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FIRST REGIONAL ARAB STATES SOUTH-SOUTH ARAB EXPO

GET TO KNOW ANATA SABAYA CENTRE

Commission on the Status of Women CSW58



NEW YORK
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2014

Challenges and achievements
in the implementation of the
Millennium Development Goals
for women and girls

Information Bulletin

UN WOMEN

58th COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

What have the MDGs achieved for women and girls?

The 58th Annual Session of the Commission on the Status of Women kick started on 10 March 2014 and will go on until 21 March. Member States, UN Entities, NGOs and others stakeholders are meeting in New York to debate the challenges and achievements in the implementation of the MDGs for women and girls.

In the context of the on-going discussions on the post-2015 agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, and one year before the review by the CSW59 of the progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action - Beijing +20 - the CSW58 is tackling crucial issues in regard to effective changes in the situation of women and girls.

What's the Commission on the Status of Women?

Established on 21st June 1946, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is a global inter-governmental policy-making body under the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), dedicated exclusively to promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women.

The Commission played a major role in setting standards and formulating international conventions aiming at changing discriminatory legislations and fostering global awareness of women's issues, notably the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and thereafter the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979).

STATE OF PALESTINE AT CSW 58

At CSW58, Palestinian Minister of Women's Affairs calls for increased assistance and support to Palestinian women

The Palestinian Minister of Women's Affairs took the floor in the CSW58 to call on institutions to accelerate and strengthen efforts to combat all forms of violence against women, and support increased participation of women in the labor market and decision-making.

She pointed out the negative impact of restrictions, policies and practices of the Israeli military occupation on the advancement and empowerment of Palestinian women, as well as the whole society. Despite the negative environment, she happily noted the progress made by Palestinian women in education, as well as the appointment of more women to high level decision-making positions. The

Minister also reiterated the commitment of the Palestinian Government to the empowerment of women and highlighted the national strategies and national committees established to align legislation and public policies to the needs of protection and empowerment of women.

Finally, the Minister reaffirmed the Palestinian Government's support to a stand-alone goal on gender in the post-2015 development agenda and its commitment to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

The statement can be found [here](#)

United Nations Secretary-General Report on the Situation of and Assistance to Palestinian Women

The UN Secretary General Report on the Situation of and Assistance to Palestinian Women is now available [here](#). The Report is presented each year to the Annual Session of the Commission on the Status of Women for adoption.

The 2013 report continues to highlight how restrictions on movement and access, increased settlement expansion and settler violence, demolitions of Palestinian infrastructure and displacement, the fragmentation of the territory and the closure of the Gaza Strip have a negative impact on the lives of Palestinian women and their families, as well as on progress to the realization of women's rights.

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS AND ARAB STATES GOVERNMENTS CALL FOR A STAND-ALONE GOAL ON GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

In preparation for the up-coming 58th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), the UN Women Regional Office for Arab States, together with the League of Arab States and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ECSWA) organized a meeting - "MDGs, post-2015 development agenda, gender equality and empowerment of women" - at the Arab League headquarter in Cairo in February this year.

Representatives of governments and civil society organizations across the Arab region demonstrated a determination to place gender equality and women's empowerment at the top of their development agenda.

In the outcome document resulting from the preparatory meetings, participants reiterated their commitment to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and underpinned the need for a solid rights-based development framework. In this regard, they called for a comprehensive stand-alone goal on gender equality and empowerment of women as a post-2015 sustainable development goal.

Furthermore, the outcome document, as a joint declaration, reflected the demands of participants for specific actions with regards to women's political participation, women's economic empowerment, social transformation and ending violence against women. Participants called for the adoption of public gender-responsive budgeting as mechanism for social justice, the collection and dissemination of data and notably the adoption of new government standards for gender-responsive indicators, and activating mechanisms of prevention, protection and compensation for survivors of violence, legislative reviews, and increasing public awareness.

TO FOLLOW THE CSW ANNUAL SESSION'S EVENTS & DEBATES

- CSW official documentation - bit.ly/1gisiQ9
- Draft CSW58 agreed conclusion - bit.ly/1fwfxMh
- Social Media: @UN_CSJ; @UN_Women; #CSW58
- Webcast of UN Women side events - bit.ly/1gidewu
- Gender-related news and resources from the UN system bit.ly/1oPzP8J

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE FIRST FEW DAYS OF THE CSW58 ON THE DISCUSSIONS ON THE PRIORITY THEME

Progress have been made in achieving gender equality and women's empowerment

The MDGs have played an important role in galvanizing attention and resources for gender equality and women's empowerment and there have been important gains in some areas, such as girls' access to primary education, reducing maternal mortality, and increasing women's participation in decision-making in the public and/or private sector.

Progress is uneven and challenges persist

Progress in other areas such as violence against women, sexual and reproductive health and rights, harmful practices such as child early and forced marriage, Female Genital Mutilation and women's economic participation and access to decent work, have not been realized. Participants highlighted that many challenges persist, including lack of political will/commitment and limited financial and human resources, as well as gender stereotypes and discrimination against women. States also pointed out challenges faced by particular groups of women and girls, such as women living in poverty, rural, indigenous and migrant women, women with disabilities, elderly women or women living with HIV/AIDS.

Need for greater accountability

Accountability for gender equality and women's and girls' human rights is critical and must be underpinned by gender indicators and disaggregated data.

Commitment to international women's rights frameworks

Most of the speakers have reaffirmed commitments to international instruments and conventions, such as CEDAW and its optional protocol, UN Security Council Resolution 1325, the Beijing Platform for Action, as well as regional instruments that establish the international legal framework for gender equality and women's empowerment.

A universal and transformative post-2015 agenda

Building on lessons learnt from the MDGs and the need to accelerate progress, a number of States are calling for a transformative stand-alone goal on gender equality, women's empowerment and women's rights, as well as a comprehensive integration of gender equality concerns and indicators across all goals. Issues such as violence against women, sexual reproductive health and rights and unpaid care work were more specifically highlighted for inclusion in the post-2015 framework.

IWD 2014

On the 8th of March 2014, the world commemorated International Women Day under the slogan: "Equality for women is progress for all". In her [message](#), UN Women Executive Director, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, reminded the international community that no country has achieved equality between women and men and girls and boys and that we could no longer afford to hold back half of the world's population. UN Secretary General Ban-Ki Moon's [message](#) pointed out that progress in all areas depended on achieving equality for women and girls and that it is the duty of governments, United Nations bodies and every human being. Both messages also called on men and boys to take their responsibility and further engage in the realization of women's and girls' rights. In his [statement](#) on behalf of the UNCT, the UN Resident Coordinator stated that empowerment of Palestinian women is key to building a strong Palestinian society and for the realization of a Palestinian State, and that UN is ready to capitalize on the opportunity offered by the first-ever UNDAF for Palestine to further support the Palestinian Government in building gender responsive institutions. In Palestine, many events and activities took place and are continuing throughout March on the occasion of International Women Day.

UN Women Arab States office also officially launched the Arabic version of the UN Women "One Woman" song, with a music video that can be watched [here](#).

UNDP and UN Women join forces in a new programme to strengthen the rule of law in Palestine



UNDP and UN Women have joined expertise in the development of a joint programme, which will build on previous experience and expand efforts of the two agencies in support to the development of a more gender-sensitive human-rights oriented rule of law sector. The 3-year "Strengthening the rule of law in the oPt: Justice and Security for Palestinian People Programme" will support building efficient, accountable and harmonized security and

justice institutions. It will more specifically focus on increasing women and children's access to justice, including through capacity development in support to the Shari'a courts, engaging with informal justice actors and processes to increase observation of international standards and monitoring their impact upon women and children, developing and strengthening specialized services for women and girls victims of violence, and working to raise beneficiaries' awareness of their rights.

UN Women and MoPAD partnership in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment

In 2013, UN Women entered a new partnership with the Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development (MoPAD) to support the development of the National Development Plan and ensure its priorities, strategies, budget and monitoring and evaluation plan effectively align with Palestinian Government's gender equality and women's empowerment's commitments. This reinforced UN Women's work with MoWA as well as line ministries in developing adequate capacities to mainstreaming gender within plans and budgets. As MoPAD is finalizing the National Development Plan, which should be submitted to the Cabinet for endorsement in March, UN Women and MoPAD have started exploring opportunities for further cooperation. Discussions between UN Women and MoPAD are focusing on ways to establish needed capacities to orient and monitor gender equality progress in the implementation of the new National Development Plan.

UN Women participates in the first Regional Arab States South South Expo



From 18 to 20 February 2014, UN Women Palestine participated in the first Regional Arab States South South Expo, which was hosted by the State of Qatar and co-organized by the United Nations Office for South South Cooperation and the UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States.

Two flagship initiatives that UN Women has nominated were presented at the Expo: the Mehwar Centre and the Women-Run School Canteens Programme. These innovative and unique initiatives received a lot of attention and interest from participants and opened prospects for replication of the models in other countries of the region. The Expo also offered the UN Women Palestine office the opportunity to exchange ideas about best practices and learn about other innovative interventions in the area of gender equality and empowerment of women in the region, which we hope to highlight in the future issues of this newsletter.

UN Women prepares a grants scheme for women entrepreneurs



UN Women is about to launch a new Grants Scheme Mechanism, which will enable women entrepreneurs working in the cultural and creative industries to access finance. The targeted beneficiaries have already received vocational, technical and marketing trainings, and will continue to receive such support even beyond the release of the grants. The grants will be distributed based on well-defined criteria related to design ideas and marketability of the products.

New steps towards gender responsive budgeting in Palestine

Under the auspices of the Financing for Gender Equality Programme, funded by the European Union, the Gender Responsive Budgets National Committee (GRBNC) held its second meeting in February to discuss its final draft by-law. The by-law, which will regulate the work of the Committee and strengthen the place of the Committee at the national level, is now ready for final endorsement by the Minister of Women's Affairs. Established through a Cabinet decision in July 2012, the GRBNC is expected to play a catalyst role in holding line ministries responsible in regard to mainstreaming gender in national plans and budgets, and in bringing about the necessary changes at the Ministry of Finance on implementing gender-responsive budgeting requirements.

UN Women Fund for Gender Equality Supports Reviving Public Discussions on the Palestinian Draft Constitution

In 2013, the Palestinian Centre for Peace and Democracy (PCPD) together with the Jerusalem Centre for Women (JCW), under a project funded by the UN Women Fund for Gender Equality, worked with a group of 24 young women and 5 men, drawn from 27 Palestinian CSOs, on reviewing the draft Palestinian Constitution, with a specific focus on human-rights and gender equality.

After the launch of their draft shadow Palestinian Constitution last December, PCPD and JCW, are now preparing to move the discussions on the Constitution in communities. In the up-coming months PCPD and JCW will organize public hearings at the community level and a national media campaign that will discuss the amendments that the group proposes to the official Palestinian draft Constitution.

For more information on the draft constitution, kindly contact [Alla Ayesh](mailto:alla.ayesh@unwomen.org): alla.ayesh@unwomen.org.

UN Women's commitment to women's economic empowerment

UN Women recently finalized its strategic plan in Palestine for the period of 2014-2016, in which one of the priority areas is increased economic empowerment of women, especially of those who are most excluded. Women's economic empowerment and access to and control over their own resources are at the core of UN Women's strategy, directly linked to national priorities and consolidated UN response. Based on consultations with partners, the UN Women Palestine office will work at two main levels; at the macro level, UN Women will focus on improving the capacity of the Palestinian Authority to ensure viable employment opportunities for women, while at the local level, UN Women will target excluded groups of women in order to, on the one hand, ensure holistic facilities and services that enable self-employment and on the other, develop business models for women's income-generation linked to the achievement of key Palestinian national development goals. The existence of an enabling environment in which women are better able to seize job opportunities and generate income will contribute to increasing women's income earning potential and decreasing economic insecurity of the most excluded and vulnerable women.

GET TO KNOW ...



Anata Sabaya Centre, one of the most active community-based women centres, offers a wide-range of services to more than 250 women and girls of the community.

Established in 2006 through the UN Women Sabaya programme, the Centre has gradually gained sustainability and independence, notably by joining the UN Women Women-Run School Canteens Programme. Currently running 5 school canteens, the business provides the working women of the Centre a monthly salary of 350-500 USD, representing a significant, and sometimes the only, income to the household.

Simultaneously, the Centre has received wider recognition and responds to an increasing amount of orders for catering within the community. UN Women has been using the catering services of the Anata Sabaya Centre for its events and is inviting you to support the professional cooking and catering services of Anata Sabaya Centre to cater for your events.

Contact Anata Sabaya Centre at [02-2355001](tel:02-2355001)

MAKING WOMEN THE FOCUS OF PROGRAMMES AND BUDGETS IN MOROCCO



Photo credit: UN Women Morocco

“Before, I was a housewife and was in charge of domestic work. One day, I decided to change my life and I started literacy classes. For two years, I learned how to read and to write. I also learned Arabic, calligraphy and arts. Today, I create my own paintings and with the other women in my course, we decided to create a cooperative to better market our products”, says Fadma.

Fadma is a beneficiary of a programme being implemented by the Department of Literacy in Morocco, one of five pilot departments that have adopted results-based and gender-responsive planning and budgeting.

This approach, which began in 2009, has allowed the Department to better adapt to the needs of its beneficiaries. As a result, several different programmes are also now developed according to age, as well as employment status.

“Morocco is one of the leading countries in the field of gender-responsive budgeting”

There are the words of UN Women Regional Director of the Arab States, Sameera al-Tuwaijiri, hailing the country’s efforts to bridge the gender gap.

Ongoing efforts have resulted in Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) being progressively anchored in the budget reform process, with five pilot line ministries applying GRB programming and 27 ministries taking part in the preparation of the gender report. Since 2011, the gender report has also included an inter-sectoral analysis which measures progress made by Morocco in different sectors towards international human rights standards and obligations.

Experimentation with results-based and gender-

responsive public finance management for more than 10 years in Morocco resulted in the adoption, by the Council of Ministers, of a new law of finance in 2014 that legally institutionalizes gender equality through budget processes. The new legislation explicitly mentions that gender equality must be taken into account in the definition of objectives, results and indicators of performance of the line budgets. The new law also institutionalizes the gender report as an official document that is part of the annual Finance Bill.

This is a major success of the GRB process in Morocco, achievement of the joint efforts between the Ministry of Economy and Finance, and UN Women.

THE GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETING CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

The Ministry of Economy and Finance and UN Women signed a partnership agreement for the establishment of a Gender-Responsive Budgeting Centre of Excellence (GRB-CE) for the period 2013-2016, in Rabat. Aimed at bolstering partnerships between various stakeholders in this field, the Centre focuses on GRB learning and innovation through peer learning and South-South knowledge sharing. It identifies existing and emerging global standards and best practices in order to devise adequate and innovative country-level approaches.