a halfway point. If we want equality, we need to step up now and demand real progress for women everywhere.

Luckily, no one is fighting this fight alone. We contacted 45 activists from across the African continent who are leading the charge fighting for gender equality. We asked them to share their vision for gender equality and what world leaders need to do to achieve it. Despite their different focuses and various fields of work, they all shared a common sentiment: we need to create a world where everyone has the same opportunities.

Their responses came together in a powerful open letter. They are urging world leaders to make real progress towards ending inequality. But, this letter isn't just about the activists who wrote it and the leaders who are acting on it - it's about you. You, reading this right now, have the opportunity to stand with them. You have the chance to join a global movement and stand in solidarity with the women who contributed to this letter, and inequality with every woman.

None of us are equal until all of us are equal. No matter where you live or what gender you are, you have a voice in this fight. Now is the time for you to use it and make sure we leave no woman behind.

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None of us are equal until all of us are equal. No matter where you live or what gender you are, you have a voice in this fight. Now is the time for you to use it and make sure we leave no woman behind.
Female farmers can now own land and are earning high profits.

Every girl in the world is getting a quality, equitable education.

The good news keeps building before when it comes to these landmark achievements. In addition to benefiting women worldwide, poverty rates are the lowest in recorded history. When women have equal opportunities, access, and value for their work, they are equally equipped to earn a stable income, which in turn is invested into their families and communities. As a result, gender equality has sparked economic development in all of the world’s countries. The severe decline in global poverty is an outstanding trend, and one that can be directly tied to the recent developments in gender equality.

The problem of inequality has never been simple. If the problem was easy, this day could have come a lot sooner. But, like all things worth fighting for, the journey to this success has not been easy.

In 2010, women and girls everywhere were suffering, simply on the basis of their sex. As a societal issue, gender-based violence has been on the rise, with on-the-rise incidence in some cases. The economic cost of gender-based violence, whatever the form, is gargantuan. It takes a toll on individuals, families, and communities. As a result, women and girls are often subjected to violence, discrimination, and abuse. The evidence, however, does not paint a full picture – every stat represents real women. Behind the stats are real lives, forever changed by a diagnosis. Behind the stats on gender-based violence, there were girls struggling to recover from assault. Behind the stats on education, there were girls whose potential was limited from not knowing how to read. The list goes on and on, but the point is clear: the numbers represent real people who were affected by gender inequality.

Important, too, is how these issues affected each other. The separate aspects of inequality did not exist in a vacuum. A woman denied access to earning land may also be a woman who didn’t have access to a quality education and can’t access vital information through the internet. A woman who underwent female genital mutilation or is barred from certain jobs may be prevented from participating in politics, preventing her from acting to change harmful policies. As a result, gender gaps could not be parcelled out and dealt with by one world. The needed solutions that recognized the ties between various forms of discrimination and acted to address them all unlikely to succeed.

On top of all these complexities lied a societal issue. Even when these challenges and obstacles were recognized, the solutions were as complex as the problems. Such grand, world-altering changes demanded participation on every level.

2010 was a year of challenges, but also one that brought about triumphs. Everyday citizens of the world, people who could have easily remained neutral, decided to take action. These people, across the world, stood up and demanded real change. From signing petitions to meeting with elected officials, spreading information to starting movements, individuals took action.

Every singular person who recognized the reality of inequality and, perhaps more importantly, knew that the world could be different are the ones who made it happen.

Activists working at local levels also played an immeasurable role in closing gender gaps. Across the world, activists began local movements, started organizations, educated the masses, and inspired others to affect change in their communities. Activism was key to breaking down barriers, changing hearts, nurturing minds, and creating a ripple effect that grew into wide-sweeping steps towards equality. Thanks to the efforts of thousands of people, activists and volunteers alike, world leaders committed to make progress, not promises. Changes to laws, financial gaps were either reducing accountability and transparency, and ending corruption are just some of the steps that world leaders took that year. Without these essential actions, the world would not be where it is today.

The road to today’s achievements – and to equality in general – was not one that was passed over. It was not a road we found and took from Point A to Point B. Rather, it was a road that was made. It’s a road of coalitions and cement, pieced together bit-by-bit based on what directions we needed to go. And, like all roads, the one towards equality is one that we can now all walk on, knowing that everyone has the same access to it.

2010 seems like long ago. In reality, those eleven years have passed as quickly as time often does. It’s hard to imagine what the world would look like today if those living in 2010 had not acted – a world where women and girls continued to face obstacles and suffer hardships, solely from an unwillingness to change. Instead, we can reflect on the road that we’ve built together, and continue walking forward.

Now that we have landed in the world we are in, where no one is held back and we can celebrate our newfound freedom, one lingering thought remains: Why hadn’t we made this happen sooner?

Kadidjah Adams, a 24-year-old pharmacist from Kano, Northern Nigeria, took to Twitter and shared the horrific account of abuse that she suffered at the hands of her ex-boyfriend. Unknown to her, her tweet would ultimately trigger the rise of an entire movement, which is at the forefront of mobilizing women in Northern Nigeria to speak up against Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV).

It took a reply to her tweet by a fellow Northern Nigerian woman and activist Fatiyakharin Hashim, who created the hashtag #ArewaMeToo (a localized version of the global gender rights movement #MeToo) to ignite the conversation. The term “Arewa” generally symbolizes Northern Nigeria.

More than one in four young Nigerian women (28%), between the age of 25-29 has suffered some form of abuse and physical violence since they were 15, according to a UNFPA survey. A majority of these victims are from Northern Nigeria where a number of social and cultural factors seem to normalize the violence suffered by women in the region.

Nigeria ranks a low 152th in the global gender gap index. In Northern Nigeria, violence against women takes several forms, with forced and early marriages, domestic violence, and sexual assault the most prevalent. Curiously, domestic violence against women has legal backing in the penal code governing Northern Nigeria.

For several years, women have wallowed in this culture of silence. This has allowed the abuse to fester, and perpetrators are even emboldened as women who have spoken in times past have been publicly shamed, isolated, and ridiculed.

This is why #ArewaMeToo was met with so much surprise and enthusiasm. For the first time, women in Northern Nigeria could collectively rally together to take a public stance against sexual harassment, sexual violence and crimes. This time, they’re naming and shaming their abusers and regaining their power.

Why hasn’t this movement succeeded in rallying together to pursue legal action against the alleged predator? Several attempts to intimidate the movement, including the arrest of one of its prominent members Maryam Aravon, has been foiled by actively engaged citizens and vocal women who have built an insurmountable movement on social media.

This highlights the importance of young people - and the social media platforms at their disposal - in addressing social injustices. A simple hashtag succeeded in rallying women. Together, they broke through an institutionalized culture of silence and are now demanding action and change.

Several issues still abound in Northern Nigeria’s laws and policies that protect women from abuse are still not in place. Likewise, unequal access to opportunities, such as literacy and finance, are undermining women and girls, raising their risk of suffering abuse and sexual exploitation.

#ArewaMeToo is evolving to take on some of these challenges. The movement has gone offline, establishing a number of local chapters that are providing pressure on local authorities and governments to protect the rights of women.

The group is staging walks and meeting stakeholders, including law enforcers and legislators, to push for lasting institutional reforms. At the same time, they’re ensuring that more women are reporting and getting linked to other organisations offering assistance, including legal and psychosocial support.

The #ArewaMeToo movement, started by young people from Northern Nigeria, should inspire more people - especially advocates fighting for the rights of vulnerable and marginalised groups across the globe. It is an important reminder that a smartphone device with access to the internet offers an opportunity to demand action and create change where needed.
ONE and Cargill: Partners in the fight for gender equality

Female farmers like Victoria – who has owned and operated her farm since 1980 – are helping feed the world. After participating in the Cargill Cocoa Promise, a program that provides female farmers with access to training, financial services, and other key resources, her crop production increased. Now, Victoria’s earning more income which means she can better support her four children.

You’ve read The News We Want now test your knowledge in our gender equality crossword

Across:
1. We’re pushing world leaders to make progress towards this kind of equality.
4. We don’t just need to get kids into school. We need to get them ______.
5. We’re not looking for your sympathy, we’re demanding your ______.
7. Increased access to ______ services, such as payments, savings, and credit, is a powerful force for advancing women’s economic empowerment.
9. Even though women make up a large part of Africa’s farmers, many are denied ownership over this resource.
11. “To accelerate progress men must demand change with us so that we rise ______ not divided.”
12. One woman in ______ will experience physical or sexual abuse in her lifetime.
13. As of November 2018, women only make up less than one-fourth of this political group.
14. It’s not a disease of the past - it’s a crisis now, especially for girls and women.
15. Discriminatory laws in order to achieve gender equality.
18. What we need instead of promises.

Down:
2. The masthead of our newspaper.
3. Empowered women ______ women.
6. Accountability is securing and enforcing equal ______ for all.
8. At the current rate of progress, we won’t achieve gender equality for this many more years.
10. Closing gender gaps doesn’t only benefit women - local, national, and global economies will experience this as a result of gender equality.
12. One woman in ______ will experience physical or sexual abuse in her lifetime.
16. ______ of us are equal until all of us are equal.

Answers

JOIN THE FIGHT AGAINST EXTREME POVERTY.

Take a photo of this newspaper headline and share with your world leader using #progressnotpromises #gender7 @G7

VISIT GENDER7.COM TO LEARN MORE

TAKE ACTION AT ONE.ORG