



Interactive dialogue on the priority theme

Building back better: women's participation and leadership in COVID-19 response and recovery

Thursday, 18 March 2021, 9.00 – 11.00 a.m., Informal virtual meeting

Overview

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action recognizes that all people have the equal right to participate in their country's government through public office and informal leadership, calls for power-sharing between men and women, and highlights women's equal access to and full participation in decision-making as critical for achieving gender equality. The Commission on the Status of Women has reaffirmed the commitments made in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and emphasized the mutually reinforcing relationship between the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Platform for Action and the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Platform for Action recognizes that many women are particularly affected by environmental disasters, serious and infectious diseases and various forms of violence against women. While progress has been made over the past twenty-five years, enabling women to access more and higher positions of power in public life, the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed and exacerbated gaps in women's participation in decision-making. Due to the differentiated impact of COVID-19 and its effects on women and men, women, national gender equality mechanisms and women's organizations need to be included in planning, decision making, and implementation of pandemic response and recovery measures.

This interactive dialogue will be an opportunity for panelists to address women's leadership in COVID-19 response, and discuss good practices, challenges, and gaps in regard to women's participation and leadership for gender-responsive, sustainable and resilient recovery in the Decade for Action for achieving the SDGs and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, and closing development divides.

Format and participation

The interactive dialogue will be chaired by [TBC by the Bureau], Vice-Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women. A moderator will support the Chair. The event will start with a moderated dialogue in which panelists may share examples of steps that have been taken in different national contexts to ensure women's full and effective participation and decision-making, and reflect on how these efforts could be scaled up.

The floor will then be open for contributions and comments from Member States, as well as other stakeholders, in an interactive dialogue. The moderator will wrap up and the chair will close the meeting.

Leading questions

Participating stakeholders in the interactive dialogue are invited to address the following questions:

- What are good practice examples of collaboration between governmental institutions, women in politics and women's organizations in responding to COVID-19 and preparing the recovery? What lessons can be learned from such collaboration that can be scaled up and replicated in other areas?
- What are examples of policies, programmes and budget allocations that Governments have adopted to promote gender-responsive COVID-19 response and recovery?
- What are examples of the impact of women's greater involvement in decision-making on COVID-19 response and recovery?
- How can governments ensure women's equal participation in decision making on COVID-19 response and recovery, and meaningful consultations with women's organizations and national mechanisms for gender equality?

Outcome

The outcome of the interactive dialogue will be in the form of a Chair's summary, prepared in consultation with the regional groups through the members of the Bureau.