



CONCEPT NOTE

#CPH20Beijing

March 19, 2015 | 1:15 pm - 2:30 pm
Conference Room 12 | UN General Assembly

Copenhagen Meets Beijing: The gender dimensions of social development policy and praxis

Background

The year of 2015 marks the 20th anniversaries of the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen, and the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing. Both landmark summits sought to promote inclusive and equitable social development for all within the framework of sustainable development. Both declarations also noted the importance of equality and equity between women and men for social and economic development.

At the World Summit for Social Development held in March 1995, representatives of Member States of the United Nations (UN) gathered together in Copenhagen and adopted the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, an ambitious and holistic approach to social development practices for all. The Copenhagen Declaration acknowledged, *“that social and economic development cannot be secured in a sustainable way without the full participation of women and that equality and equity between women and men is a priority for the international community and as such must be at the center of economic and social development.”*¹ The Copenhagen Declaration also recognized the significance of the Fourth World Conference on Women by requiring member states and the international society to *“give specific attention to the preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held at Beijing in September 1995, and to the implementation and follow-up of the conclusions of that Conference.”*²

¹ Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development, Item 7, <http://www.un-documents.net/cope-dec.htm>.

² Ibid, Commitment 5, <http://www.un-documents.net/cope-dec.htm>.



Building on the consensus made at the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen, representatives from 189 governments reunited in Beijing in September of the same year and adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action during the Fourth World Conference for Women. The Beijing Declaration reaffirmed that *“eradication of poverty based on sustained economic growth, social development, environmental protection and social justice requires the involvement of women in economic and social development, equal opportunities and the full and equal participation of women and men as agents and beneficiaries of people-centered sustainable development.”*³

Today, 20 years after the adoption and implementation of the two Declarations, great progress has been made across the globe in social development, while some challenges remain. Understanding and promoting the gender dimensions of this progress, and of the persistent and emerging challenges, is important to ensuring that both women and men benefit from the post-2015 global sustainable development agenda.

Objectives

This event will present a platform for dialogue on the complementary goals and commitments made in Copenhagen and Beijing, as well as the past and potential benefits to development progress of working at the intersections of the issues that they address. Initiated by the Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD) of the UN Department of Economics and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and with the support of the Permanent Mission of St. Vincent and The Grenadines, the event is designed to echo the theme of the 53rd Session of the Commission for Social Development, “Rethinking and strengthening social development in the contemporary world”, and assess the approach to and contribution of gender equality in achieving social development for all. This event aims at promoting dialogue and strengthening partnerships among stakeholders for future cooperation and collaborations.

Some key questions guiding the discussion would include:

³ Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Item 16,
http://www.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/csw/pfa_e_final_web.pdf



1. What are some of the overlaps in the Copenhagen Declaration on social development and Beijing Declaration on the advancement of women? What is the impact of these overlaps on policy making?
2. How can attention to gender relations in a society lead to more effective social policy making?
3. Based on past experience in social progress, what shifts need to be made in the approach to social policy to better support the achievement of gender equality?

Proposed Agenda

13:15 pm	Welcome and brief introduction	Ms. Daniela Bas	Director, Division for Social Policy and Development, United Nations Department of Economics and Social Affairs
13:20 pm	Opening address	H.E. Ms. Inga Rhonda King	Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations
13:28 pm	Introduction of panel	Ms. Daniela Bas	
13:31 pm	Brief introductory statement by each panelist (3 minute each)	Ms. Patience Stephens	Special Advisor on Education at the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, UN Women
		Mr. Ravi Karkara	Global Strategic Partnership Adviser Post-2015, United Nations Millennium Campaign; and Global Advisor on Youth, UN Habitat
		Mr. Kevin Cassidy	ILO Senior Communications and External Relations Officer
		Ms. Bette Levy	Executive Committee member of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women and the NGO Committees on Social Development
13:43 pm	Moderator led discussion	Moderator and Panelists	
14:08 pm	Interventions from the floor	Moderator, panelists and audience	
14:28 pm	Closing		



Suggested Speakers

Opening:

H.E. Ms. Inga Rhonda King, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations

Moderator:

Ms. Daniela Bas, Director, Division for Social Policy and Development, United Nations Department of Economics and Social Affairs

Panelists:

Ms. Patience Stephens, Special Advisor on Education at the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, UN Women

Mr. Ravi Karkara, Global Strategic Partnership Adviser Post-2015, United Nations Millennium Campaign; and Global Advisor on Youth, UN Habitat

Ms. Bette Levy, Executive Committee member of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women and the NGO Committees on Social Development

Mr. Kevin Cassidy, Senior Communications and External Relations Officer, ILO