



Roundtable participants at the Nanjing Forum. Photo © City of Nanjing

Gender Equality Action Assembly

FRIDAY, 19 MARCH

OPENING CEREMONY

08:45 – 10:00 - Room W3 -14

The Opening Ceremony will include a welcome address from the Mayor of Rio, Eduardo Paes, the Executive Director of UN-HABITAT Dr. Anna Tibaijuka, the Minister for Women Affairs of Brazil Nilcéa Friere and other invited dignitaries.

Ms Christine Platt, President, Commonwealth Planners Association, will be the overall Chair for the first day of the Assembly. This day will focus on assessing progress on implementation of the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP).

1. ASSESSING PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN (GEAP): AN INTRODUCTION TO THE GENDER EQUALITY WORKSHOP

10:30 to 11:00 - Room W3 - 14

The Gender Equality Action Plan approved by the 22nd Session of the UN-HABITAT Governing Council aims to strengthen the agency's work on gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women. This segment will be used to introduce the action areas of the Gender Equality Action Plan and to put into perspective the different topics that will be presented and discussed in the Workshops. It will also discuss the objectives of the Workshops and explain the structure they should take.

2. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN

11:00 – 13:00 – Room W3-14

The Chief of UN-HABITAT Gender Mainstreaming Unit, Ms Lucia Kiwala, will brief all participants not familiar with the Gender Plan on the key action areas, strategies for implementation, the role of partners, and the work of UN-HABITAT on gender equality.

3. ADVOCACY AND MONITORING GENDER INEQUALITY IN CITIES

11:00 – 13:00 – Room W3-13

Evidence-based information on the situation of women and girls as compared to men and boys in cities is essential to improve knowledge, statistics and gender analysis and illustrate the relationships between gender equality, sustainable urbanization and poverty reduction.

This session will focus on actions undertaken at the local and global level including examples from Latin America, Philippines and Canada.

Moderator: *Professor Dory Reeves, The University of Auckland, New Zealand*

4. URBAN PLANNING, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

11:00 – 13:00 – Room W3-18

Good governance, especially at the local level, allows women and men to engage with the sphere of government closest to them on issues of accountability, transparency, participation and service delivery. In a world where most countries are far from reaching parity between men and women in decision-making, it is important that women partner with men in decision-making at the local level to promote gender equality, women's rights and empowerment that can make a difference in their daily lives. This session will focus on actions undertaken in the areas of gender and local governance, climate change, safety, security for women and participatory budget and planning at the local level. The women friendly city project of the City of Seoul Korea will serve as an example.

Moderator: *Ms Rita Dandavino, Coordinator, Metropolis Women International Network*

5. LAND AND HOUSING

11:00 – 13:00 – Room W3-19

Ms Raquel Rolnik, UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Adequate Housing will lead panellists including leaders of grassroots women's organisations to discuss progress in promoting women's rights to land and housing. Cases will be presented on building the capacity of grassroots women to map their engagement in land reform, housing and domestic violence policies, pilot testing of gender evaluation criteria for large scale land tools, and influencing policies to address inequality in land.

Moderators: *Ms Fides Bagasao, Leaders and Organisers of Community Organisations in Asia*

6. ACCESS TO ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND URBAN SERVICES

11:00 – 13:00 – Room W3-20

Improving women's access to basic services and infrastructure can greatly enhance their quality of life and increase their level of participation in other gainful activities at the local and national level. At this session, partners including representatives of the Gender and Water Alliance, Huairou Commission, and the Lake Victoria Region initiatives will present experiences on what works in developing community led strategies to monitor, develop and sustain basic services and infrastructure including water, sanitation, housing, beach and river systems, sanitation for micro credit for women, and in developing a pro-poor and gender responsive water and sanitation strategy.

Moderator: *Ms Lowie Rosales, UN-HABITAT*

7. STRENGTHENED HOUSING FINANCE SYSTEMS

11:00 – 13:00 – Room W-12

Financing gender equality through land and housing is a key component of the Gender Equality Action Plan. This, coupled with the need to economically empower women through access to micro-credit to improve their working conditions in the informal sector, will form the basis for this discussion. Ms Brigitte Grouwels, Minister of Public Works, Transport and Port of Brussels will discuss improved access to sustainable financing for gender responsive and affordable housing and infrastructure. Other presentations will include financing land and housing through special purpose vehicles, especially women land access trusts, and holistic and community based approaches to increase women's access to finance for secure tenure and economic security through public and private partnerships.

Moderator: *Ms Cecilia Njenga, UN-HABITAT*

8. PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN: WORKSHOP SUMMARIES

14:00 – 16:00 – Room W3 – 14

After the parallel workshops, there will be a report back session to the plenary, giving summaries of what will have been discussed. The summaries will include messages for targeted groups.

Moderator: *Christine Platt, President Commonwealth Planners Association.*

9. RECOMMENDATIONS TO POLICY MAKERS

16:30 – 17:30 – Room W3 – 14

This plenary session will discuss and agree on the key messages to be presented to policy makers attending the second day of the Gender Assembly including recommendations on accelerating progress in implementation of the Gender Equality Action Plan.

Moderator: *Christine Platt, President Commonwealth Planners Association.*

SATURDAY, 20 MARCH

10. GENDER AND SUSTAINABLE URBANIZATION: EMERGING ISSUES

09:00 – 10:00 – Room W3 – 14

As the world battles to address the impact of the current financial and economic crisis, and climate change, participants at the Assembly including ministers, mayors and parliamentarians will consider emerging issues such as climate change, bridging the urban divide through gender responsive urban planning, and economic empowerment of girls. Plan International will present key policy recommendations and strategies on economic empowerment of women based evidence and experiences from the field.

The sessions on second day of the Assembly will focus on Bridging the urban gender divide: dialogues with policy makers. Through interactive dialogues, ministers, parliamentarians, mayors and experts will discuss pertinent, strategies and policy implications for gender equality and urbanisation.

Presenters: *Gotelind Alber, Germany, Professor Dory Reeves, University of Auckland and Ms Emily Lundel – Plan International.*

11. LAND AND HOUSING

10:30 – 13:00 – Room W3 – 20

A woman's right to land and housing is often linked to marital property and inheritance rights, and subject to cultural and traditional practices. This is reflected in the registration of land and housing in the husband's

name and the customary handing down of land to male heirs in many societies. Even when there is joint-titling, women still lack control. This situation is compounded by poverty, lack of access to credit and housing finance, lack of awareness of women's human rights and legal rights, and low representation of women in decision-making bodies, including legislative and other bodies responsible for the administration and management of land and property. In some countries women are discriminated in rental housing, yet female-headed households constitute on average 20 per cent.

12. ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES

10:30 – 13:00, Room W3 – 19

While women and men experience the urban environment and use urban public spaces and services differently, women and girls' needs and priorities are often overlooked in public policies and programmes. In a world where most countries are far from reaching parity between men and women in decision-making, it is important that women partner with men in decision-making at the local, national and international level to promote gender equality, women's rights and empowerment. This dialogue will provide an opportunity to explore strategies for improving women's access to basic services and infrastructure in cities and towns around the world.

Moderator: *Dr Amaryllis Torres: Commissioner, Philippine Commission on Women, and Dean of the College of Social Work and Community Development of the University of the Philippines, Diliman.*

13. ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN CITIES

10:30 – 13:00 - Room W3 – 18

To bridge the urban divide, women can be empowered through ownership of land and housing and increased access to financial resources. Women's incomes in the informal sector are lower than those of men's, as women tend to concentrate on micro-enterprises such as petty trading of fruits, vegetables and other perishable goods with high levels of competition and rates of wastage. Women's income from such activities tends to be extremely low and there are limited opportunities for women to break out of the cycle of poverty.

14. POLICY MAKERS' SESSION

14:00 – 15:45- Room W3 – 20

This session will enable Ministers, mayors, commissioners and parliamentarians present to consider establishing a network of key policy-makers to enhance gender mainstreaming in decision-making on urbanisation and related matters, and support for implementation of the Gender Equality Action Plan at the national level.

15. RIO TO WUF6: STRATEGIES FOR THE NEXT FORUM

14:00 -15.45 Room W3-14

Partners will discuss strategies for action and milestones for the next two years before the next World Urban Forum. What needs to be done to accelerate and measure progress individually and collectively by women's organisations, development partners, governments, cities and local authorities?

CLOSING CEREMONY

16:00-17:00 Room W3-14

This plenary session will start with a presentation from the session on Rio to WUF6 on key decisions and strategies proposed. This will be followed by the formal closing ceremony, which will include the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between UN-HABITAT and the Seoul Metropolitan Government aimed at strengthening partnerships and collaboration to promote women-friendly cities. The closing session will underscore the key messages and recommendations from the Gender Assembly and outline a roadmap for the future. Ms Inga Bjork-Klevby, Deputy Executive Director, UN-HABITAT will make closing remarks.

RECEPTION

From 18:00