

Concept Note

Date and Time: Wednesday, April 25, 2018 6:30 - 8:00pm

Location: UN Headquarters, Conference Room A

Co-organizers: Civil Society Financing for Development Group, Women's Working Group on Financing for Development (WWG on FfD), Feminist UN Campaign

Co-sponsors: Save the Children, Feminist Task Force, Christian AID, Equidad de Género, International Center for Research on Women (ICRW), Society for International Development

Event Description:

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda states that achieving gender equality, empowering all women and girls and the full realization of their human rights are essential to achieving sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development. Moreover, a corresponding Addis Ababa Action Plan on Transformative Financing for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment calls on all actors to adopt policies at the domestic and international level to mobilize the resources needed to implement gender equality commitments. Financing for gender equality is not only vital; it is a missing piece to the realization of SDG 5 on Gender Equality and the ambitious vision of the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This interactive dialogue will highlight advances and challenges to the financing for gender equality agenda, including setbacks within the scope of the ten years since the financial crisis. Panelists from Member States, the UN and civil society will address the gendered impact of the financial and economic collapse of 2008, including the effects of financial austerity policies at the national level and inter-generational cycles of poverty and inequality for women and girls that linger ten years on.

The 2008 financial and economic crisis coincided with the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development. While governments negotiated agreements in Doha, the Wall Street collapse was looming on the horizon. Agreements became irrelevant in the face of the collapse, and emergency and long-term responses to mitigate the impact of the crisis, especially on vulnerable populations, had to be identified. Assessments of the impact of the ongoing economic crisis highlighted deteriorating social and political fallout in least developed countries and middle-income countries. Developing countries, which contributed least to the crisis and were most severely affected, were in the worst predicament. Women and girls became particularly vulnerable due to their marginalized economic status, contributing to the feminization of poverty and cyclical impoverishment.

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda, adopted in 2015, recognized the importance of gender-responsive budgeting to achieving sustainable development. It called for targeted investments towards gender mainstreaming and urged governments to monitor and report resources

allocated towards women's empowerment and gender equality. Progress has been slow, as gender equality remains vastly underfunded by governments, donors, and the UN system. There has been a resurgence in interest from Member States, the UN Secretary General, several UN Agencies and civil society on transparent, effective resource allocation for gender equality. The ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development provides an opportunity to highlight the importance of mainstreaming gender-responsive budgeting, addressing gender implications of financial austerity policies, and sharing best practices from the national level.

As an official side event of the ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development, the Civil Society Financing for Development Group, the Women's Working Group on FfD, and the Feminist UN Campaign, as co-organizers, will host an interactive dialogue entitled, ***Financing for Gender Equality: Challenges and Solutions Ten Years after the Financial Crisis***. At this interactive dialogue, speakers will discuss challenges on financing for gender equality and propose solutions to ensure women's and girls' empowerment and elimination of poverty and inequity. Key themes for discussion will include:

- Advancements in gender-responsive budgets and progressive taxation highlighting case studies at the national level.
- Pathways and barriers to women's economic empowerment and the fulfillment of women's and girls' rights.
- Progress on inter-generational cycles of women's and girls' poverty and inequality, with a focus on those furthest below the poverty line and LDCs.
- Steps the UN is taking towards reform in support of gender equality financing, and how it is encouraging Member States to implement effective gender budgeting in their countries.

Format: Interactive roundtable discussion

Speakers:

1. Kate Donald, Program Director, Human Rights in Sustainable Development, Center for Economic and Social Rights (CESR)
2. Matti Kohonen, Principal Advisor, Private Sector, Christian Aid
3. Nora O'Connell, Associate Vice President, Public Policy & Advocacy, Save the Children
4. Shanchita Haque, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to the United Nations
5. Katherine Gifford, UN Women
6. Bruno Rios Sanchez, Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations
7. Representative, UN Task Force on Financing for Gender Equality (TBC)

Moderator: TBC

Participants: UN Missions, UN Task Force on Financing for Gender Equality, Ministers of Finance, UN Agencies, NGOs, Academics, Civil Society, FfD Forum Participants
