

Multi-Women
12/04/25.

Report on 56th Session of the United Nations Commission on Status of Women

Key Issues Emanating from Session

Background

- Session took place from 27 Feb – 9 March .
- Priority theme “The Empowerment of Rural Women & their Role in Poverty & Hunger Eradication”.
- Also a review theme: “Financing for gender Equality & the Empowerment of Women”.

Recommendations

- Need to focus on food security for rural women & girls.
- Improved education systems in rural areas to break the cycle of poverty.
- Access to sexual & reproductive health care as well as basic health services.
- Focus on prevention of teenage pregnancy & forced marriages (Note link between this & continued cycles of poverty).

Recommendations Contd

- Must focus on changing socio-economic status of rural women (eg access to credit, land & resources, access to markets for women in agriculture, improving ICT in rural areas).
- Urgent: Need for empirical data to inform the development of adequate policies & service delivery.
- Urgent: Need for enabling policy environment for rural women's economic empowerment

2. Financing for Gender Equality & the Empowerment of Women

Challenges

- Need for gender responsive budgeting.
- Rural women rely heavily on microfinance because of lack of access to land and inability to acquire land.
- Access to micro credit has limitations & there is a need for broader range of strategies for securing access to finance for rural women.
- Also a need for non financial support e.g. business planning.

Challenges Contd

- Access to banks a problem for rural women (e.g. issues of commuting to banks, but also rural women have no collateral).
- Need for rural women to have training in financial literacy so that they can effectively interact with banking system & enhance their business skills.
- ICT infrastructure: internet, fax, email is important way in which financial institutions communicate with clients. Yet rural women no access to this & often low literacy levels.

Key Recommendations

- Re-examine current macro-economic frameworks & policies.
- Adopt policies that expand fiscal space to ensure adequate financing for gender equality.
- Strengthen & ensure capturing & analysis of data that can inform policy decisions.
- Ensure management of aid instruments aimed at addressed gender inequity.
- Set measurable targets for financing for gender equality.
- Improve access to resources, finance, small grants etc.
- Need for comprehensive rural development policies wrt women and girl children.

3. Engaging Young Women & Men, Girls & Boys to Advance Gender Equality

- Focus on the need to engage young women & men and girls & boys in eradicating gender inequity.
- Need to consider the adoption of quota systems to enhance representation of women in public office.
- Need for research on status of women and girls in rural areas.

4. Gender Based Violence

- Notwithstanding legislation & progress, women & girls across globe continue to be subjected to high levels of GBV.
- Clear intersection between GBV and HIV/Aids pandemic.
- Violence and HIV two of greatest dangers to health & well being of women.
- Need to focus on prevention modalities and addressing root causes.

Inter-Parliamentary Union

- Focussed on the role of Parliaments in empowering rural women.
- Focus on 4 key strategies:
 - 1. Monitoring of legislation through a gender lens.
 - 2. Ensuring mainstreaming of gender in budgets.
 - 3. Strengthening political participation of women through quotas.
 - 4. Stringent oversight.
- Delegates urged to implement CSW resolutions at country level.

CSW Resolutions

- 7 Resolutions
- 1. End female genital mutilation.
- 2. Indigenous women: Key actors in poverty and hunger eradication.
- 3. Women, the girl and HIV and AIDS: accelerating progress in this regard.
- 4. Release of women & children taken hostage in armed conflicts.
- 5. Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women.
- 6. Gender equality and empowerment of women in natural disasters.
- 7. Eliminate maternal mortality and morbidity through the empowerment of women.

SA Recommendations

- Three key action areas:
- 1. Need to develop a framework that tracks progress with regard to implementing resolutions at country level. Parliament to be kept abreast of this.
- 2. IPU: Conduct a gender sensitive audit of current term. Identify achievements and main challenges.
- 3. GBV Submission by Parliament: The theme for the 57th session is on GBV. SA Parliament has an invaluable contribution to make in this regard. Proposed that SA hosts side event that focuses on best practice models.