

UN Women/FAO/IFAD/WFP Expert Group Meeting Sept 2017 Summary Report



UN Women, IFAD, FAO, WFP
Rome, 20-22 September 2017

Expert Group Meeting

‘Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality
and the empowerment of rural women and girls’

In preparation of the priority theme of the 62nd session of
the UN Commission on the Status of Women

Summary of the EGM report

by Kate Lappin and other participants

<http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw62-2018/preparations/expert-group-meeting>

Focus:

- Key Barriers
- Rural Women's Rights To Land and Productive Resources
- Rural Women's Rights To Food Sovereignty and Nutritional Empowerment
- Rural Women's Rights to an Adequate Standard of Living and Social Protection
- Enabling a Just and Equitable Transition toward a Sustainable Future for Rural Women
- Enabling Women's Collective Power and Self-determination over their Bodies, Households, Resources and Communities

1. Key barriers

Neo-liberal economic model:

- Privatization former public services; deregulation corporation, labor and financial markets; trade and investment liberalization; illicit financial flows,
- So: erosion of resource base of public services for women's human rights; exposure to 'land and water grabbing', large-scale export agriculture, input monopolization, distress migration, and violence

Climate change

- Rural women & girls no or negative emissions while most vulnerable for reduced production, distress migration, and extreme floods/droughts/storms.
- Yet gender-blind or -negative adaptation measures

2. Rural women's rights to land and productive resources

- **Land and tenure security**
Weak and vital to realize women's human rights; also lack of data
- **Land grabbing** and speculation; 'national treatment' clause
- **Gender-responsive framework for land rights:** Quality of broad & specified scope access, use, rule setting, rule implementation, exclusion; legality/implementation; participation 'FPIC'; enforcement.
- **Access to water and water grabbing** women's lack of access to infrastructure; water grabs legitimized in investment agreements; customary water rights are often criminalized
- **Energy democracy** transition to renewables including rural women
- **Human rights instruments on land, water and other resources** 'Voluntary' Guidelines, Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investments, various Indigenous people's rights declarations.

3. Rural women's rights to food sovereignty and nutritional empowerment

- **Food sovereignty** own agro-ecological, locally adapted production, diets and markets, requiring affirmative state subsidies and procurement
- **Tariffs and subsidies** currently heavily biased in favour of EU/USA and corporate agriculture, against women's small-scale production, so special and differentiated measures in WTO in Agriculture needed
- **Intellectual property protections** companies' monopolization of 'new' varieties and medicines marginalizes women's traditional knowledge on seeds/medicinal plants, so apply flexibilities in Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS)
- **Pesticides** monopolization & mono-cropping marginalizes women's local agro-ecological production and health risks, so use 'precautionary principle'
- **Women's nutritional empowerment** acquiring the capacity to be well-fed and healthy and reduced unpaid labor

4. Adequate standard of living and social protection

Labour:

- Decent work; equal pay to overcome lowest-paid, informal, seasonal, difficult, dangerous jobs and in labour migration
- Alleviate and redistribute unpaid care work (13% of GDP)
- Universal living wage

Health:

- State support to overcome lesser access also reproductive health; higher costs with privatization

Social protection for 73 % of people, mainly women:

- Pensions, safety nets: cash, in-kind, and/or work programs

5. Enabling a just and equitable transition toward a sustainable future for rural women

Shifting to sustainable and equitable agricultural production and economy:

- Social contract between the state and citizens
- Global Tax Body
- Public-public partnerships for public good
- State investments in care work, health, education, housing, transport, agriculture, disaster management, & common resource rights,

6. Enabling women's collective power and self-determination

- Rural women's organizing for policy, law and governance
- Public participation in Political and Public Affairs (e.g. budgets)
- Women's collection, analysis and utilization of data
- Social norms perpetuating inequalities, e.g. curricula; roles and responsibilities of men and boys
- Protect Women Human Rights Defenders
- Regulate private security actors in line with international human rights

Rural Women's Rights to Water for Health, Food and Income



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Three Messages

1. Intersectionality and intersecting ***human rights to health, food and income***
2. Ensure women's participation in water ***infrastructure*** rights through decentralized planning and design
3. Protect women's ***water resource*** rights for basic domestic and productive water uses in plural water resource laws

1a. Intersectionality & multi-faceted wellbeing

Benefits

- Domestic/nutrition: drinking, cooking, personal hygiene, cleaning, washing, bathing; sanitation
- Productive/nutrition: Livestock, fisheries/aquaculture, wildlife; crop irrigation, horticulture, trees; water-dependent enterprises
- Energy: biogas, hydropower
- Other: Navigation, recreation, cultural, ceremonial

Harm

Water-borne disease, pollution, flooding, storms, droughts

Climate change

= a more extreme and less predictable global hydrological cycle

1b. So: intersecting human rights to health, food, income, equality

1966 CESCR → 2002 General Comment 15 on a human right to water (substantive and procedural rights; prioritizes both domestic and productive water uses for intersecting human rights)

1979 CEDAW → 2016 General Recommendation 34 on the rights of rural women in domestic water uses (defeminize care economy) and productive water uses (gender equality)

2010: UN Assembly: Resolutions on the right to affordable water **infrastructure** for drinking, personal hygiene, sanitation and other domestic uses

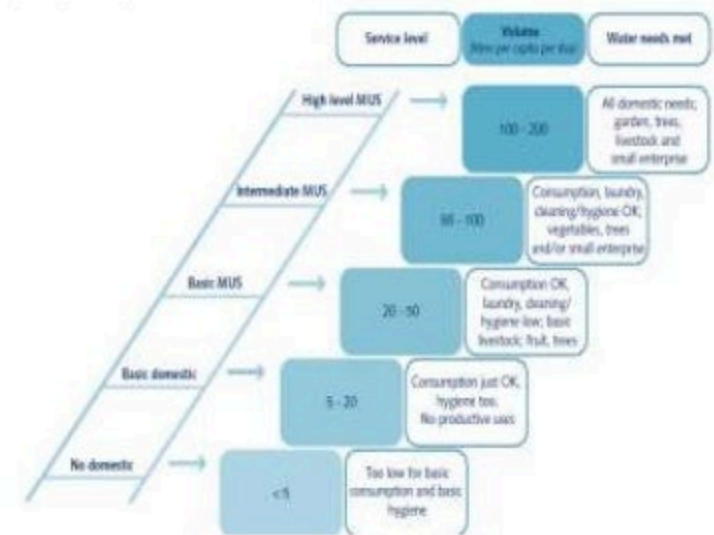
2a. Water infrastructure rights

- Investments in infrastructure vest claims to water conveyed: 'hydraulic property rights creation' (self vs state investment)
- Overcoming male monopolization through participatory design for multiple uses (norms, capital, training/skills, land and other inputs in enterprises)



2b. Human right to water services: defeminize care economy and promote small-scale production

- Expand the human right to water infrastructure services at homesteads to enable multiple use services (MUS)
- 5 lpcd safe for drinking



IDE Nepal
334 MUS
for 60,500
people



2c Irrigation sub-sector: reduce gender and social discrimination

- Colonial state: divide and rule by promoting male breadwinner – female housewife
- Today: often continued male elite capture

So:

- Awareness raising ‘Gender in Irrigation Learning and Improvement Tool’.
- Irrigated plot allocation to women or jointly
- Women’s and joint membership of Water User Association; leadership
- Adopt a holistic multiple use water services approach (MUS)



3. **Water resource** rights: defining a human right to water *resources* for livelihoods

- Decolonize water legislation and recognize legal pluralism/indigenous water laws, esp in 'land and water grabs'
- Protect water resource availability that meets basic domestic **and** basic productive water needs
- Implement women's procedural rights



A close-up photograph of a person's hands being washed with water flowing from a green plastic tap. The person is wearing a yellow wristband. In the background, a solar panel is mounted on a structure, and a green circular logo with the word 'SUNPOWER' is visible. The setting appears to be a rural agricultural area with green plants and trees.

Thank You