

STATEMENT
Jokudu Winnie Jada
Utah Valley University Rotaractor
67th Session of The Commission on The Status Of Women
Side Event

“Advocating for mountain women and girls’ education through student-engaged learning.”

March 8th, 2023.

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, my name is Jokudu Winnie Jada. I am an International Student at Utah Valley University (UVU) studying Political Sciences/ Global Politics.

In South Sudan, unemployment and underemployment are high across all demographics. Entrepreneurship however has made its way into the mainstream as a way to combat employment issues. Gender inequality has however made it difficult for women. According to UNESCO, less than 30% of women over the age of 15 are literate. There are social norms and conditions preventing women from and girls from accessing and completing formal education which affects their ability to engage in business.

Ending gender inequality has always been a major interest to me. In 2018, I participated in a campaign in Juba, South Sudan called “Ana Ma Mara Sakit” translation, “I am not just a woman”, “mara sakit” is a demeaning Arabic term meaning “just a woman” which is often used to disregard women who speak up for their rights. Through this campaign, we went to schools, and villages talking to girls and women about the importance of education and women’s rights.

The Student Engaged Learning Model relies on students to work together to find solutions to problems that affect their communities. I served my community through the UVU Rotaract Club, by raising funds and then delivering dictionaries and coats for local schools, which was an opportunity to build teamwork. I am also the Vice President of the Immigrant and Refugee Student Union (IRSU), a student club made up of students from all backgrounds to advocate for immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers and undocumented students. We also serve our communities through hosting clothing drives and volunteering to teach and mentor refugee students in Utah.

I hope to apply my experiences using student engaged learning as a solution in the future to empower women in Sudan and South Sudan, fighting against gender inequality.

Thank you.