

Towards a Sustainable Future for All Women and Girls: Combatting Poverty and Promoting Gender Equality: A Data and Policy Perspective

Background:

Based on latest available data for 2013, an estimated 767 million people lived below the international poverty line of \$1.90 a day — down from 1.7 billion people in 1999. The figure reflects a decrease in the global poverty rate from 28 per cent in 1999 to 11 per cent in 2013.¹ It is unknown however how many of those living in poverty are women and girls. This is, in part, because the headcount measure of extreme poverty (\$1.90 a day) is estimated by using aggregate household level income data which makes it difficult to estimate individual poverty rates, and hence, gender differences in the incidence, severity and impact of poverty.

The 2030 Agenda recognizes that realizing gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls is a crucial contribution to the achievement of sustainable development. The goal to end poverty in all its forms everywhere will not be achieved unless women are lifted out of poverty and able to exercise equal rights and opportunities to have access to land, decent work, resources (including services and social protection) and technology. It is therefore essential to broaden the discussion on poverty to include a greater understanding and recognition of the role discrimination against women plays in perpetuating poverty and heightening the risk of poverty among specific groups of women and girls.

A Special Event during the Second Committee, GA72

The Second Committee of the General Assembly will consider the biennial sub-item on “Women in development” (item 24 b of the provisional agenda) during its forthcoming session. UN-Women will convene a special event to contribute new ideas and expert knowledge that will inform the Committee's deliberations and work. The panel will take place on **18 October 2017 (3 pm to 6 pm)** at UN Headquarters in New York.

UN-Women and the World Bank have partnered to explore how existing data can be used in innovative ways to expand our knowledge and understanding of the gender dimensions of poverty. The collaborative work analyses how variables such as sex, age, marital status, educational attainment and employment status of individuals correlate with their household characteristics, including poverty. The findings from this joint initiative have clear and practical implications for policy makers.

¹ Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (E/2017/66).

A Special Event of the Second Committee: GA 72

UN-Women will convene a special event to present the findings from this joint research/analysis with the World Bank. The presentation of the data will be followed by a discussion on relevant policy responses, including presentations from leading researchers and policy experts on innovative policy solutions that have had an impact on reducing poverty rates and contributed substantively to gender equality and empowerment of women and girls.

Moderator:

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Under-Secretary-General, Executive Director of UN-Women

Panelists:

- **Kinnon Scott** (Senior Economist, Development Research Group, World Bank) Presentation of the study's key findings – gender profiles of the poor.
- **Shahra Razavi** (Chief, Research & Data Section, UN-Women) – The interconnections between gender equality, poverty and policy responses.
- **Haris Gazdar** (Collective for Social Science Research, Karachi, Pakistan) – Measuring women's work and implications for poverty analysis in South Asia.
- **Agnes Quizumbing** (Senior Research Fellow, IFPRI) – Women's land rights as a pathway to poverty reduction in sub-Saharan Africa.
- **Magdalena Sepulveda** (Previous Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, Mexico) – Social protection and women's rights in Latin America.