

SRMUN Atlanta 2015
*Unifying Our Global Community through
Humanitarian Collaboration*
November 19-21, 2015
Atlanta, GA
csw_atlanta@srmun.org



Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the SRMUN Atlanta 2015 Conference and the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). My name is Erika Davidson and I have the wonderful pleasure of serving as the Director of CSW for my second SRMUN on staff. Previously, I served as Assistant Director in the League of Arab States - Heads of State Committee in SRMUN Charlotte 2015. Taking the role of Assistant Director this year will be the esteemed Miss Augaly Kiedi, who is serving her first time on staff. Model UN offers a unique experience, giving delegates the opportunity to challenge themselves, all while engaging fellow delegates in an open dialogue. Augaly and I hope to learn as much from you and your work, speeches and discussion as you will learn during your preparations for committee and in our discussions at the conference. Please take full advantage of this incredible opportunity and make the most of your experience in Atlanta.

The Commission on the Status of Women was established 21 June 1946, as an organ of the United Nations dedicated solely to the promotion of women's rights and gender equality, as well as raising awareness of the various issues that women face around the world. We have chosen the following topics to discuss at this year's conference to fulfill the duty of upholding and preserving the rights of women:

- I. Ensuring Access to Justice and Legal Protection for Women in Post-Conflict Zones
- II. Strengthening the Role of Women in Rural Development as a Means for the Eradication of Poverty

Each delegation is required to submit a two-page (single spaced) position paper that covers both topics. Position papers are critical in providing insight into the history, policies and positions of each Member State and setting the foundation for the direction your Member State will take in approaching the topics. This background guide will provide a strong foundation for your research, yet should not be utilized as a complete means for these selected topics. Delegates are expected to go beyond the guide when researching the topics in preparation for their position paper.

Position papers are an excellent way to present the history and foreign policy of your Member State, but perhaps more importantly, they should be used as an opportunity to discuss unique, effective solutions to the problems at hand. A strong and clear position paper is the foundation and manifestation of your conference preparation and should showcase your research and understanding of the topics. More detailed information about how to write position papers can be found at the SRMUN website (www.srmun.org). **All position papers MUST be submitted by 30 October 2015, by 11:59pm EST using the submission system on the SRMUN website.** Delegations are reminded that CSW is a double delegate committee at SRMUN Atlanta 2015. I appreciate the opportunity to serve as the director for the CSW. I look forward to working with and learning from each and every one of you, and wish you the best of luck. Please feel free to contact Augaly or myself if you have any questions.

Erika Davidson
Director
Csw_atlanta@srmun.org

Augaly Kiedi
Assistant Director
csw_atlanta@srmun.org

Lucie Bowman
Deputy Director-General
ddg_atlanta@srmun.org

The Committee History of the Commission on the Status of Women

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) was created in order to dedicate specific time and effort to “the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.”¹ Established by its Resolution 11(II) on 21 June 1946, CSW operates as an organ of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), and exists as a means of promoting women’s rights through reporting and monitoring the various sociopolitical situations that impact those rights.² The first session of the Commission of the States of Women was held in February 1947 at Lake Success, New York and every delegate in attendance was a woman.³ As a major global intergovernmental body, the Commission “is instrumental in promoting the rights of women, documenting the conditions of women’s lives throughout the world, and determining global standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women.”⁴ CSW’s main function is to provide ECOSOC with information, in the form of recommendations and reports, in order to improve legislation that addresses women’s needs and rights throughout the world.⁵

In its earliest days, CSW’s original focus was bringing women’s issues throughout the world into societal awareness, as well as helping to establish legal protection for the basic rights of women.⁶ This gradually evolved, as the CSW found its place on the world stage, to “addressing women’s role in economic and social development.”⁷ The United Nations declared 1975 the International Women’s Year, at the insistence of the CSW and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs), heralding “equality, development and peace” as its theme.⁸ International Women’s Year ended with the adoption of a plan for the international community to promote women in every Member State at the world’s first Women’s Conference in Mexico City, Mexico.⁹ This Plan of Action mandated the drafting of the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW), which called for “a convention on the elimination of discrimination against women and effective implementation procedures.”¹⁰ 130 Member States voted in favor of CEDAW, and in 1979 “entered into effect on 3 September 1981; just 30 days after the twentieth state had ratified it—faster than any previous human rights convention.”¹¹

After the conference in Mexico City, the United Nations declared the next decade “for Women,” with “Equality, Development, and Peace” continuing as themes for progress.¹² The momentum by the international community to promote women’s rights that began in 1975 continued pushing forward, with subsequent conferences held in Copenhagen, Denmark in 1980 and Nairobi, Kenya in 1985.¹³ During this decade, offices within the United Nations intended specifically for women and the advancement in women’s rights, were established, in particular the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW).¹⁴ UNIFEM “provides financial and technical assistance to innovative programs and strategies that promote women’s human rights, political participation and economic security.”¹⁵ Working within the boundaries of its parent organization, UNIFEM “promotes gender equality and links women’s issues and concerns to national, regional and global agendas by fostering collaboration and providing technical

¹ “Commission on the Status of Women,” UN Women, <http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw> (accessed August 15, 2015).

² Ibid.

³ “Short History of the Commission on the Status of Women,” United Nations, <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/CSW60YRS/CSWbriefhistory.pdf> (accessed August 15, 2015).

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ “CSW Founding Council Resolution 11(II),” Commission on the Status of Women, United Nations Economic and Social Council, 13 July 1946, http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/pdf/CSW_founding_resolution_1946.pdf (accessed August 15, 2015).

⁶ “60 Years of Work for Equality, Development and Peace,” Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Division for the Advancement of Women, <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/CSW60YRS/> (accessed August 15, 2015).

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ “Fact Sheet No.22, Discrimination against Women: The Convention and the Committee,” Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/FactSheet22en.pdf> (accessed August 16, 2015).

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ “Short History of the Commission on the Status of Women,” United Nations, <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/CSW60YRS/CSWbriefhistory.pdf> (accessed August 15, 2015).

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ “United Nations Development Fund for Women,” Taking ITGlobal, <http://orgs.tigweb.org/united-nations-development-fund-for-women-unifem> (accessed August 15, 2015).

expertise on gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment strategies.”¹⁶ UN-INSTRAW strives to “improve the lives of women throughout the world by ensuring that their rights, needs, views and priorities are integral components in decision-making and development,” and is “the leading UN institute devoted to research, training and knowledge management to achieve gender equality and women’s empowerment.”¹⁷

The Fourth World Conference on Women was held in Beijing in 1995, where the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* was adopted, “which consolidated the consensus and commitments achieved through the work of the Commission.”¹⁸ In 1996, the Commission’s mandate was expanded upon with ECOSOC’s adoption of Resolution 1996/6, which gave the Commission the lead in “monitoring and reviewing progress and problems in the implementation of the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, and in mainstreaming a gender perspective in UN activities.”¹⁹ Additionally, as called for in the Platform for Action, the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI) was established, functioning to promote gender equality.²⁰ From its earliest days as an organization, “the Commission was supported by a unit of the United Nations that later became the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) in the UN Secretariat.”²¹ In 2011, a new organization within the United Nations was formed. UN Women was the product of a merge between the Division for the Advancement of Women, INSTRAW, OSAGI, and UNIFEM. UN Women currently acts as the Secretariat for the Commission on the Status of Women.²² The Commission’s method of work is to take on multi-year programs, during which they closely observe in order to appraise progress and make further recommendations to accelerate and improve the implementation of the Platform for Action.²³ Recommendations “take the form of negotiated agreed conclusions on a priority theme.”²⁴

Current methods of work are outlined by the Economic and Social Council in Resolutions 2006/9 and 2009/15, and are covered at each of the Commission’s annual two-week sessions.²⁵ There are 45 Member States of the Commission of the States of Women at any one time.²⁶ The Commission is made up of “one representative from each of the 45 Member States elected by the Economic and Social Council on the basis of equitable geographical distribution: 13 members from Africa, 11 from Asia, 9 from Latin America and Caribbean, 8 from Western Europe and other States and 4 from Eastern Europe.”²⁷ Members States are elected to serve a four year term.²⁸ The current Member States of the Commission of the Status of Women are as follows:

ALBANIA, BANGLADESH, BELARUS, BELGUIM, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, BRAZIL, BURKINA FASON, CHINA, COLOMBIA, CONGO, CUBA, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, ECUADOR, EGYPT, EL SLAVADOR, QUATORIAL GUINEA, FINLAND, GHANA, GERMANY, GYANA, INDIA INDONESIA, ISLMAIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, ISRAEL, JAPAN, KAZAKHSTAN, KENYA, LESOTHO, LIBERIA, LIECHTENSTEIN, MALAWI, MONGOLIA, NIGER, PAKISTAN, PARAGUAY, REPUBLIC OF KOREA, RUSSIAN FEDERATION, SPAIN, SUDAN, SWITERZLAND, TAJIKISTAN, UGANDA, UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, and URUGUAY.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ “60 Years of Work for Equality, Development and Peace,” United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women, <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/CSW60YRS/> (accessed August 15, 2015).

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ “A Brief History of the CSW,” UN Women, <http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/brief-history> (accessed August 15, 2015).

²² Ibid

²³ “Commission on the Status of Women,” UN Women, <http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw> (accessed August 15, 2015).

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ “Member States,” UN Women, <http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/member-states> (accessed August 15, 2015).

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

I: Ensuring Access to Justice and Legal Protection for Women in Post-Conflict Zones

*“Access to justice means more than punishing the perpetrators. It means redress and reparations that enable women to recover losses, alleviate poverty and promote women’s long-term empowerment to become full and equal members of society.”*²⁹

—Michelle Bachelet, Executive Director of UN Women, 2012

Introduction

According to the United Nations Populations Fund, “violence against women and girls” or gender-based violence (GBV), “is one of the most prevalent human rights violations in the world... know[ing] no social, economic or national boundaries.”³⁰ Further, GBV “undermines the health, dignity, security and autonomy of its victims, yet remaining shrouded in a culture of silence.”³¹ In modern armed conflicts, women and children are at an increased risk of being victims.³² Women face many traumatic forms of sexual violence, which are used as tools of war, for military or political objectives.³³ In Rwanda, for example, over 100,000 women were raped in 1994, while a political struggle turned genocide ravaged the country.³⁴ According to various UN agencies, “more than 60,000 women were raped during the civil war in Sierra Leone (1991-2002), more than 40,000 in Liberia (1989-2003), up to 60,000 in the former Yugoslavia (1992-1995), and at least 200,000 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo since 1998.”³⁵

While the focus on sexual violence in many areas is to be commended as tackling a historical silence, this should not be substituted for mainstreaming gender-sensitive perspectives across the board in rule of law programming. Accordingly, during its 57th session in March 2013, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) “reached a historic global consensus that discrimination and violence against women and girls have no place in today’s world.”³⁶ The consensus, which was documented in the Agreed Conclusions on the “Elimination and Prevention of all Forms of Violence Against Women and Girls” by the 2013 Commission on the Status of Women addresses “all forms of violence against women and girls, in all contexts and settings.”³⁷ Particularly in Section A, the CSW determines the actions necessary “to strengthen legal and policy frameworks that address gender inequality and violence against women and girls.”³⁸ The section also includes actions aimed at “ensuring accountability to end impunity and punish perpetrators, and providing access to justice for survivors.”³⁹

History

Post-conflict Member States often structurally fail to meet the ideals set out by the UN to integrate women and girls in justice and legal processes. Continued impunity for perpetrators of gender-based crimes remains a major problem in these areas and it is now widely documented that the obstacles of women’s access to justice derive as much from

²⁹ “Expanding women’s participation in peace-building and recovery is critical to addressing gender-based violations in times of conflict and to advance equality,” UN Women, 25 September 2012, <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2012/9/expanding-women-s-participation-in-peace-building-and-recovery-is-critical-to-addressing-gender-base> (accessed 3 August 2015).

³⁰ “Gender-based violence,” United Nations Populations Fund, <http://www.unfpa.org/gender-based-violence> (accessed August 3, 2015).

³¹ Ibid.

³² “Background Information on Sexual Violence used as a Tool of War,” Outreach Programme on the Rwanda Genocide and the United Nations, <http://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/rwanda/about/bgsexualviolence.shtml> (accessed August 3, 2015).

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ “Elimination and Prevention of All Forms of Violence Against Women and Girls,” 2013 Commission on the Status of Women Agreed Conclusions, UN Women, 4-5 March 2013, <http://www.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/csw/57/csw57-agreedconclusions-a4-en.pdf> (accessed August 15, 2015).

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

justice-chain actors' attitudes and skills as the availability of legal assistance or other direct forms of support to victims of gender-based rights violations. Issues of economic and social injustice, although connected to access to justice issues more broadly, also remain largely separate from the activities of rule of law actors, a gap which highlights the importance of integrated assessment and planning, and the need to sustain meaningful partnerships with other sectorial actors.⁴⁰

Other efforts by the Commission on the Status of Women include the result of the 57th session in March 2013. Focusing on the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls, the CSW urged Member States and relevant entities of the United Nations system, including international and regional organizations, to take a number of actions on the following issues:

- A) Strengthening implementation of legal and policy frameworks and accountability;*
- B) Addressing structural and underlying causes and risk factors so as to prevent violence against women and girls;*
- C) Strengthening multisectorial services, programmes and responses to violence against women and girls; and*
- D) Improving the evidence-base.⁴¹*

The Agreed Conclusions continue to serve as a comprehensive blueprint of actions to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls. In October 2013, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) established *General recommendation No. 30 on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations*.⁴² The primary objective of the general recommendation has been “to provide authoritative guidance to States parties on legislative, policy and other appropriate measures to ensure full compliance with their obligations under the Convention to protect, respect and fulfill women’s human rights.”⁴³ However, CEDAW first noted that “the transition from conflict to post-conflict is often not linear and can involve cessations of conflict and then slippages back into conflict – a cycle that can continue for long periods of time.”⁴⁴

Such situations are outlined in the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*, and include “crises of internal displacement, statelessness and the struggle of refugee populations with repatriation processes.”⁴⁵ According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), women and girls comprise about half of any refugee, internally displaced, or stateless population.⁴⁶ In these statuses they face discriminatory conditions including economic and cultural barriers to education, leadership and participation in decision-making, lack of access to sanitary materials, and freedom of movement.⁴⁷ Therefore, reiterating the observation in general recommendation No. 28 (2010) that discrimination against women is also compounded by intersecting forms of discrimination, general recommendation No. 30 continues to stress the need for States parties to legally “address the rights and distinct needs of conflict-affected girls that arise from gender-based discrimination.”⁴⁸

⁴⁰ Rashida Manjoo and Calleigh McRaith, “Gender Based Violence and Justice in Conflict and Post Conflict Areas,” Cornell Law School, 2011 <http://www.lawschool.cornell.edu/research/ILJ/upload/Manjoo-McRaith-final.pdf> (accessed August 3, 2015).

⁴¹ E/2013/27. *Agreed conclusions on the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls*. United Nations Economic and Social Council. 1 April 2013. [http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw57/CSW57_Agreed_Conclusions_\(CSW_report_excerpt\).pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw57/CSW57_Agreed_Conclusions_(CSW_report_excerpt).pdf) (accessed August 3, 2015).

⁴² CEDAW/C/GC/30. *General recommendation No. 30 on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations*. United Nations Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. 18 October 2013. <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/CEDAW/GComments/CEDAW.C.CG.30.pdf> (accessed August 3, 2015).

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

Women in Post-Conflict Zones

Despite the standards being set by the international community for the protection and empowerment of women and girls with regards to GBV, little progress has been made. In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), for example, GBV remains unchecked despite new national legislation and interventions by the United Nations. The prevalence of GBV in the DRC has reached such alarming levels that Major-General Patrick Cammaert, former commander of UN peacekeeping forces in the Eastern Congo, commented, “It has probably become more dangerous to be a woman than a soldier in armed conflict.”⁴⁹ GBV, including rape, prostitution, forced marriage and domestic violence, continues to be a consistent issue, “especially in artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) areas where women and children constitute up to 60 percent of miners, sorters, transporters and suppliers.”⁵⁰

In July 2006, the DRC nationally criminalized rape within its borders. This new law “provided a modification and supplementation to the existing criminal code on matters related to sexual violence.”⁵¹ Not only was rape defined and criminalized, but it also outlined provisions for other crimes, such as indecent assault, and forced marriage and prostitution. The DRC’s Constitution “orders public authorities to ensure the elimination of sexual violence,” and recognizes the destabilizing impact that sexual violence can have on individuals, as well as populations, and further declares it as a crime against humanity.⁵²

According to Gender Action, an organization devoted to issues of gender, justice, and women’s rights, International Financial Institutions (IFIs) such as the World Bank have “facilitated the DRC’s GBV epidemic through mining sector investments that disregard negative gender impacts.” For example, in 2012 the World Bank “assisted the DRC to revise its Mining Code in order to attract foreign private investment; meanwhile, the new Code completely fails to address GBV that stems from mining activities.”⁵³ The World Bank additionally gave the DRC’s government a USD 255 million loan in order to strengthen the mining industry in the DRC, which helped to promote development in isolated, rural communities, and contributed to combating rampant poverty.⁵⁴ This was done as “part of a [USD 631 million] mining infrastructure investment,” and despite the acknowledgment in the WB project appraisal document that “‘extreme violence and urgent humanitarian needs persist’ in the targeted area,” the project still completely disregards GBV.⁵⁵

Conclusion

While there has been commendable focus on sexual violence in many areas, this should not be substituted for mainstreaming gender-sensitive perspectives across the board in rule of law programming. It is equally important to address the prevalent lack of women’s protection under justice and legal processes in conflict zones. Various measures, both legal and non-legal, “are essential to ensuring that the ideals set forth in international standard-setting instruments become a reality for women.”⁵⁶ Additional measures must be taken to encourage victims to report GBV, which includes eliminating the social stigma that often comes with being a victim of rape, which frequently

⁴⁹ Rashida Manjoo and Calleigh McRaith, “Gender Based Violence and Justice in Conflict and Post Conflict Areas,” *Cornell International Law Journal* (2011), <http://www.lawschool.cornell.edu/research/ILJ/upload/Manjoo-McRaith-final.pdf> (accessed August 3, 2015).

⁵⁰ “Case Study: Democratic Republic of the Congo,” Gender Action, November 2011, <http://www.genderaction.org/publications/gbv/drc.pdf> (accessed August 3, 2015).

⁵¹ Rashida Manjoo and Calleigh McRaith, “Gender Based Violence and Justice in Conflict and Post Conflict Areas,” *Cornell International Law Journal* (2011), <http://www.lawschool.cornell.edu/research/ILJ/upload/Manjoo-McRaith-final.pdf> (accessed August 3, 2015).

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ “Case Study: Democratic Republic of the Congo,” Gender Action, November 2011, <http://www.genderaction.org/publications/gbv/drc.pdf> (accessed August 3, 2015).

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Rashida Manjoo and Calleigh McRaith, “Gender Based Violence and Justice in Conflict and Post Conflict Areas,” *Cornell International Law Journal* (2011), <http://www.lawschool.cornell.edu/research/ILJ/upload/Manjoo-McRaith-final.pdf> (accessed August 3, 2015).

silences victims from reporting the crime.⁵⁷ Accordingly, complicated and degrading reporting procedures must be supplanted with prompt and thorough investigations.⁵⁸

In terms of incorporating women into justice processes, “it is necessary to create space for women leaders on such as advisory boards and planning committees.”⁵⁹ Member States should “consider developing gender-specific initiatives,” including “strengthening national legislation, training judicial and law enforcement personnel, and creating special courts to counter the rise of GBV, which typically accompanies post-conflict transitions.”⁶⁰ These are not only ways “to ensure the effective implementation of recent standard-setting instruments,” but also hopefully will bring about the decline of gender-based violence worldwide, especially in times of conflict and immediately thereafter.⁶¹

Committee Directive

The Commission on the Status of Women is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. It is instrumental in promoting women’s rights, documenting the reality of women’s lives throughout the world, and shaping global standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women.⁶² Given the provided information, delegates should discuss the impacts of gender-based violence (GBV) and the general status of women in post-conflict recovery and rebuilding. In doing so, delegates should address the social, cultural, political and economic barriers that inhibit women’s access to justice and legal protection in such environments. Delegates should consider not only policies and implementations at the national level, but also at the local level where the status of women is most influenced. Therefore, in due respect for cultural relativism, cultural sensitivity and mindfulness must be a top priority throughout the course of this discussion in order to produce comprehensive and effective solutions to the challenges threatening the status of women in post-conflict zones.

II: Strengthening the Role of Women in Rural Development as a Means for the Eradication of Poverty

“Empowering rural women is crucial for ending hunger and poverty. By denying women rights and opportunities, we deny their children and societies a better future.”⁶³

—UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, International Day of Rural Women 2012

Introduction

In September 2000, world leaders came together to adopt the United Nations Millennium Declaration, resulting in the establishment of universally agreed objectives to eradicate poverty and hunger worldwide.⁶⁴ The global community formally recognized gender inequality as a significant obstacle to development with Millennium Development Goal number three: “to promote gender equality and empower women.”⁶⁵ While there has been remarkable progress over the past 15 years, issues of extreme poverty and gender inequality still exist today. In fact, more than one billion people still continue to live in extreme poverty, many of whom are women and children.⁶⁶ Rural poverty comes with its own unique set of issues, and women are impacted much differently than men. These

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² “Commission on the Status of Women,” UN Women, <http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw> (accessed August 15, 2015).

⁶³ “International Day of Rural Women,” Secretary-General’s Message for 2012, 15 October 2012, <http://www.un.org/en/events/ruralwomenday/2012/sgmessage.shtml> (accessed August 27, 2015).

⁶⁴ “MDGs,” United Nations Millennium Project, 2006, <http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/goals/> (accessed March 4, 2015).

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ “The Millennium Development Goals Report,” United Nations, 2014, <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/2014%20MDG%20report/MDG%202014%20English%20web.pdf> (accessed August 27, 2015).

circumstances are often more difficult for women, as they struggle at higher rates than men when it comes to the specific roles they play within their households and in their communities. Women in rural poverty “face more difficulty than men in accessing public services, social protection, employment and markets, due to cultural norms, security issues and lack of identification documents.”⁶⁷

Despite the international community’s progress in recent years in regard to women’s rights and gender equality, women continue to face huge challenges and policy continues to fail to bridge the gap for rural women. According to UN Women, “rural women, the majority of whom depend on natural resources and agriculture for their livelihoods, make up over a quarter of the total world population.”⁶⁸ Rural populations account for a vast majority of the agricultural labor force, with women making up 43 percent of that population.⁶⁹ Although women account for the labor force behind most food production, rural women are the most malnourished and have restricted access to land, agricultural inputs, financial assistance, extension services, technology, and markets.⁷⁰ According to UN Women, “women hold less than ten percent of the credit available to smallholder agriculture” in Sub-Saharan Africa, and “only 5 percent of agricultural extension services are provided for women farmers.”⁷¹ In addition, only three percent of the international community’s USD 7.5 million in various contributions to sustainable development were devoted to projects specifically directed at women.⁷² It is through the restriction from these resources that weaken the position of rural women, ultimately setting back progress to the eradication of extreme poverty on a global scale.

Bearing in mind their reliance on natural resources, it is vital to ensure these women’s access to productive agricultural resources empowers them, as well as contributes to the reduction of world hunger and poverty. Providing the necessary tools for their trade would be one way to also ensure the unification of the global community. Ensuring women’s access to equal and empowering agricultural resources, and thus ensuring the minimum and basic human right of food security for their families and communities, also ensures their potential to contribute to the greater global community. In a report highlighting the importance of improving the status of rural women, UN Women explained that “if rural women had equal access to productive resources, agricultural yields could reduce the number of chronically hungry people by between 100 and 150 million.” While there have been many achievements since the adoption of the UN Millennium Declaration, many serious gaps remain.

Women and Development from a Historical Perspective

The discussion of women and poverty first came to the forefront as a theme at the First World Conference in 1975.⁷³ The *Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women* was adopted by the World Conference to “present concrete measures to overcome the obstacles to the Decade’s goals and objectives for the advancement of women.”⁷⁴ CSW took up the theme of “Women in Extreme Poverty: Integration of Women’s Concerns in National Development Planning” in 1993, and two years later, Member States convened in Beijing at the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace.⁷⁵ Global commitments on gender equality and the empowerment of women came to the forefront with the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for*

⁶⁷ “Rural Women, Their Contributions and Challenges, to be Highlighted at UN Commission on the Status of Women, 27 February – 9 March,” UN Women, 23 February 2012, <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2012/2/rural-women-their-contributions-and-challenges-to-be-highlighted-at-un-commission-on-the-status-o> (accessed August 19, 2015).

⁶⁸ “The role of women in rural development, food production and poverty eradication,” UN Women, <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/rural-women-food-poverty#edn2> (accessed March 4, 2015).

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ “Concept Note for the General Recommendation on Article 14 of CEDAW,” OHCHR, http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/CEDAW/RuralWomen/ConceptNote_GR_Article14.doc (accessed March 4, 2015).

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ “Beijing at Ten and Beyond: Women and Poverty,” UN Women, <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/beijingat10/A.%20Women%20and%20poverty.pdf> (accessed August 26, 2015).

⁷⁴ A/CONF.116/28/Rev. *Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies. Introduction*. United Nations. 26 July 1985. <http://www.un-documents.net/nfl-intr.htm#A> (accessed August 26, 2015).

⁷⁵ “Beijing at Ten and Beyond: Women and Poverty,” UN Women, <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/beijingat10/A.%20Women%20and%20poverty.pdf> (accessed August 26, 2015).

Action of 1995, which set the agenda for realizing women's rights.⁷⁶ The *Platform of Action* included 12 critical areas of concern, including women and poverty, women and the economy, women in power and decision-making, and institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women among others.⁷⁷ Member States agreed that "in order to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development, women and men must participate fully and equally in the formulation of macroeconomic and social policies and strategies for the eradication of poverty."⁷⁸ Within the Platform of Action, Member States pronounced their determination to:

*Promote women's economic independence, including employment, and eradicate the persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women by addressing the structural causes of poverty through changes in economic structures, ensuring equal access for all women, including those in rural areas, as vital development agents, to productive resources, opportunities and public services.*⁷⁹

At the five-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing + 5) in June 2000, the General Assembly held a special session at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century."⁸⁰ At this session, Member States adopted a Political Declaration and outcome document entitled "further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action," agreeing to regular reviews of the progress towards the commitments laid out in the Beijing Platform for Action.⁸¹ In the UN Millennium Declaration, governments resolved to "halve by the year 2015, the proportion of the world's people whose income is less than one dollar a day" and to "promote gender equality and empowerment of women as effective to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable."⁸² At the ten-year review, the Commission adopted a Declaration stressing the importance of effective implementation for achieving the MDGs.⁸³ At the fifteen-year review in 2010, CSW placed special emphasis on good practices and new challenges.⁸⁴ In its report, CSW addressed a number of issues including microcredit as a tool for women's economic empowerment, women's access and participation in the labor market, national protection measures, and longstanding discriminatory customs and traditions.⁸⁵

In 2012, CSW directed its focus to rural development through the advancement of rural women.⁸⁶ At its fifty-sixth session, CSW considered "The empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges" as its priority theme.⁸⁷ The fifty-ninth session of the Commission took place in March 2015. The primary focus of the session was on "the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, including current challenges that affect its implementation and the achievement of gender equality and the

⁷⁶ A/CONF.177/20/Rev.1. *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women*. United Nations: New York. 1996. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/Beijing%20full%20report%20E.pdf> (accessed August 26, 2015).

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ A/CONF.177/20/Rev.1. *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women*. United Nations: New York. 1996. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/Beijing%20full%20report%20E.pdf> (accessed August 26, 2015).

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ A/55/341. *Implementation of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women and of the special session of the General Assembly entitled 'Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century.'* Report of the Secretary General. 30 August 2000. <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/docs/55/a55341.pdf> (accessed August 26, 2015).

⁸¹ *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Beijing+5 Political Declaration and Outcome*, UN Women, 2014, http://www.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/csw/pfa_e_final_web.pdf (accessed August 27, 2015).

⁸² A/RES/55/2. *United Nations Millennium Declaration*. United Nations General Assembly. 18 September 2000. <http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm> (accessed March 4, 2015).

⁸³ E/2005/27. *Report on the forty-ninth session*. Commission on the Status of Women. 2005. <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N05/346/33/PDF/N0534633.pdf?OpenElement> (accessed August 26, 2015).

⁸⁴ E/2010/27. *Report on the fifty-fourth session*. Commission on the Status of Women. 2010. <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N10/305/76/PDF/N1030576.pdf?OpenElement> (accessed August 26, 2015).

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ E/CN.6/2012/3. *The empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges*. Report of the Secretary-General. 9 December 2011. http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/CN.6/2012/3 (accessed August 26, 2015).

⁸⁷ Ibid.

empowerment of women.”⁸⁸ In September 2015, world leaders will meet again to adopt a new development framework and the Sustainable Development Goals, providing a “golden opportunity to position gender equality, women’s rights and women’s empowerment at the centre of the global agenda, both as an important end in itself and as an essential means to sustainable development.”⁸⁹

Rural Concepts and the Road Ahead

Looking to the future, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimates that food production will have to increase by 70 percent in order to feed 2.3 billion people by 2050.⁹⁰ The challenges facing world agriculture include “combating poverty and hunger, using scarce natural resources more efficiently and adapting to climate change.”⁹¹ Women play critical roles in advancing agriculture and development in rural areas of the developing world, however, inequalities often make it difficult for them to reach their full potential.⁹² According to the FAO, “women perform 2/3 of the world’s working hours and produce over 50% of its food but only earn 10% of its income, own less than 2% of its property and receive less than 5% of all bank loans.”⁹³ The FAO estimates that if women had the same access to agricultural resources as men, “food output in developing countries would increase by between 2.5 and four percent – enough to pull 100-150 million people out of hunger and help achieve Millennium Development Goal One on hunger and poverty reduction.”⁹⁴ Issues of access and affordability will have to be addressed in order to ensure food security for the increasing world population.⁹⁵

Cultural norms and socio-economic barriers are some of the primary factors constraining women’s economic empowerment. There are several resources that must be made available to women in order to provide the means for farming at their full capacity. The difficult nature of land ownership is a major barrier towards socio-economic equality, “as women own less than 2 percent of all land, and receive only 5 percent of extension services worldwide.”⁹⁶ When women are provided access to land “through marriage, inheritance, land reform programs and land markets, it is often of poorer quality than the land that men have access to and control.”⁹⁷ When women are afforded legal rights to land and other property and

Securing women’s legal rights to land and other property and access to markets is an indispensable component of their economic empowerment and often the basis for sustainable food production.⁹⁸ Cultural stigmas, traditions and discriminatory laws—both formal and informal—often restrict, or deny rural women’s access to and control over land.⁹⁹

Another issue faced by rural women is with financing. It is estimated that women in Africa receive less than 10 percent of all credit going to small farmers and a mere one per cent of the total credit going to the agricultural sector.¹⁰⁰ A number of institutional and socio-economic barriers restrict women’s access to financial services. Examples of

⁸⁸ “CSW59/Beijing+20 (2015),” UN Women, <http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw59-2015> (accessed 4 March 2015).

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ “2050: A third more mouths to feed,” Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, <http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/35571/icode/> (accessed May 1, 2015).

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ “Communicating Gender for Rural Development: Integrating Gender in Communication for Development,” Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, <http://www.fao.org/docrep/014/am319e/am319e00.pdf> (accessed August 26, 2015).

⁹⁴ “FAO At Work, 2010-2011: Women—Key to food Security,” Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, <http://www.fao.org/docrep/014/am719e/am719e00.pdf> (accessed August 26, 2015).

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ “Rural Poverty Portal,” International Fund for Agricultural Development, <http://www.ruralpovertyportal.org/en/topic/home/tags/gender> (accessed April 10, 2015).

⁹⁷ E/CN.6/2012/3. *The empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges*. Report of the Secretary-General. 9 December 2011. http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/CN.6/2012/3 (accessed August 26, 2015).

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ “Gender inequality and the MDGs,” Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, <http://www.oecd.org/dev/development-gender/45987065.pdf> (accessed June 20, 2015).

¹⁰⁰ “Rural Poverty Portal,” International Fund for Agricultural Development, <http://www.ruralpovertyportal.org/en/topic/home/tags/gender> (accessed April 10, 2015)

these include basic knowledge, information and technical advice, and organization¹⁰¹ Extension services can best be described as the provision of knowledge, information, and technical advice as well as organizational plans to assist farmers with the management of their land. This service is provided by various governments, programs and other third parties with the goal of providing information to farmers and increasing productivity.¹⁰² Information and technology must be available, as well as access to markets. There are higher food prices in the global market, but the small-scale producers are unable to reap the benefits due to the limited access of markets as well as the high transaction costs typical for small economic units.¹⁰³

Social programs are also lacking in many rural areas. Social programs are welfare subsidies designed to aid the needs of a population. Their intention is to insure individuals against interruption or loss of earning power and for certain expenditures arising from marriage, birth, or death.¹⁰⁴ Social welfare programs today primarily serve wealthy urban citizens who work in the public sector.¹⁰⁵ Those excluded from these number, i.e. rural persons, are left to rely on the community support. For example, in Kenya, there is a clan system that works in much the same way as a labor union would, pooling resources and providing for those in need during vulnerable times.¹⁰⁶ These systems are eroding, as poverty and AIDs have “further destabilized households, changed demographic patterns, and orphaned enormous numbers of children.”¹⁰⁷ Rural women, who work in an informal sector and often drop out of the labor force all together to care for children, tend to have difficulty in accessing financial services.¹⁰⁸ In addition to pregnancy and childrearing, women have limited access to most social programs that are in place, and usually designed with men in mind.¹⁰⁹ Noting the different characteristics of women’s lives in developing rural areas when designing social programs are paramount in alleviating financial and healthcare burdens and accommodating their unique needs.

Sub-Saharan Africa

Poverty remains a massive and predominantly rural phenomenon; 70 per cent of the developing world’s 1.4 billion extremely poor live in rural areas. Sub-Saharan Africa is home to nearly a third of that population.¹¹⁰ 46.8 percent of the people in Sub-Saharan Africa live on 1.25 USD or less a day.¹¹¹ Commonly, rural women in such developing countries are primarily responsible for growing crops, raising livestock, and caring for families. Their family and domestic responsibilities are often compounded on top of that, leaving them with little time to generate cash income. A lack of access to modern energy sources adds to their burden.¹¹² Exacerbating these challenges, women in many countries cannot own or inherit land or borrow money. Worldwide, fewer than 20 percent of landholders are

¹⁰¹ “Report of the Secretary General,” Commission on the Status of Women.

http://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/report_of_the_secretary-general_ecn.620123.pdf (accessed June 20, 2015)

¹⁰² “Understanding Extension,” FAO Corporate Document Depository, <http://www.fao.org/docrep/t0060e/T0060E03.htm> (accessed August 2, 2015)

¹⁰³ “Good Practices in Building Innovative Rural Institutions to Increase Food Security,” IFAD and FAO. <http://www.fao.org/docrep/015/i2258e/i2258e00.pdf> (accessed June 20, 2015).

¹⁰⁴ “Social Security Programs Throughout the World: Africa 2013,” SSA, <http://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/progdesc/ssptw/2012-2013/africa/ssptw13africa.pdf> (accessed August 2, 2015).

¹⁰⁵ “Social Pensions Part I: Their Role in the Overall Pension System,” Social Protection Discussion Paper NO. 0601, World Bank.

¹⁰⁶ Dixon, J. “Social Welfare in Africa,” London: Croom Helm, 1987.

¹⁰⁷ “Africa’s Orphaned and Vulnerable Generations: Children affected by HIV/AIDS,” UNICEF, http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/Africas_Orphaned_and_Vulnerable_Generations_Children_Affected_by_AIDS.pdf (accessed August 2, 2015)

¹⁰⁸ “Social Protection Programs for women in developing countries,” IZA World of Labor, <http://wol.iza.org/articles/social-protection-programs-for-women-in-developing-countries> (accessed August 3, 2015)

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ “Good Practices in Building Innovative Rural Institutions to Increase Food Security,” IFAD and FAO. <http://www.fao.org/docrep/015/i2258e/i2258e00.pdf> (accessed June 20, 2015)

¹¹¹ “Poverty Date: Sub-Saharan Africa,” The World Bank, <http://povertydata.worldbank.org/poverty/region/SSA> (accessed May 15, 2015)

¹¹² “Rural women key in ending hunger,” UNDP, <http://www.jo.undp.org/content/jordan/en/home/ourperspective/ourperspectivearticles/2012/03/05/rural-women-key-in-fighting-hunger-helen-clark.html> (accessed June 20, 2015)

women.¹¹³ In rural sub-Saharan Africa, women hold less than ten percent of the credit available to small holder agriculture.¹¹⁴ In April 2015, experts met in Nairobi, Kenya to discuss policy reformation for the rural women of Sub-Saharan Africa.¹¹⁵ Taluma Irene Banda, a gender specialist at Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), stated that

“Many women across Sub-Saharan Africa are keen to venture into agribusiness, but huge barriers have stifled their aspirations. We cannot lift our economies from stagnation if women remain subsistence farmers. African women contribute 70 percent of food production, yet they are stuck in poverty due to lack of access to markets. Other limitations, such as, lack of land tenure and inadequate capital are to blame for limited female participation in agribusiness.”

Data released from the Food and Agriculture Organization shows that women in Sub-Saharan Africa are 20-30 percent less productive than men. This is due to lack of access to the technology and training as well as the land and credit.¹¹⁶

Conclusion

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon stated that despite the momentum being seen in gender equality and empowerment,

“There is a long way to go before women and girls can be said to enjoy the fundamental rights, freedom and dignity that are their birthright and that will guarantee their well-being. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the world’s rural areas. Rural women and girls make up one quarter of the global population, yet routinely figure at the bottom of every economic, social and political indicator, from income and education to health to participation in decision-making.”¹¹⁷

There is widespread evidence that placing rural women at the very center of rural and agricultural development and expanding rural women’s access to productive resources, assets, finances, services, infrastructure and markets is the prerequisites for poverty reduction, hunger eradication, and accelerated progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.¹¹⁸

Committee Directive

Rural women account for most of the agricultural labor force, and are of the most underprivileged and restricted. It is this fact that makes the issue of providing empowerment to rural women of the utmost importance. Delegates should investigate how their Member State is involved with women’s roles in the agricultural field, as well as looking into work that has already been done to eradicate poverty through the empowerment of women in rural areas. They should consider the role women play in the rural community and what resources they may require in order to perform their jobs at optimal conditions. Delegates are encouraged to research previous actions taken by the CSW on this topic in order to design effective methods for the future eradication of poverty. Delegates are encouraged to think outside of the box in order to solve the unique issues faced by rural women, and are encouraged to take a multifaceted approach that encompasses both class and gender into their resolutions.

¹¹³ “Women, Land, and Sustainable Development,” International Centre for the Research on Women <https://www.icrw.org/files/publications/Women-Land-and-Sustainable-Development.pdf> (accessed April 4, 2015)

¹¹⁴ “Rural Women key in fighting hunger,” United Nations Development Programme, <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourperspective/ourperspectivearticles/2012/03/05/rural-women-key-in-fighting-hunger-helen-clark.html> (accessed April 10, 2015)

¹¹⁵ “Gender Forum on Women in Agribusiness,” Heinrich Boll Foundation, http://ke.boell.org/sites/default/files/uploads/2015/06/women_in_agribusiness_forum_-_synthesis_report_05.29.2015_1.pdf (accessed June 1, 2015)

¹¹⁶ “Key Facts,” Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations. <http://www.fao.org/sofa/gender/key-facts/en/> (accessed April 10, 2015)

¹¹⁷ “Statements,” United Nations Secretary General. <http://www.un.org/sg/statements/?nid=5903> (accessed March 4, 2015)

¹¹⁸ “Report of the Secretary General,” Commission on the Status of Women. http://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/report_of_the_secretary-general_ecn.620123.pdf (accessed June 20 2015)

Technical Appendix Guide

Topic I: Ensuring Access to Justice and Legal Protection for Women in Post-Conflict Zones

“Violence Against Women”, World Health Organization (WHO).

http://www.who.int/topics/gender_based_violence/en/ (accessed August 3, 2015).

This website compiles a number of resources from the WHO regarding the general, technical, and statistical information on violence against women, as well as the prevention of intimate partner and sexual violence. In particular, there are links to regional issues and work with violence against women, publications on gender and rights, and information on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls. Here, delegates can also find information on programs and activities of the World Health Organization dealing with violence against women.

“Gender-Based Violence”, USAID <http://www.usaid.gov/gbv/>, (accessed August 3, 2015).

USAID or the United States Agency for International Development is a lead United States Government agency dedicated to ending extreme global poverty and enabling resilient, democratic societies to realize their potential. This organization offers a number of resources highlighting various issues in gender based violence. USAID discusses its efforts and partnerships leveraged in the areas of closing gaps, empowering women in crisis and conflict, trafficking, and forced marriage. This resource may be helpful in painting the picture of Western interaction, assistance, collaboration in developing nations in combatting gender based violence.

“Strengthening Health System Responses to Gender-based Violence in Eastern Europe and Central Asia” United Nations Population Fund and Women Against Violence Europe, <http://www.health-genderviolence.org/training-programme-for-health-care-providers/facts-on-gbv/gbv-in-numbers/23> (accessed August 3, 2015). This website is a resource package compiled through a collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund and Women Against Violence Europe network. This resource provides briefings from conferences and workshops held by WAVE and related organizations, as well as definitions to the technical health terms surrounding gender-based violence. From this source, delegates can find information on the responses of different health systems to gender-based violence in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

“Selected links on Gender Based Violence” Health and Human Rights Info.

http://www.hhri.org/thematic/gender_based_violence.html (accessed August 3, 2015).

This website is a comprehensive compilation of gender based violence resources. This resource will assist delegates with expanding their scope of the issues at hand, as well as diversifying their research options through providing information from many organizations, guidelines, manuals, and publications.

“Fight against Sexual Violence in Conflict Reaches ‘New Juncture’”, United Nations

<http://www.un.org/press/en/2015/sc11862.doc.htm> (accessed August 3, 2015).

This article is a synopsis of the UN Security Council’s 7428th meeting, which highlighted the issue of sexual violence against women in conflict. This is a useful resource for delegates to reference the opinion of the Security Council representatives and various efforts in addressing the matter.

“Gender-Based Violence and Justice in Conflict and Post-Conflict Areas” Manjoo, R., & McRaith, M,

<http://www.lawschool.cornell.edu/research/ilj/upload/manjoo-mcraith-final.pdf>, (accessed August 3, 2015).

This article addresses the prevalent forms of gender-based violence, its causes and consequences, as well as the need for and measures of seeking and implementing justice for the victims. This resource can be key to delegate preparation as it reviews the legalities that are taken into account when it comes to accountability with gender based violence

Topic II: Strengthening the Role of Women in Rural Development as a Means for the Eradication of Poverty

“The role of women in rural development, food production and poverty eradication,” WomenWatch.

<http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/rural-women-food-poverty> (accessed August 19, 2015).

This article provides a starting point for research in the topic of rural women and their role in eradication poverty. It includes several links in previous work done such as a discussion held at UN Headquarters on October 14, 2014.

This resource will be helpful to delegates by providing a recent timeline of collaborative efforts with rural women since 2012.

“Improving Gender Equality in Africa”, World Bank. <http://www.worldbank.org/en/region/afr/brief/improving-gender-equality-in-africa>, (accessed August 19, 2015).

This source discusses The World Bank’s projects put into action to improving gender equality in Sub-Saharan Africa. Additionally, the Africa Region Gender Action Plan and its four priority areas are highlighted. This article also connects to gender based databases that sort information by the country. This will be helpful to the delegates getting a more in-depth analysis of the issue in their respective Member State.

“Policy Brief 5: Increasing rural employment in sub-Saharan Africa” Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation ACP-EU (CTA). http://www.cta.int/images/docman-files/policy_papers/4_Increasing_rural_employment_in_sub_Saharan_Africa.pdf, (accessed August 19, 2015).

This document examines the policies implemented to jump start Sub-Saharan Africa. These policies include educational provisions, intentionality with closing the gender gap, and supporting organizations that represent farmers and rural entities. This resource will assist delegates in identifying other players who are contributing to supporting rural women and eradicating poverty.

“Putting Gender on the Map in Sub-Saharan Africa”, International Food Policy Research Institute. <http://www.ifpri.org/blog/putting-gender-map-sub-saharan-africa>, (accessed August 19, 2015).

This site provides an interactive, map based tool designed to collect information from gender and farming experts to identify gender-related farming patterns in particular geographical areas. It also includes links to several other articles relating to the Sustainable Development Goals, agricultural research, and information collected from seminars and previous projects.

“Sub-Saharan Africa: Projects designed to confront development challenges”, International Development Research Centre. http://www.idrc.ca/EN/Regions/Sub_Saharan_Africa/Pages/ProjectsList.aspx (accessed August 19, 2015).

This site provides a list of projects designed to improve the development of Sub-Saharan Africa, including job creation for rural women, social projects and several others. This source will help to inform delegates of currently available services that should be considered before new projects are created for the resolution of this issue.

“Policy Brief: Advancing African Women’s Financial Inclusion”, Africa Platform. http://www.africa-platform.org/sites/default/files/cop_resources/advancing_womens_financial_inclusion_0.pdf, (accessed August 19, 2015).

This article is a comprehensive compilation of the story of women in finances in Africa. It includes the barriers of women in regards to financial inclusion, as well as policy recommendations. This resource displays a number of causes and concerns with suggestions for correction as well as short-comings; and will be helpful to delegates to see all sides of the battle.