



American Model United Nations

Commission on the Status of Women

**Report to the Commission on the Status of
Women on the empowerment of rural women and
their role in poverty and hunger eradication,
development and current challenges**

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1 Executive Summary

2 The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is pleased to present to the Economic and Social Council
3 (ECOSOC) its final report on the topic of the Empowerment of Rural Women and Their Role in Poverty and
4 Hunger Eradication, Development and Current Challenges. The following report covers a wide range of sub-topics,
5 ranging from access to education and training to the under-representation of rural women in government and other
6 organizations.

7 The first chapter of the report includes two draft resolutions, which the CSW is submitting and recommending
8 to ECOSOC for consideration and adoption. The first draft resolution, entitled "The empowerment of rural women
9 and their role in education development," recognizes the role that education plays in improving rural women's access
10 to resources, tools and services, as well as increasing their opportunities in the home and workplace. The activating
11 clauses encourage governments to invest in infrastructure for education, particularly through non-governmental
12 organizations (NGOs), train educators and rural women in order to facilitate rural women's financial independence
13 and self-sustainability and continue to contribute to and cooperate with organizations such as the World Bank and
14 the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in the spirit of reducing hunger
15 and poverty among rural women.

16 The second draft resolution is entitled "Education, Legality and Finance." Its main focus is on ensuring that
17 there are three spheres that are highlighted to improve the livelihoods of women in rural areas. Education addresses
18 the need for rural women to have access to educational and vocational programs. Its activating clauses support
19 participation in the legislative process and representation in government in order to reduce gender gaps to political
20 structures and encourages the promotion of providing funds to initiate media, education and political programs that
21 aim at empowering rural women.

22 Other recommendations of the Commission, which are not included in draft resolutions, include the further
23 investigation of legal structures that can increase the representation of rural women in government and other or-
24 ganizations and encourages UN Women to amplify its efforts to address the issue of domestic violence against rural
25 women.

26 Chapter Two covers the deliberations and proceedings of the CSW that produced this proposal. It includes
27 a brief summary of the relevant and significant debate on this topic as well as the voting record for the resolutions
28 presented in the report.

29 Matters Calling For Action by the Economic and Social Council

30 CSW I/1

31 *Recalling* previous reports of the Commission on the Status of Women, particularly E/CN.6/2012/3 and
32 E/CN.6/2012/10, which emphasize the empowerment of rural women and girls as an essential part of the solution
33 of the global challenges of food security, poverty reduction and sustainable development,

34 *Reaffirming* the work of the United Nations Girls Education Initiative, which strives to promote girls'
35 education and gender equality through policy advocacy and support to government,

36 *Additionally affirming* the tenets of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly that of Goal Four,
37 which emphasizes quality education and aims to eliminate gender and wealth disparities within the educational
38 realm,

39 *Further emphasizes* the importance and growing need to educate women in the sphere of financial indepen-
40 dence, to encourage self-sustainability and participation in economies,

41 *Acknowledges* that rural women still face problems accessing training programs necessary to not only benefit
42 the lives of themselves and their families, given that rural women contribute significantly to familial economic support,

43 *Recognizing* the importance of state autonomy and varying cultural values, particularly in regards to women's
44 roles in their communities,

45 *Recommending* that states work in conjunction with organizations such as the World Bank and the United
46 Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for the finding of educational amelioration,

47 1. *Encourages* the implementation of adequate and sustainable funding to train educators worldwide, focus-
48 ing on the resources and knowledge provided by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to facilitate education of
49 teachers and students alike;

50 2. *Requests* governments of each nation state to consider an increased budget to enhance infrastructure to
51 provide better facilities for learning with a focus on:

52 (a) A focus to be made on transportation methods and infrastructure in order to provide easier
53 public access to education;

54 (b) The importance of NGO support in order to provide financial assistance for these implementa-
55 tions;

56 3. *Calls upon* states to implement, support and provide better access to programs which provide rural women
57 with the opportunities to gain employment within their desired fields;

58 4. *Supports* states' cooperation with international, national and private organizations to help create voca-
59 tional training programs in areas with growing demand, such as textile production and technology services;

60 5. *Urges* states to implement programs designed to train educators;

61 6. *Invites* member states to focus on overall student retention rates, particularly that of females;

62 7. *Emphasizes* the importance of training teachers to spread knowledge of women's health with a focus on
63 HIV and AIDS prevention;

64 8. *Further invites* states to continue to invest in agricultural education, with particular emphasis on improved
65 irrigation and seed technologies;

66 9. *Expresses its hope* that member states continue to cooperate in the interest of empowering rural women
67 to increase efforts to decrease poverty and eradicate hunger.

68 CSW I/2

69 *Reaffirming* the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against
70 Women, which calls for equal rights for men and women in rural areas,

71 *Further reaffirming* the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which states that the rights of
72 women should be the same as men,

73 *Recalling* previous reports of the Commission on the Status of Women that call attention to the empowerment
74 of rural women and girls as part of addressing the global challenge of poverty,

75 *Reaffirming* the United Nation's 2014 Gender Equality and Sustainable Development conclusions, especially
76 in regards to the roles women may take in developing more sustainable farming techniques, energy and food sources
77 given the educational and career opportunities necessary to influence such changes,

78 *Further Reaffirming* the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal 3, especially its focus on the existing
79 disparities between the educational levels of women and men, as well as the disadvantages women face pertaining to
80 career advancement,

81 *Reminding* the committee of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 2, which stresses that all
82 humans are entitled to the same rights regardless of race or gender,

83 *Further reminding* the committee of the 2004 Commission on the Status of Women Conclusions, especially
84 Conclusions 1 and 6, both of which stress that women are protected by law and by birth from discrimination and
85 from being stripped of the rights given to all men and women,

86 *Noting with approval* the sentiments of Chinese Ambassador Liu Jieyi in regards to member nations taking
87 responsibility for empowering women for the benefit of women and society as a whole,

88 *Recognizing* that women are still paid less and have fewer opportunities for career advancement than men
89 within a myriad of Member States,

90 1. *Recommends* the facilitation of a higher degree of access to primary and secondary education for females
91 in rural areas, including but not limited to:

92 (a) Subsidized primary and secondary education nationwide;

93 (b) Employment training that includes sustainable production techniques specialized for women,
94 particularly in agricultural sectors, simultaneously furthering development in their countries;

95 (c) Government collaboration with other world, national and private organizations to create easily
96 accessible and affordable educational and vocational programs for rural women in particular;

97 2. *Encourages* all Member States to modify existing legislation and government-led programs which limit
98 the rights of women as necessary to achieve greater gender equality with the focus on:

99 (a) Member States reaffirming their commitment to the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for
100 Action, especially lines 8, 9, 15, 19, 21 and 27, all of which state that the rights of women should be the same as the
101 rights of men;

102 (b) Endowing women with equal opportunities to participate in not only legislative and governmental
103 activities, but also private economic sectors within the capacity of each nation, yielding a reduction in current gender
104 gaps within political systems through the establishment of a committee that addresses the issue of disproportionate
105 representation of women in domestic political structure;

106 (c) Effectively and comprehensively consulting the Handbook for Legislation for Violence against
107 Women on issues of domestic violence and oppression;

108 3. *Requests* national governments work in conjunction with independent and world organizations as well as
109 private organizations to financially support working plans pertaining to gender equality;

110 4. *Encourages* collaboration with the Associated Country Women of the World, World Health Organization,
111 International Monetary Fund and/or the UN Women's Fund for Gender Inequality to provide the funds to initiate
112 media, educational and political programs aimed at empowering rural women and ending violence against rural
113 women, including but not limited to expansion of existing programs such as the Beyond Zero Campaign and The
114 Dreams Network, with a focus on:

115 (a) Increasing and improving access to health care in rural areas for women;

116 (b) The provision of doctors in more rural areas;

117 5. *Encourages* the careers of rural women in any sector of their choice, including but not limited to:

- 118 (a) Microfinance institutions that can be accessed through microfinance loans to enable rural women
119 professionally;
- 120 (b) Capitalizing on the natural resources available in rural areas;
- 121 (c) Providing rural women with necessary skills to flourish in modern markets.

122 **Additional Recommendations By the Committee**

123 The Commission on the Status of Women recommends that the Economic and Social Council further
124 consider the implications of the under-representation of rural women in the government and other local and national
125 organizations.

126 The Commission further recommends that the Economic and Social Council investigate legal struc-
127 tures that can encourage the inclusion of rural women in the government and other local and national organizations,
128 as a means to promote their economic and social cohesion and development.

129 The Commission applauds the efforts of UN Women and other organizations surrounding the em-
130 powerment of rural women, and encourages it to take further action to address the issue of domestic violence against
131 rural women.

Consideration and Deliberations on the Empowerment of Rural Women

Social Issues

Rural development and agricultural growth around the world are constrained by the inability of rural women and girls to reach their full potential as economic agents. According to the 2012 United Nations Report of the Secretary-General (E.CN.6/2012/3), if rural women had equal access to fertilizers, seeds and tools, total agricultural output in developing countries would increase by an estimated 2.5 to 4 percent, thereby reducing the number of hungry people by between 100 to 150 million around the world.

The global financial and economic crisis, volatile food and energy prices and climate change pose a serious threat to hard-earned advances made in the empowerment of rural women in recent years. They will undoubtedly have major negative implications for rural women in general and their role in poverty and hunger eradication and development in particular, unless the international community takes a comprehensive approach to finding a joint solution to the current crises.

During discussion of the issue of empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and other challenges, Member States of the Commission on the Status of Women discussed the following:

Member States emphasized that education of rural women, especially at an early age, remains a crucial part of ensuring their access and opportunities in society. UN Women on Education reported in 2015 that of 774 million illiterate people in the world, two-thirds are female. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) Education for All Global Monitoring Report also states that 31 million girls of primary school age are kept out of school. Of these girls, 17 million are expected to never enter school. Member States reaffirmed United Nations Development Program's (UNDP) Sustainable Development Goal 5 of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, as well as the importance of quality education and recognizing education as one of the basic human rights for women. Member States also encouraged implementing education programs initiated by organizations such as United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), Global Fund for Children and UNDP.

Member States also noted the importance of employment training techniques that give rural women access to tools and natural resources needed in order to empower them in their communities. Furthermore, providing this type of education for women will facilitate the representation of women in the government. Many Member States spoke in favor of initiatives that educate the public on women's equal role in society. The younger generations of rural women can play a vital role in facilitating this change, and ensuring their access through infrastructure will be important moving forward.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, in particular, noted that a lack of sound infrastructure leads rural women to face educational barriers to education. This leads to devastating and life long consequences which include, but are not limited to, missed economic and social opportunities. To provide a scope, Member States noted that geographic isolation proves to be difficult to overcome due to a lack of roads and buses, or even bike lanes. Pakistan noted that a half-kilometre increase in the distance to school decreases girls' enrollment by 20 percent. Therefore, not only is education important, but so too is removing barriers to education. Various entities such as Resource Organization for Advancement & Development (ROAD) have aided in mitigating the consequences.

Further, Member States noted that a lack of access to school materials limits the educational opportunities of rural women. Member States suggested that non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as Room to Read and Reach Out to Asia (ROTA) are organizations that may be used as case studies for further adopting organizations to lessen the burden of a lack of resources. China recommended aligning all policies with the values presented in the UNESCO document entitled "Promoting Health and Literacy for Women's Empowerment," which identifies specific ways to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 5.

Member States noted that it is crucial that girls are encouraged to continue their schooling and to explore areas which are typically male-dominated, such as STEM (Science, Tehnology, Engineering and Math) careers. Exploring ways women can enhance the economy could provide a larger variety of employment opportunities and would empower women, giving them increased positive visibility in the public sphere. Member States emphasized the importance of working with international, national and private organizations to help fund vocational training

181 programs in growing fields. These organizations can also provide resources and training to help teachers effectively
182 address student retention rates, health and reproductive matters and problems which specifically impact women.

183 Some member states noted that marriage proves to be an issue that proliferates across the borders of
184 many states, particularly in rural areas where women have limited access to legal and social representation. Member
185 States reaffirmed the language of A/HRC/29/L.15, encouraging the body to "strengthen efforts to prevent and
186 eliminate child, early and forced marriage." Ultimately, the robbing of one's childhood and future further limits rural
187 women's access and opportunity as participants in the workforce and society as a whole.

188 Member States further noted that in order to ensure the empowerment of rural women in eradicating
189 poverty, the international community should address the high rates of violence against women worldwide. According
190 to a multi-country study conducted by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2005, rural women report a higher
191 rate of physical abuse than urban women. Because rural women face a multitude of different challenges in regards
192 to gender-based violence, Member States believed that it is necessary to identify these disparities in order to move
193 towards proactive change.

194 Member States expressed concern that victims of gender-based violence in rural areas face unique
195 challenges in regards to resource access. There is a common lack of social services for domestic violence victims,
196 including crisis rooms, long-term housing, rehabilitation services and access to legal representation. While these
197 services might exist in urban areas, there is a lack of public transportation from rural areas to these services. Along
198 with this, due to the absence of advanced technology in many rural communities, there is an inability to contact
199 crisis hotlines and other emergency health services. Member States suggested that developing public transportation
200 to rural communities can improve abused women's access to these services, as well as work with non-governmental
201 organizations in order to develop proximate solutions for the high rate of domestic violence for rural women.

202 Along with this lack of access to social services, Member States noted that rural women face chal-
203 lenges with national and local law enforcement. There is a higher rate of underreporting of domestic abuse in rural
204 areas than urban areas due to both lack of presence and trust in law enforcement. Member States suggested the
205 domestic implementation of law enforcement training programs that address situations of abuse. This includes iden-
206 tifying situations of abuse, empathically dealing with victims and holding perpetrators accountable. These programs
207 would benefit victims of abuse and would involve the legal system in eradicating violence against women.

208 Currently, only 125 Member States consider domestic violence a crime, which leaves 608 million
209 women residing in countries that do not prosecute domestic abusers. Therefore, many Member States agreed that
210 the criminalization of violence against women is imperative for the empowerment of women. Some Member States
211 urged others who have yet to criminalize intimate partner violence to consider policy suggestions put forth by the
212 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

213 In order to ensure sustainable solutions for victims of gender-based violence in rural communities,
214 Member States noted that the suggestions listed above must be affirmed through public awareness campaigns along
215 with primary and secondary education programming. Campaign materials include information on the definition of
216 domestic abuse and violence against women, which is defined by the United Nations in the 1993 Convention on the
217 Elimination of Violence Against Women as "anyact of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in,
218 physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary
219 deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life." Beyond this, Member States recommended
220 further information distributed on marital rape, which is unrecognized as criminal in all but 52 Member States. In
221 regards to education programming, it is essential to involve both young males, females and non-gender conforming
222 individuals in the gender-based violence conversation. Member States suggested the use of Voices Against Violence,
223 a co-educational curriculum developed by the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS) and
224 UN Women.

225 Member States also expressed concern about the issue of financial abuse against women. It was
226 noted that, in developing nations, although women do play a large role in jobs in rural areas, often they are expected
227 and/or forced to give any and all wages earned through their work to their head of household, which is usually their
228 fathers or husbands. This is one of the most common forms of domestic abuse, and the representatives discussed
229 the fact that this type of abuse is often overlooked in the discussion of domestic abuse and women's rights. Member
230 States noted that it is difficult, if not impossible, for women to take care of themselves and/or get out of abusive
231 situations if they are unable to earn and retain wages from the labor that they perform. Member States believed
232 that this is especially problematic if the heads of the households are the abusers or oppressors.

233 Member States noted and expressed appreciation for the work done by the United States-based

234 non-profit organization known as Secure the Call, which collects donated cell phones, converts them into working
235 emergency access phones and then distributes these free phones to victims, victim's rights organizations, domestic
236 abuse shelters and other organizations with similar interests and goals. Many Member States expressed the belief
237 that programs of a similar nature could help alleviate the overwhelming issue that victims face in a lack of adequate
238 means by which to report instances of domestic abuse in rural areas.

239 Legal Issues

240 Recognizing the discrepancies in the number of men and women in leadership positions across differ-
241 ent arenas, Member States expressed a general concern for the introduction of policies that combat the stern reality
242 of the discrepancy between men and women in the agriculture sector, business sector, as well as public service sector.
243 Women lose their rights and power in every sector of public and private life. Inclusion of women in these sectors
244 directly affects the empowerment of rural women as well as women as a whole. Member States discussed how the
245 laws in place act as a proxy for the value structures of a nation and how they can facilitate both benefit and harm
246 when it comes to women's empowerment.

247 Member States discussed the need for awareness as to what the rights of rural women are as well
248 as the importance of formation and implementation of policy. Some noted how legal codes can be modified and
249 adjusted by each individual nation to best pursue gender equity and women's empowerment.

250 Being aware of the cultural and religious differences of the commission, Member States discussed
251 the importance of laws for women's protection in every realm of life. Member States further considered how the laws
252 can be best implemented on a country by country basis to best be implemented and have the greatest effect on rural
253 women.

254 Several Member States, including, Albania, Liberia, Colombia, the Russian Federation and Uruguay-
255 suggested domestic affirmative action legislation which would be written with direct and concise rhetoric that would
256 not allow room for misinterpretation and/or corruption with the aim to empower rural women to attain a greater
257 place in their local public and private power structures. They also suggested further action on determining how
258 countries would implement the policies, and they emphasized countries could cover whatever areas the countries
259 themselves deemed areas of most pressing need.

260 Member States further suggested the adoption of domestic policies that addressed the social, edu-
261 cational, and economic advancement needs specific to rural women. They encouraged the participation of women in
262 government and the workforce, as this allows for inclusion as well as the advancement of underrepresented viewpoints
263 and perspectives. On the systemic level, Rwanda, Uganda, Uruguay, Colombia and Liberia suggested quota systems
264 for their legislative bodies which could be adopted as a framework for inclusion across the developing world. This
265 has had positive effects on increasing women's involvement in politics. For example, the formation of peace huts in
266 Liberia, which foster dialogue between local leaders and rural women, is one particular way in which women could be
267 given greater access and a greater voice in politics. Member States believed that could also be used as a framework
268 for domestic legislation.

269 Member States, particularly the delegation from Pakistan, encouraged the creation of legislation
270 that would empower women and make them feel safe. In Pakistan, 4 October 2016, a piece of legislation was passed
271 that sentences convicted honor killers to prison for 25 years. This would deter honor killings on a social level by
272 making a statement that this behavior is no longer acceptable. Member States emphasized that this policy could be
273 adopted in countries where this is still prevalent to reduce rates of femicide across the developing world.

274 Member States further discussed the creation of an investigatory commission to publish reports on
275 corruptions to facilitate greater transparency. This would be looking only at local level corruption as it pertains to
276 the rights and needs of rural women. Many Member States believed this would ensure that local bias and family
277 politics are kept out of the courtroom in the adjudication of women's issues. This would be implemented by each
278 country and would act as a special task force within each government's justice department.

279 Member States also recommended the implementation of modernized laws surrounding divorce.
280 Some member states noted that the divorce laws in their borders that are on the books are incredibly antiquated in
281 that they represent obsolete gender norms and are inherently sexist. They either do not allow or have restrictions
282 on divorce, such that it is only accessible to men or accessible to women under very limited circumstances. Member
283 States recommended working through local leaders and NGOs to change the laws, as well as the implementation of
284 those laws so that dangerous practices could be illegal in practice, not just illegal on the books.

285 Moreover, many Member States believed that a key legal reform that countries could enact was the
286 creation of more equitable policies in regards to private property. If women could have control of their own financial
287 capital and their own land they would have greater agency. Ideally, giving women greater freedom of movement
288 and freedom of action will help to empower women, especially those in rural areas, and make sure that they are
289 not as constrained as they might be otherwise. For women in rural areas with very limited resources, the more
290 thorough implementation of this policy will give them localized power beyond what they could have through public
291 or private institutions. Member States believed that these revised property rights would furthermore provide for a
292 more equitable distribution of assets in marriages and also give alimony rights post marriage.

293 **Economic Issues**

294 Member States classified as High Income Countries (HICs) discussed the financial disparities born
295 out of stereotypical gender roles. They recommended focusing on the disparity between the compensated and
296 uncompensated domestic work of women, which plays a large role in preventing the social mobility of women in these
297 rural societies. Some Member States called for a partnership with the Alliance of Women in Workers' Compensation
298 (AWWC) which provides open dialogue on industry-specific topics to promote idea sharing, insight gathering, etc.
299 In addition, Member States evaluated the imbalance of land-ownership for rural women farmers. Women make up
300 approximately 50 percent of all farmers that produce food, and currently claim ownership of only 10 to 20 percent
301 of land in Low Income Countries (LICs) for which data is available. Some Member States emphasized investment in
302 rural women farmers through seed money programs. For example, a partnership between Seed Programs International
303 and UN Women may help to develop these seed money programs.

304 Many Member States observed that women in rural areas often have restrictive domestic partnerships
305 where income only comes from their partners, and women are often chained to abusive partnerships because of this
306 financial inequality. Accordingly, these Member States encouraged others to partner with non-profit MADRE,
307 which helps women workers and women who are victims of atrocities become leaders in their communities. The
308 Young Professionals for Agricultural Development (YPARD) gives young women a voice in decision making around
309 agricultural development. World Farmers Organization (WFO) works to empower women farmers and find ways to
310 lift up all farmers from inequities that exist today. Furthermore, in the vein of economic independence, the Fund
311 for Gender Equality, the grant-making mechanism dedicated to the economic and political empowerment of women
312 worldwide, may help with creating these seed money programs and relevant initiatives.

313 Member States expressed concern that the healthcare situation in rural areas segregated from larger
314 communities disproportionately affects women and girls, who are unable to receive the primary and specialized
315 care that they need. In the next decade, the amount of people in STEM careers will drastically decline, making it
316 imperative for less developed and developing countries to retain the physicians educated in their countries. The United
317 States recommended following its example, the National Health Service Corps (NHSC), which provides scholarship
318 and loan-repayment programs for allopathic and osteopathic doctors. This program could be mirrored in rural areas
319 by providing economic incentives for doctors focusing specifically on women's, children's and reproductive health.
320 By offering similar incentives and scholarships to local women allowing them to pursue higher education relating to
321 STEM and healthcare careers, the amount of rural care available would increase, demolishing a barrier that holds
322 women and girls back from reaching their full potential.

323 Aside from incentives alone, Member States applauded existing NGOs that have created spaces for
324 rural women to receive vocational training with international financial assistance that facilitates local economic
325 independence, such as the Lupane Women's Centre in Zimbabwe, which is partially sponsored by the Liechtenstein
326 Development Service. It does, however, receive 50 percent of its funding through the profits of the women to whom
327 it provides assistance, including education and income-generation opportunities within the local community.

328 Member States emphasized that infrastructure is the foundation for introducing new ideas and social
329 policies. Through infrastructure, programs can be developed for rural women in poverty, as well as pushing forth
330 the economic mobility for rural women. Member States wished to emphasize policies already put into place within
331 fellow Member States' governmental bodies as to respect these Member States' sovereignty, especially in LICs. They
332 recommended improving low income housing to form a basis for increased economic maneuverability for rural women.
333 In regards to rural women, providing affordable, low income housing affords women with small wages, or who may be
334 tied to an abusive spouse, the means for economic independence. This economic independence will supply a path for
335 impoverished women to increase their economic viability and improve their upward social mobility. Member States
336 supported the current program for low income housing improvement, the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme

(PSUP), a joint effort of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States, the European Commission (EC) and UN-Habitat. Member States believed this program would be a fundamental attribute to creating low income housing in rural areas. This housing will encourage the destruction of social barriers to rural women becoming financially independent as they will have one of the most basic needs.

Furthermore, Member States noted with approval the Second Rural Roads and Markets Improvement and Maintenance Project, which increases institutional capacity for efficient rural infrastructure management. Increasing access to basic infrastructure in rural communities will allow more stable financial conditions to arise out of these communities, and therefore rural women will have the ability to move up the social hierarchy.

Member States classified as LICs analyzed the role of rural women in agriculture and discussed seed quality and diversification of crops, as well as organizations which can help with this process. These organizations include the World Seed Project, which directly give resources to rural women to grow sustainable crops through diversified and specialized seeds. For some Member States, rice is an essential food resource. Therefore, the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), which helps rice-growing farmers gain access to more diverse seeds and subsequent education, was thoroughly discussed. Member States further considered irrigation systems and wells, such as securing water resources for agriculture secures food for rural women, as well as the advancement of agricultural education among rural women. Agriculturalists who are educated in effective techniques can better utilize the technology discussed in the previous paragraph. As mentioned before, the IRRI aims to educate women in Member States where rice is prevalent. In addition, Member States emphasized the importance of educating rural women in utilizing this technology so they are able to achieve financial self-sufficiency.

Health Issues

Member States believed in promoting the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) as an international organization created by the UN for the purpose of tackling human suffering and progress stalling caused by malnutrition. These Member States aimed to drive the vision of a world without malnutrition through the creation of alliances between governments, business and civil society to find and deliver solutions to the complex problem of malnutrition. Member States emphasized these efforts to support rural women, as providing them with a sustainable nutritious diet is beneficial for all of society.

Member States emphasized the importance of the GAIN project, which has proven to be successful in other Member States. They encouraged the improvement and expansion of the program via Direct Foreign Investments, facilitated through more Non-Governmental Organizations' participation and foreign aid from developed Member States. Furthermore, GAIN has signed a Cooperation Agreement with the World Food Programme (WFP) on a collaborative effort to improve the nutritional status of vulnerable population groups. Through this partnership, Member States believed that GAIN and the WFP will engage private-sector partners in improving the nutritional value of their products for the general population and targeted population groups. Member States suggested providing education on food security and nutritional information, as well as businesses to address malnutrition and actively promote all women's access to healthy food containing good quality ingredients and reasonable prices.

Member States recalled the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically Goals 6 and 9, which refer to the universal access to clean water and sanitation, and the development of infrastructure respectively. They noted the pivotal role played by water in human development and individual sustenance, while acknowledging that 40 percent of the world population (1.7 billion people) are still affected by water scarcity, including many rural women. Many Member States were alarmed by the accelerated consumption of water in river basins that do not allow for resource replenishing. They recommended that all Member States work in close accordance to the recommendations and data gathered and provided by UN Water and other research programs which specialize in water resources in order to promote sustainable water supplies for rural women. Member States encouraged the development of infrastructures by Member States which prioritize providing resources; with the inclusion of rural areas, in which women are particularly affected by the lack of nutritional resources. Member States called for renewed efforts to recognize existing alliances and partnerships with the common goal of achieving Sustainable Development Goals, including the aforementioned, as well as the eradication of poverty and the promotion of gender equality.

Member States expressed their hope to continue increasing access to maternal healthcare services for rural women. Specifically, the importance of prenatal and postnatal care, such as i) institutional delivery and/or access to skilled birth attendants ii) prevention of further transmission of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases/infections iii) Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and iv) Shaken Baby Syndrome. Member States reaffirmed participation in, and the work of, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), such as working to

389 improve rural women's access to family planning and empower individual choices by partnering with community
390 service organizations, faith based organizations, youth groups, NGOs and governments. The aforementioned will
391 flourish by promoting collaboration between developed and underdeveloped nations for empowering rural women
392 around the world.

393 **Adoption of the Report**

394 **ECOSOC I/3**

395 *Recognizing* the efforts made by the Commission on the Status of Women in producing a report on the
396 empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges
397 as requested by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC),

398 1. *Accepts* the report of the Commission on the Status of Women.

Passed by consensus, with 0 abstentions