



High-level interactive dialogue among Ministers on the priority theme

Building alliances to achieve gender equality and empower rural women and girls

Tuesday, 13 March 2018, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., United Nations Headquarters

Overview

In accordance with its methods of work, the Commission on the Status of Women holds a ministerial segment that may include ministerial round tables or other high-level interactive dialogues. At its sixty-second session, the Commission's ministerial segment will include a two-hour high-level interactive dialogue among Ministers on "Building alliances to achieve gender equality and empower rural women and girls." The report of the Secretary-General on the priority theme supports this dialogue (E/CN.6/2018/3).

The interactive dialogue will provide Ministers with an opportunity to engage with each other on challenges, opportunities, good practices and lessons learned with regards to their experiences in building alliances with other stakeholders and how such alliances can help to achieve gender equality, empower rural women and girls and realize their human rights. In addition, non-governmental organizations, especially those representing rural women and girls, will be invited to present established processes, planned initiatives and other efforts to strengthen alliances among gender equality leaders and advocates, and other stakeholders, to achieve gender equality and empower rural women and girls.

This dialogue will also contribute to strengthening opportunities for non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders to contribute to the work of the Commission, as called for in the Commission's methods of work.

Format and participation

The event will be a moderated dialogue among Ministers. Participants will be invited to comment on leading questions (*see below*), and the moderator will support the dialogue and its interactive nature through follow-up questions. Ministers will participate in the dialogue on a voluntary basis. No speakers' list will be kept. However, Ministers wishing to participate in the dialogue will be invited to communicate this intention in advance.

As regards participation by representatives from non-governmental organizations, UN-Women will facilitate an online application process for representatives of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with ECOSOC, and recommend speakers in a manner that reflects regional balance, diversity of voices and expertise at national level. Additionally, UN-Women will work with the relevant United Nations agencies, in particular the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and World Food Programme (WFP), to identify representatives of rural women's and girls' organizations.

Initial comments will be strictly limited to three minutes, and any follow-up comment to one minute.

Leading questions

The transformative, universal 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development confirmed that the Beijing Platform for Action laid a solid foundation for sustainable development. Member States agree that the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Platform for Action will make a crucial contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that will leave no one behind and that will achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

Realizing gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls requires action by Governments and many other stakeholders to translate recent and longstanding commitments into measurable progress. Collaboration, partnerships, alliances among, and mobilization of, a broad range of stakeholders are critical to create opportunities, and overcome barriers and challenges.

National gender equality mechanisms are the principal governmental bodies charged with policy coordination for gender equality and women's empowerment and their human rights. They support mainstreaming of a gender perspective across ministries and across all policies and programmes. They also collaborate with civil society organizations, especially women's organizations, towards common goals. In regards to rural women and girls, other ministries and rural development-related mechanisms and institutions, cooperatives, employers' and workers' organizations, the private sector, and women's and civil society organizations are also key actors in developing and implementing effective legal, regulatory and policy frameworks, and for ensuring monitoring and compliance.

Participants are invited to address the following questions during the dialogue:

- How can gender equality mechanisms collaborate effectively across Government, including with ministries of planning, finance, agriculture, energy and others; and with other stakeholders for gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls?
- What are some of the key trends in rural development that are impacting on rural women's and girls' livelihoods, resilience and full participation? What actions are stakeholders taking to ensure that rural women and girls benefit from these trends and can take full advantage of new opportunities?
- What are examples of effective multi-stakeholder collaboration or coordination among governmental authorities and rural women's organizations, cooperatives and enterprises? What other actors and stakeholders need to step up collaboration to ensure rural women's and girls' rights to an adequate standard of living, to a life free of violence and harmful practices, to land and productive assets, food security and nutrition, decent work, education and healthcare are realized?

Outcome

The outcome of the discussion will be in the form of a summary by the Chair of the Commission, prepared in consultation with the regional groups, through the members of the Bureau. The summary will highlight concrete ways of alliance building for realizing gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls.