

Interactive Dialogue: Accelerating Progress towards the Empowerment of Rural Women

FAO, IFAD, UN-Women and WFP: 28 Feb. 2012, 3.00-4.30 pm

BIOGRAPHS

Elisabeth Atangana

Elisabeth Atangana is a farmer who is actively involved in the creation of associations, professional organizations and agricultural producers since 1979. These include the Platform Sub-Regional Peasant Organizations of Central Africa (PROPAC) and the platform Pan-African Peasant Organizations (PAFO). She was particularly active and engaged in the construction of the peasant movement at the regional and continental levels. During the period 1998-2005, she was actively involved in the consultation process of National Platforms of Peasant Organizations of Central Africa. Ms. Atangana was elected first President of the Pan-African organization of farmers and producers.

Michelle Bachelet

Michelle Bachelet is the first Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women. She is trained as a doctor, with graduate studies in Military Sciences. Ms. Bachelet most recently served as President of Chile from 2006 to 2010. A long-time champion of women's rights, she has advocated for gender equality and women's empowerment throughout her career. Ms. Bachelet also held ministerial portfolios in the Chilean Government as Minister of Defence and Minister of Health. In April 2010, former President Michelle Bachelet founded and headed Dialoga Foundation, as a way to contribute to and support a renovation of ideas, action, and leadership in Chile.

Lilly Be'Soer Kolts

Lilly Be'Soer Kolts is the founder of the local women's human rights NGO, Voice for Change in Papua New Guinea. She is personally a victim of tribal conflict while also being a survivor of polygamous marriage, currently raising six children alone. She defines herself as a Women's Human Rights Defender and has taken a lead in facilitating mediation among the parties in conflict in past and present internal tribal conflicts and wars in Papua New Guinea. In 2010 she was awarded a Pacific Human Rights Defenders Award. In the beginning of this year, she successfully coordinated a peace reconciliation to resettle 500 internally displaced families and initiated a committee to address the terror, violence and fatal impacts related to sorcery. She is also facilitating a drug surrender program of youths in her local district. Lilly Be'Soer Kolts is currently the General Secretary of the newly established regional network Highlands Regional Human Rights Defenders Network.

Eleonora Menicucci de Oliveira

Eleonora Menicucci de Oliveira is Minister of Policies for Women of Brazil. She is also Professor of Public Health and Deputy Dean at the Department for Preventative Medicine of the Federal University of São Paulo (UNIFESP). Ms. Menicucci de Oliveira holds an undergraduate degree in Social Sciences from the Federal University of Minas Gerais, a Master's degree in Sociology from the Federal University of Paraíba, a Ph.D in Political Science from the University of São Paulo, a post-doctorate degree in health and women's labour from the Facultad de Medicina della Università Degli Studi Di Milano and Associate Professorship in Public Health at the Public Health Faculty of the University of São Paulo. She is an experienced academic and professor in the fields of sociology and public health. Her academic trajectory has been marked by her active engagement in councils and commissions regarding women's rights as well as her work as a consultant regarding public policies towards women.

Saraswathi Menon,

Saraswathi Menon, is currently the Director of the UN-Women Policy Division. She was formerly Director of the UNDP Evaluation Office and the elected Chair of the United Nations Evaluations Group that brings together the heads of evaluation of all UN organizations. She was a member of the team of authors who wrote the first six Human Development Reports. Subsequently, she was the Deputy Chief of the Regional Programme in the Regional Bureau of Asia and the Pacific; UNDP Deputy Resident Representative in Nepal; and UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Mongolia. Prior to joining UNDP she taught sociology in Madras University in India. She has a Ph.D. in Sociology from Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi. Her Ph.D. dissertation was on caste and land control in Thanjavur district, and she continues to be interested in multi-dimensional issues of poverty.

Cheryl Morden

Cheryl Morden is the Director of the North American Liaison Office of IFAD. In that capacity, she leads efforts to mobilize resources, influence policy, and build partnerships on behalf of IFAD's mission to enable the rural poor to overcome poverty. Prior to joining IFAD, she served as Director of Policy and Communications for the International Center for Research on Women. Until 1998, she was the Associate Director for Development Policy for Church World Service and Lutheran World Relief. She has managed policy advocacy initiatives, advocacy training, and mobilization campaigns on a variety of international development issues, including foreign aid reform, food security, agriculture and nutrition linkages, and gender and development. She holds a Master's degree in international development education from the University of Pittsburgh.

H.E. Guillermo E. Rishchynski

H.E. Mr. Guillermo E. Rishchynski was appointed Permanent Representative of Canada to the UN in New York in August last year. Prior to joining the Department of External Affairs and International Trade as Assistant Trade Commissioner in 1983, Ambassador Rishchynski was regional marketing manager for Interimco International in Latin America. From 1999 to 2002, he was Ambassador of Canada to Colombia. He joined the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in 2003, serving as vice-president of the Americas Branch until his appointment as ambassador to Brazil in 2005. In 2007, he was appointed ambassador to Mexico. He has also served in Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Amman, Melbourne, Jakarta, and Chicago.

Claudia Serrano

Claudia Serrano, PhD in Sociology, graduated from l'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris. She is former Undersecretary of Administrative and Regional Development at the Ministry of Interior in Chile during the Government of Ms. Bachelet, where she later was appointed as Minister of Labor and Social Affairs. She has worked as professor at the Catholic University of Chile as well as at the University of Chile, and has previously worked with the Economic Research Center for Latin America (CIEPLAN), a think tank in the Latin American region. Ms. Serrano is currently Director of the Latin American Center for Rural Development.

Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury

Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury is the State Minister of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Bangladesh. She is a Member of the 9th Parliament of Bangladesh. Having obtained Commonwealth Scholarship, Shirin completed Ph.D (in Law) in from the University of Essex, UK. She completed LL.B (Honours) and LL.M. from University of Dhaka, securing First Class First position. She has teaching experience from different Universities in Bangladesh. She was the Editor of Bangladesh Legal Decisions (BLD), Law Report Series published by Bangladesh Bar Council (2003-2009 (July) Edition). Dr. Shirin was awarded Asia Society's Humanitarian service Award on 09 June 2010 in recognition of her role as a leader in advocating the elimination of violence against women and mainstreaming women's empowerment and employment in Bangladesh.

Sheila Sisulu

Sheila Sisulu became Deputy Executive Director for Hunger Solutions in the Office of the Executive Director of the World Food Programme in January 2008. Prior to this appointment, Ms. Sisulu served as WFP's Deputy Executive Director for Policy and External Affairs Department from 2003. Before joining WFP, Ms. Sisulu was South Africa's Ambassador to the United States. Her diplomatic career began in 1997 as Consul General in New York and as Ambassador to Washington two years later. In addition to her diplomatic skills, Ms. Sisulu has 25 years' experience in South African politics and government.

Ann Tutwiler

Since January 2011, Ann Tutwiler is the FAO Deputy Director General of Knowledge. Prior to joining FAO, she served as the Coordinator for the Global Food Security Initiative at the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Senior Advisor for International Affairs to the Undersecretary for Research, Education and Economics. She also worked at USAID in the Africa Bureau on trade policy; as Managing Director for Agricultural Markets at the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation; as President and Chief Executive Officer of the International Food & Agriculture Trade Policy Council; and as Director of Government Relations at Eridania Beghin-Say. Ms Tutwiler graduated Cum Laude in political science from Davidson College and has a Master's in Public Policy from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. She has certificates in executive agribusiness management programs from Purdue University and INSEAD.