



AAUW PROGRAM IN A BOX

GLOBAL ISSUES FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

AT A GLANCE

GLOBAL ISSUES FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Use this Program in a Box to raise awareness about the successes and challenges facing women and girls in their communities and around the world.

INTENDED AUDIENCE

AAUW members and local community members who are interested in learning about global development issues for women and girls

PROGRAM FORMAT

A workshop, luncheon, forum, film screening, half-day conference, community service project, fundraiser, or other event

TIME CONSIDERATIONS

Time frame: Any time or season, though many are scheduled around March 8, International Women's Day

Estimated planning time: Two months

Estimated presentation time: Anywhere from two hours to a half-day event

RESOURCES NEEDED

Space: A meeting room

Speakers or consultants: Individuals with international experience such as someone from a local college or university, international organization, or an AAUW fellow

Equipment: Possibly a computer and data projector

Supplies: Pens, pencils, paper, badges, notepads, extension cords, literature tables, registration table, chairs

Handouts: Various AAUW brochures about membership, fellowships and grants, and programs

Budget considerations: Possible reimbursement of speakers' travel expenses

BENEFITS TO YOUR STATE, BRANCH, OR COMMUNITY

- Showcases the accomplishments of women in their communities and across the world
- Gives AAUW members and attendees the opportunity to network and share knowledge by partnering with local international organizations
- Shows AAUW members how they can take ongoing action to make an impact on critical issues affecting women in their communities and worldwide

PROGRAM DETAILS

GLOBAL ISSUES FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

AAUW branches or states can plan and deliver a powerful, informative event at the grassroots level and draw on local experts to educate people about universal global development issues as they relate to women and girls. Educate and link members of your local community to the global issues affecting women and girls. Promote the rich and diverse fabric of local activities that connect women from around the world.

Your event theme may be related to a current issue in the news, something that affects your community, topics that your speakers are interested in, or issues that your branch is passionate about. Topics should be related to AAUW's mission of breaking through barriers for women and girls and may include prominent global development issues. The following are just a few examples:

- Human trafficking
- Girls' and women's education
- Human rights
- Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics opportunities for women and girls
- Violence against women
- Economic empowerment
- Women's political participation

There are a variety of program ideas and formats to consider, as detailed on the Global Programming Ideas tool ([see below](#)). The planning committee may need branch members to help identify knowledgeable presenters or event moderators after you determine the topic and format for the program.

It is important to research or contact potential speakers, panelists, or workshop coordinators about their availability early in the process. Local speakers from CARE may be available; e-mail groups@care.org to find out. Local organizations such as Rotary International, the National Council for International Visitors, the United Nations Association of the United States of America, colleges, universities, and global businesses are also excellent sources for finding speakers and partners.

You should select a strong moderator (if needed) who can relate information about AAUW's mission and point out other AAUW products and services that address global women's issues, such as the travel program, fellowships and grants, the [CARE partnership](#), U.N. activities, and AAUW's work to promote women's rights and equality globally.

If time and space permits, encourage panelists and participants to talk and network after the formal session ends. Encourage ongoing collaboration among participants and organizations.

INCORPORATE MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT

Membership matters! Help grow the AAUW community by inviting prospective members to your event and encouraging them to join AAUW. Visit the [membership campaign website](#) to learn more.

If your event involves college and university faculty or students or is held on a campus, invite schools that are not yet AAUW college/university partner members to join AAUW and offer their students the benefits that go with AAUW membership. All students attending a C/U partner-member institution are eligible to join AAUW for free as e-students. For more information, visit the [college/university partner recruitment web page](#).

TOOLS

GLOBAL ISSUES FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

GLOBAL ISSUES FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS TOOLS

- [Global Issues Programming Ideas](#)
- [History of International Women's Day and time line](#)
- [Facts about Women and Girls around the World](#)

PROGRAMS-IN-A-BOX TOOL KIT

From the [tool kit](#), you can download and alter the following documents for your event:

- Attendee sign-in form
- Event evaluation form
- Event planning checklist
- Event registration form
- Photograph release form
- Sample time line

MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT TOOLS

- [Individual members](#)
- [AAUW college/university partner members](#)

CONTACTS

- For questions or information about this Program in a Box, contact connect@aauw.org or 800/326-2289.

GLOBAL ISSUES PROGRAMMING IDEAS

GLOBAL ISSUES FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

To organize a successful program, make sure to choose an event and a topic that suits your audience's interests and concerns.

Possible topics include the following:

- Poverty
- Violence against women
- Self-esteem
- Portrayal of women in the media
- Stereotyping and sociosexual roles
- Equal rights
- Women's struggles
- Work and family challenges
- Education and training for women
- Career choices
- Women and science
- Women in nontraditional roles
- Employment and pay equity
- Sharing power and decision making
- Strategies to introduce change
- Legal questions
- Feminism
- Gender relations
- Women's health issues
- Issues of particular interest to visible minority groups such as Aboriginal women, lesbians, seniors, women with disabilities, or immigrant women

Choose your program's format from the list below or brainstorm about another type of event or project that fits your needs.

- Have a discussion relating to the global theme for International Women's Day or to the concerns of the women in your community, your co-workers, or students at your local university or school.
- Host a conference or round table with guest speakers to discuss issues relating to the status of women. Members of the panel could be affiliated with an organization fighting for women's rights, economic security, education, or other topics. You could utilize an AAUW International Fellow (see the [Focus on the Fellows Program in a Box](#) for more information) or a grant recipient who is working on international issues.

- Hold a brunch, a newsmaker lunch, or a community dinner with your colleagues, neighbors, or friends.
- Put together an information fair with kiosks to distribute pamphlets and other materials.
- Display a photo or art exhibit in your workplace, school, or public library featuring works created by women. Invite women's organizations to attend the activity.
- Have a quiz or contest on the history of the struggle for women's rights in the United States.
- Produce a show, concert, or play relating to the theme for International Women's Day.
- Highlight the special leadership qualities, contributions, achievements, progress, or volunteer work of members of your community who are working for women's equality (give a prize, write an article about them, or invite them to speak about their activities).
- Interview women in your organization or community who work in nontraditional jobs.
- Invite women from several generations to share their personal experiences.
- Present a film or video on issues relating to women followed by a discussion. It may be helpful to have the discussion moderated by a special resource person, or you could invite a guest speaker to make a presentation.
- Produce a promotional poster on International Women's Day and post it on bulletin boards or on the walls in your office, community center, church, or school.
- Prepare and send out an e-mail message or bulletin in your branch.
- Write an article on International Women's Day for your branch's newsletter or for a special publication dedicated to women.
- Write an op-ed and submit it for publication in your local newspaper.
- Run a contest for photos, drawings, sculptures, or other art on the theme of women taking action.

So make a difference—think globally and act locally! Do your part to ensure that the future for girls is bright, equal, safe, and rewarding.

THE HISTORY OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

GLOBAL ISSUES FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS



International Women's Day has been observed since in the early 1900s, a time of great expansion and turbulence in the industrialized world that saw booming population growth and the rise of progressive ideologies.

1908

In the early 20th century, women's oppression and inequality were spurring women to become more vocal and active in campaigning for change. In 1908, 15,000 women marched through New York City demanding shorter working hours, better pay, and voting rights.

1909

In accordance with a declaration by the Socialist Party of America, the first National Woman's Day was observed across the United States on February 28. Women continued to celebrate the day on the last Sunday of February until 1913.

1910

At a Socialist International meeting in Copenhagen, Denmark, an International Women's Day was proposed to honor the women's rights movement and to assist in achieving universal suffrage for women. Over 100 women from 17 countries unanimously agreed to the proposal—three of these women were later elected the first women in the Finnish parliament.

1911

Following the Copenhagen decision, in 1911 International Women's Day was celebrated for the first time in Austria, Germany, and Switzerland on March 19. More than 1 million women and men attended rallies campaigning to end discrimination and advocate for women's rights to work, vote, and hold public office. Less than a week later, the tragic Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire in New York City took the lives of more than 140 working women, most of them Italian and Jewish immigrants. This disastrous event drew significant attention to working conditions, and labor legislation in the United States became a focus of subsequent International Women's Day events. That year also saw the women's Bread and Roses campaign.

1913–14

On the eve of World War I, Russian women campaigned for peace while observing their first International Women's Day in February 1913. In 1914, more women across Europe held rallies to campaign against the war and to express women's solidarity.

1917

On the last Sunday of February 1917, Russian women began a strike for “bread and peace” in response to the deaths of over 2 million Russian soldiers in World War I. Opposed by political leaders, the women continued to strike for four days with other workers and citizens, spurring on the Russian Revolution until the czar was forced to abdicate and the provisional government granted women the right to vote.

1918–99

Since its birth in the socialist movement, International Women’s Day has grown to become a global day of recognition and celebration worldwide. For decades, the event has grown in strength—for many years the United Nations has held an annual International Women’s Day conference to coordinate global efforts for women’s rights and participation in social, political, and economic processes. The United Nations even designated 1975 as International Women’s Year. Women’s organizations and governments around the world have also observed the occasion annually on March 8 by holding large-scale events that honor women’s advancement and remind people of the work that has yet to be done.

2000 AND BEYOND

International Women’s Day is now an official holiday in Armenia, Russia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Macedonia, Moldova, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam. The traditions include men honoring their mothers, wives, girlfriends, colleagues, and friends with flowers and small gifts. In some countries, the event is on the same scale as Mother’s Day in the United States—children give small presents to their mothers and grandmothers.

The new millennium has witnessed a significant change and attitudinal shift in both women’s and society’s thoughts about women’s equality and emancipation. Many people in the younger generations feel that all the battles have been won for women, while many feminists from the 1970s know only too well the longevity and ingrained complexity of sexism. With more women in the boardroom, greater equality in legislative rights, and an increased critical mass of women’s visibility in every aspect of life, one could think that women have gained true equality. The unfortunate fact is that women are still not paid equally to their male counterparts; women still are not present in equal numbers in business or politics; and globally women’s education, health, and safety is worse than that of men.

However, great improvements have been made. We do have female astronauts and prime ministers; women can work and have a family—women have real choices. The tone and nature of International Women’s Day has, for the past few years, moved from being a reminder about the negatives to a celebration of the positives.

Annually on March 8, thousands of events are held throughout the world to inspire women and celebrate their achievements. While there are many large-scale initiatives, a rich and diverse fabric of local activity connects women from all around the world, ranging from political rallies, business conferences, government activities, and networking events to local women’s craft markets, theatrical performances, fashion parades, and more.

SOURCES AND RESOURCES

- [U.N. Women Watch](#)
- [International Women’s Day websites](#)
- [CARE website](#)

FACTS ABOUT WOMEN AND GIRLS

GLOBAL ISSUES FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

The following are statistics from Dosomething.org that may be helpful when you're planning a global-issues program.

- Women perform 66 percent of the world's work but receive only 11 percent of the world's income and own only 1 percent of the world's land.
- Women make up 66 percent of the world's illiterate adults.
- Women head 83 percent of single-parent families. The number of families nurtured by women alone doubled from 1970 to 1995 (from 5.6 million to 12.2 million).
- Women account for 55 percent of all college students, but even when women have equal years of education it does not translate into as many economic opportunities or as much political power.
- There are 6 million more women than men in the world.
- Two-thirds of the world's children who receive less than four years of education are girls. Girls represent nearly 60 percent of the children who aren't in school.
- Parents in countries such as China and India sometimes use sex determination tests to find out if their fetus is a girl. Of 8,000 fetuses aborted at a Mumbai, India, clinic, 7,999 were female.
- Wars today affect civilians most, since many are civil wars, guerrilla actions, and ethnic disputes over territory or government. Three out of four fatalities of war are women and children.
- Rape is consciously used as a tool of genocide and a weapon of war. Tens of thousands of women and girls have been subjected to rape and other sexual violence since the crisis erupted in Darfur, Sudan, in 2003. There is no evidence of anyone being convicted in Darfur for these atrocities.
- About 75 percent of the refugees and internally displaced people in the world are women who have lost their families and their homes.
- Gender-based violence kills one in three women across the world and is the biggest cause of injury and death to women worldwide, causing more deaths and disabilities among women age 15- 44 than cancer, malaria, traffic accidents, and war.

RESOURCES

- Amnesty International
- U.S. Census Bureau
- Women's Learning Partnership