



**Commission on the Status of Women
Fifty-ninth session**

**Resources for gender equality:
Good practices and strategies for action/the way forward**

**Friday, 13 March 2015
3.00 pm to 6.00 pm**

ISSUES PAPER

1. Introduction

In its resolution 2013/18, the Economic and Social Council decided that at its fifty-ninth session in 2015, the Commission of the Status of Women (CSW) will undertake a review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. The review will include current challenges that affect the implementation of the Platform for Action and the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women, as well as opportunities for strengthening gender equality and the empowerment of women in the post-2015 development agenda through the integration of a gender perspective.

As part of the review and appraisal at its fifty-ninth session, the Commission will hold a panel discussion on *“Resources for gender equality: Good practices and strategies for action/the way forward”* to identify existing gaps, challenges and lessons learned in financing for gender equality and priority actions and partnerships needed to fulfill commitments and obligations on gender equality and the empowerment of women in the post-2015 development agenda. The panel discussion will result in a Chair’s summary that should contribute to the accelerated implementation of the Platform for Action in the current context.

2. Elements for discussion

A. Background

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action emphasizes that all sources of financing should be mobilized to meet gender equality and women’s empowerment goals. Many United Nations summits and conferences and meetings, including the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, the International Conferences on Financing for Development, and the Commission on the Status of Women (including at its fifty-second session and more recently in 2014) have called on governments to increase investments in gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Further, the agreed conclusions adopted by the Commission at its fifty-second session explicitly called on governments to mainstream gender perspectives into development strategies, plans and budgets and to increase

investments and adequately allocate resources for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Despite these commitments, national reports from the 20-year review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action show that persistent financing gaps remain (E/CN.6/2015/3).

Domestic resources remain the most critical source of financing for gender equality and are essential to meet national commitments including the provision of basic services, social protection, employment, infrastructure and other areas. However, there are critical capacity gaps at the national level in mobilizing and effectively using domestic resources to address gender inequality. Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) allocated to gender equality has increased steadily over the years but there remains considerable underinvestment in women's economic empowerment, sexual and reproductive health and rights, women's role in peace and security and violence against women, despite the prominence of these issues on the global policy agenda. Similarly, private financing for development has increased significantly over the years. However, such resources are often not aligned with national development efforts that deliver social returns, which are critical for the realization of gender equality, the empowerment of women and women's rights.

Fulfilling gender equality commitments through the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Platform for Action and in the post-2015 context will require robust and adequate financing that must be mobilized through (a) enhanced domestic resource mobilization, including through progressive macroeconomic policies, such as tax reforms and the effective use of existing resources; (b) increased commitments of all donors to meet the target of 0.7 per cent of GNI for ODA and ensure ODA is targeted more strategically by focusing on critical gender equality gap areas; and (c) efficient and effective leveraging and use of both traditional and non-traditional (innovative, blended, etc.) types of financing from all sources, including the private sector, philanthropic institutions and donor countries. Commitments to financing gender equality can only be realized if they are underpinned by multi-stakeholder partnerships that work together to address both the structural causes and consequences of gender inequality.

B. Questions for discussion during the dialogue

This session will address the gaps, challenges and lessons learned from implementation of the Platform for Action and identify the partnerships and financing sources required for implementing gender equality commitments in the post 2015 context.

- What are the existing financing gaps for gender equality? What action and policy reforms are needed to increase resources domestically for closing these gaps? What will it take to implement those measures?
- What are examples of effective monitoring and accountability mechanisms for allocating resources for gender equality? How do we use these examples, and lessons learned from monitoring public spending allocations for gender equality to increase resources?
- How can innovative financing become a means to address the financing gaps and areas of underinvestment in gender equality? What are examples of such innovative financing?
- How will we know that greater investment accelerates realization of gender equality?
- What partnerships are needed to deepen resource flows towards realizing gender equality commitments? Where are the gaps, and how can we close those?

- How will we strengthen the global partnership for effective financing for gender equality in the context of the SDGs?
- How can we better mobilize traditional and emerging donors, private sector and civil society in a common effort to step up investment in gender equality?

3. Format

The panel will be chaired by Mr. Mohamed ElBahi, Vice-Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women (Sudan). The introductory comments by panelists of 5 – 7 minutes each will be followed by an interactive discussion with representatives of Member States, the United Nations System and non-governmental organizations.