

Asia-Pacific High-Level Meeting for CSW 62

“Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls”

23 February 2018, CR-4, UNCC, Bangkok, Thailand

1. Background

In accordance with its multi-year programme of work (2017-2020), the sixty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW62) will take place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 12 to 23 March 2018. Representatives of Member States, UN entities, and ECOSOC-accredited non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from all regions of the world will attend the session.

CSW62 will consider “*Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls*” as its priority theme, and “*Participation in and access of women to the media, and information and communications technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women (agreed conclusions of the forty-seventh session)*” as its review theme.

To assist the Commission in its deliberations, the **Asia-Pacific Regional High-Level Meeting for CSW 62** is being jointly convened by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific as well as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, in collaboration with the World Food Programme Regional Bureau for Asia & the Pacific (WFP) and other members of the Asia-Pacific UN Regional Coordination Mechanism Thematic Working Group on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (TWG-GEEW) at the UNCC in Bangkok, Thailand on 23 February 2018.

The Asia-Pacific Regional High Level Meeting will build further on the outcome documents of major global conferences – such as the fifty-sixth session of CSW, the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), the third United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (A/RES/66/288), the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the third International Conference on Financing for Development (A/RES/69/313), and the Istanbul Programme for Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (A/CONF.219/3) – which all recognize the need for increased attention to rural areas, and reiterate the importance of empowering rural women as critical agents for enhancing agricultural and rural development and food security and nutrition.

It will be further informed by the work undertaken during the 2017 High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, focusing on eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world, and the Secretary General’s report on Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (E/2017/66), as well as during the High Level Event on “Step it Up together with Rural Women to End Hunger and Poverty,” organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Slovak Presidency of the Council of the European Union and the European Commission, held at FAO Headquarters on 16 December 2016. It will also build on the Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on the CSW62 priority theme, which UN Women convened in collaboration with FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the WFP, at IFAD Headquarters in Rome, Italy on 20-22 September 2017.

2. Objectives

The **overall objective** of the Asia-Pacific High-Level Meeting is to provide an interactive forum for Member States of the Asia-Pacific region to identify good practices and lessons learned and develop policy recommendations to address challenges and enhance opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls. The outcomes of the High-Level Meeting will feed into the preparations for the 62nd session of the Commission on the Status of Women to be convened in New York from 12 to 23 March 2018.

Expected Outcome: The outcome of the Asia-Pacific Regional High-Level Meeting for CSW62 will be a report, containing a summary of the discussions and recommendations. The report will be made available at the sixty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women, on the website of UN Women and ESCAP, as well as those of other UN agencies and stakeholders as may be applicable.

3. Participants

The Asia-Pacific High-Level Meeting for CSW62 will bring together Ministers and high-level officials (from national women's machineries, Ministry responsible for the advancement of gender equality and Ministry of Rural Development/Agriculture) in the Asia and Pacific region, as well as CSOs and UN Agencies.

Expected number of participants: 80-100 people.

4. Date and Venue

The Asia-Pacific High-Level Meeting for CSW62 will take place at CR-4, United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC) in Bangkok, Thailand on 23 February 2018.

5. Organization

- The Meeting will be jointly convened by ESCAP, UN Women and FAO, in collaboration with WFP and other members of the UN Regional Coordination Mechanism Thematic Working Group on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (TWG-GEEW).
- The Meeting will be conducted in English and all documentation will be in English.
- The Meeting will comprise presentations, high-level roundtable and multi-stakeholder dialogue and discussions.