



REPORT **CSW62 Advocacy Template**

NGO CSW62 Leaving no-one behind: Ensuring the inclusion of girls and young women from rural communities in the implementation and achievement of the SDGs

Preamble:

In consultation with young women, youth-led and youth-serving networks and organisations, including those from indigenous and rural communities and recognising all genders in all their diversities; this Youth Declaration makes urgent policy recommendations to inform discussions of the Sixty Second Commission on the Status of Women and its priority theme.

The theme of leaving no one behind was considered under seven key issue areas outlined below:

1. Education

- Ensure access to free quality education - inclusive of digital literacy, human rights education and comprehensive sex education - for all girls and young women and provide necessary infrastructure and resources including sanitation facilities, safe transportation and educational materials.
- Invest in location specific and non-traditional education including non-formal education, skills-based training, digital literacy and vocational training.
- Implement policies for the prevention and redress of violence and bullying in educational settings on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression.

2. Health

- Invest in inclusive, free, accessible, youth-friendly, high quality healthcare services for all including mental health and sexual and reproductive health and rights services in rural areas.
- Implement comprehensive, inclusive, stigma-free sexuality education for all from primary education, including in and outside of school contexts.

3. Violence

- Strengthen laws to prevent and respond to all forms of gender-based violence, and implement already existing and ratified conventions such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).
- Ensure services are well-funded, survivor-centred, free, and accessible to young women, girls living and working in rural areas.
- Ensure proper training of police officers, social workers, legal workers, and judicial officers dealing with cases of gender-based violence.
- Invest in independent disaggregated national data collection efforts to understand the nature and scale of gender-based violence and to track progress.

4. Economic Justice

- Create and implement progressive legislation that addresses the gender pay gap, affirmative action policies for young people particularly to leadership positions at all levels especially local governance, zero tolerance to violence/sexual harassment policies.
- Increase opportunities that enable young women and girls and trans youth living and working in rural communities to meaningfully participate the labor market by investing in financial literacy programmes, providing training opportunities that lead to decent and meaningful work as well ability to unionize and to form cooperatives.

5. Environment, Climate Change and Land Rights

- Adopt and enforce legislation that gives girls and young women equal inheritance rights, as well as rights to property and resources.
- Recognise the rights of indigenous girls and young women to their land, as well as acknowledging their cultural identity and traditional knowledge.
- Ensure inclusion and leadership of young women and girls in climate change decision making processes, with full recognition of the disproportional impact climate change has on girls and young women and that today's youth are the last generation who can solve climate change.

6. Media, ICT, Data

- Provide access to affordable digital connections and ICT, specifically mobile technology in rural communities. Additional infrastructural contributions should be made to ensure electricity is reliable.
- Ensure a safe online environment where young women and girls can express themselves freely and without violence.
- Develop mechanisms of collecting gender and age disaggregated data that reflects the realities of young women and girls, non-binary and trans youth living in rural areas.

7. Political Participation and Agency

- Implement national and international instruments that ensure young people in all their diversity are meaningfully consulted and represented in decision making processes from local to international levels and reduce the minimum age to hold public office.
- Formally initiate meaningful annual youth delegation programmes to represent national youth interests at the United Nations. Delegates should be elected through a transparent process and represent youth-led networks and organizations.

Conclusion:

With less than 12 years to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, we call upon Member States to continue and increase their political and financial support for girls and young women's rights - ensuring that no one is left behind, no matter where they are from. We call upon Governments to work in consultation with girls and young women and prioritise their leadership, respecting them as rights bearers. To achieve the above recommendations, we call on governments to commit to the removal of structural barriers and harmful gender norms that limit girls' and young women's empowerment. Finally, we require continued support of youth contributions and access to CSW spaces, and to demonstrate leadership in and engage with us toward the achievement of SDG 5: Gender Equality.

Submitted by GWI UN Representative in New York, Maryella Hannum.