



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
7 December 2017

Original: English

Commission on the Status of Women

Sixty-second session

12–23 March 2018

Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and
to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly
entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace
for the twenty-first century”

Statement submitted by Latter-day Saint Charities, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



Statement

Enhancing the Health, Well-being and Opportunities of Women Throughout the World

Latter-day Saint Charities is the humanitarian arm of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and is committed to enhancing the health, well-being, and opportunities of women throughout the world. It sponsors relief and development projects in 189 countries. Assistance is given without regard to race, religious affiliation, or nationality. Interventions are based on the core principles of personal responsibility, community support, self-reliance, and sustainability. This outreach is part of a Christian commitment that — whatever belief system or tradition individuals follow — all people are children of God and as such should have access to basic resources, and be treated with dignity and respect.

Latter-day Saint Charities recognizes that in all parts of the world, women face threats to their well-being, health and even their lives. Changes to these conditions are effected in part by programs that allow women to gain access to limited resources or that alleviate their disproportionate household responsibilities. Many Latter-day Saint Charities signature programs — clean water and sanitation, maternal and new-born care, immunization, food security and nutrition, and community projects — increase women’s access to essential, life-sustaining resources and provide them opportunities to make choices regarding domestic duties, income generation, and the health of themselves and their children.

The work of Latter-day Saint Charities aligns with many of the United Nations’ broader Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including eliminating poverty (Goal 1), ending hunger (Goal 2), providing clean drinking water (Goal 6), promoting safe and inclusive societies (Goal 16), and revitalizing partnerships to ensure sustainable development (Goal 17).

The maternal and new-born care program directly improves maternal survival following births. Lifesaving training and equipment are provided to birth attendants, centring on how to resuscitate babies at birth, protocols for premature births, improving maternal survival following birth, and the best care for new-borns. A particular focus of training curriculum is on ensuring that a mother’s health is protected during pregnancy and childbirth. Women were served by this program in 37 countries in 2016, and 88 countries since 2003.

Latter-day Saint Charities’ immunization program supports universal access to all life-saving vaccines recommended for children by the World Health Organization. Overwhelmingly, women are the proponents within the family unit for their children’s health. By improving access to routine vaccine services and educating on the importance of immunizations, more women can make better choices for their children’s health — and their own. Latter-day Saint Charities provides annual support for polio eradication, measles and rubella vaccinations, and maternal and neonatal tetanus elimination — protecting the lives of both women and children from the deadly effects of these preventable diseases.

Latter-day Saint Charities’ efforts in food security and nutrition offer women greater access to nutritious food and knowledge about proper nutrition through income generating farming activities. In this initiative, women grow produce and sell it to the schools which offer a daily nutritious meal for the children attending. This program provides skill training for women, income for families, and an incentive to

keep children in school. Women and their families in 12 countries reived support from this program in 2016.

The clean water and sanitation program aims to help communities establish sustainable water systems. Given that the vast majority of individuals who collect water, often from distant sources, are women and girls, this program results in increased safety, decreased domestic burden, greater school attendance, and improved health. Additionally, appropriate sanitation facilities, particularly for girls who have reached puberty, have been provided at schools, enabling young women to continue their formal education. In 2016 alone, 380,000 women, girls, and their families in 19 countries were served by the clean water and sanitation program.

Community projects sponsored by Latter-day Saint Charities are uniquely tailored to the needs of local populations. For example, a current vocational training project in Nepal provides increased economic opportunity for women as they acquire the skills to make clothing and work in major industry sewing centres. Latter-day Saint Charities partners with a Nepali NGO to support vocational training for women who are marginalized, economically poor, abused, or disabled. Vocational training has shown to be a leading cause of improved quality of life for the women served; not only can they generate income themselves, but doing so also decreases or eliminates the incidence of domestic abuse.

In addition to increasing access to resources, Latter-day Saint Charities believes the well-being of women and girls also increases when fundamental human rights are protected, including the freedom of expression, the freedom of religion or belief, the freedom to form a family, and freedom from discrimination.

Latter-day Saint Charities confirms its continuing commitment to these essential goals and calls on the combined resources of governments, non-governmental organizations, and faith-based organizations to effect significant positive change in areas where women and girls are in greatest need. The duty to ensure a future of opportunity and equality for women and girls throughout the world is one we all share and is crucial for the success of the human family.
