



UN COMMITTEE: CSW60

Cynthia DeWindt, ACWW UN Representative

Achieving the SDGs together, 14-24 March 2016

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is the principal global, inter-governmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

The CSW 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.

During the Commission's annual two-week session, representatives of UN Member States, civil society organizations and UN entities gather at UN headquarters in New York. They discuss progress and gaps in the implementation of the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the key global policy document on gender equality, and the 23rd special session of the General Assembly held in 2000 (Beijing+5), as well as emerging issues that affect gender equality and the empowerment of women. Member States agree on further actions to accelerate progress and promote women's enjoyment of their rights in political, economic and social fields. The outcomes and recommendations of each session are forwarded to ECOSOC for follow-up.

This year the CSW held its 60th session and had 'Women's empowerment and its link to sustainable development' as its priority theme.



'Parallel events', hosted by civil society are encouraged so that speakers and participants can discuss topics related to the priority theme. The Network of Rural Women Producers of Trinidad & Tobago (NRWPTT) and the Jamaican Network of Rural Women Producers (JNRWP) hosted a parallel event at CSW60, entitled: "The Engagement of Rural / Grassroots women is needed for the SDGs to succeed". UN Committee Chair, Sharon Hatten and UN Representative, Cynthia de Windt both spoke at this event and were joined by Graciela Coy Maas from the Asociacion AK' Tenamit (Guatemala) and Gia Gaspard Taylor of the NRWPTT.

The first question they posed was 'Which Sustainable Development Goals relate specifically to rural women producers & agriculturalists?' SDGs 1, 2 and 12 were said to be the most relevant:



SDG 1 - End poverty in all its forms everywhere

1.4 By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance.



SDG 2 - End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

2.3 By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishermen, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment



SDG 12 - Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

12.3 By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses.

Each speaker then highlighted different ways of meeting the needs of rural women and posed the following questions for participants to reflect on:

1. How can we allocate more resources to Grassroots women leaders' organisations?
2. Who inspired your sense of empowerment?
3. How will we work together?
4. How will implementation of the SDGs take into account: the priorities of and the participation of rural/ grass roots women?

The 25 workshop participants formed 4 break-out groups to reflect on these questions. They decided that development activities should never be imposed but take into account the particular needs of rural women and foster empowerment by enabling them to take ownership of the process.

By the end of CSW60, governments, UN stakeholders and NGOs had resolved to:

- **Strengthen normative, legal and policy frameworks.**
- **Foster enabling environments for financing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.**
- **Strengthen women's leadership and women's full and equal participation in decision-making in all areas of sustainable development**

You can find out more about the Sustainable Development Goals by visiting www.sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs