



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
17 December 2021

Original: English

Commission on the Status of Women

Sixty-sixth session

14–25 March 2022

Item 3 of the provisional agenda*

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”

Discussion guide for the ministerial round tables to be held under the priority theme “Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes”

Note by the Secretariat

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution [2015/6](#) on the future organization and methods of work of the Commission on the Status of Women, the Economic and Social Council decided that the session of the Commission would include a ministerial segment to reaffirm and strengthen political commitment to the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, as well as their human rights, and to ensure high-level engagement and the visibility of the deliberations of the Commission, and that the segment would include ministerial round tables or other high-level interactive dialogues.

2. In accordance with the multi-year programme of work of the Commission, as contained in Economic and Social Council resolution [2020/15](#), the Commission will consider “Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes” as the priority theme for the sixty-sixth session, to be held from 14 to 25 March 2022. Further to that decision, it is proposed that the Commission hold ministerial round tables at that session to provide ministers with opportunities for high-level engagement on key issues arising under the priority theme.

* [E/CN.6/2022/1](#).



II. Organizational matters

A. Theme and topics

3. Under the priority theme, the Commission will hold four ministerial round tables on the following two topics:

(a) Climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes: advancing gender equality through holistic and integrated actions from global to local;

(b) Women's voice and agency: good practices towards achieving women's full, equal and meaningful participation and decision-making in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes.

4. The round tables will be focused on the exchange of experiences, lessons learned and good practices in relation to these topics. Ministers will be invited to highlight the steps and measures that are necessary and planned to ensure that national responses effectively contribute to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, and the full enjoyment of their human rights, through the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

B. Participants

5. The round tables will provide ministers with the opportunity to engage in dialogue and discussion. They will be open to all Member States and observers.

6. Ministers are invited to indicate, in advance and preferably no later than 25 February 2022, the round table in which they would prefer to participate, as well as their second preference. Approximately 20 to 25 ministers are expected to participate in each round table. The Chairs of the round tables, supported by a moderator, will guide the discussion with a view to promoting interaction. While they will have a list of ministers who have signed up for each round table, no list of speakers will be prepared in advance.

7. Each round table will begin with a moderated dialogue among five ministers on key issues arising under the topic. Thereafter, ministers will be invited to comment on the questions posed or on previous interventions. Interventions shall not exceed three minutes, and an emphasis shall be placed on dialogue. Time permitting, ministers may be given the opportunity to make more than one intervention. Written statements are strongly discouraged. For ministers who are not able to travel to New York, there will be an option of delivering pre-recorded remarks.

C. Times

8. The round tables will be held at Headquarters, in person and through pre-recorded videos, on Monday, 14 March 2022, from 3 to 6 p.m. and on Tuesday, 15 March 2022, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the times set out in the table below. The conference rooms have yet to be confirmed.

<i>Round table</i>	<i>Time</i>
Climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes: advancing gender equality through holistic and integrated actions from global to local	3–4.30 p.m.
Women’s voice and agency: good practices towards achieving women’s full, equal and meaningful participation and decision-making in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes	4.30–6 p.m.
Climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes: advancing gender equality through holistic and integrated actions from global to local	10–11.30 a.m.
Women’s voice and agency: good practices towards achieving women’s full, equal and meaningful participation and decision-making in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes	11.30 a.m.–1 p.m.

D. Outcome

9. The outcomes of the round tables will be in the form of Chairs’ summaries, prepared in consultation with the regional groups through the members of the Bureau.

III. Items for discussion in the round tables

A. Background

10. The discussion of the priority theme will provide the Commission with an opportunity to consider the topic in terms of how gender-responsive action across the relevant areas can accelerate the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development through holistic and integrated policies and programmes that uphold human rights, build resilience and foster regenerative green or blue economies and gender-responsive just transitions.

11. During the round tables, ministers will be invited to consider the questions in the discussion guide below and to highlight climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes that integrate gender perspectives. Ministers may also share recent experiences of collaboration between national gender equality mechanisms and climate, environment and disaster risk reduction institutions, and the impact of such collaboration and coordination with regard to the accelerated implementation of sustainable gender-responsive climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes. Ministers are encouraged to use the discussion guide and to consult the report of the Secretary-General on the priority theme (E/CN.6/2022/3).

B. Discussion guide

Climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes: advancing gender equality through holistic and integrated actions from global to local

12. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals make integral connections between sustainable development, gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, with a comprehensive agenda across the Goals to tackle environmental and climate challenges. Integrating gender perspectives into climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes at all levels is critical for the achievement of gender equality and sustainable development. This requires an all-of-government approach, based on the coordination and capacity-building of parliamentarians, national gender equality mechanisms, mayors and municipalities and the institutions responsible for addressing climate change and environment degradation and disaster risk management and their financing.

13. At the global level, the Rio conventions integrate gender equality considerations into key processes, plans and mechanisms, including through their gender action plans, and have seen progress made towards gender balance in representation. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 (see resolution [69/283](#)) is aimed at integrating gender perspectives as a priority for enhanced disaster preparedness, recognizing women as key players in disaster risk reduction policies, plans and programmes. Nevertheless, more efforts are needed to create national frameworks for the holistic, coordinated and synergistic gender-responsive implementation of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes at the global, national and local levels.

14. Advancing gender equality through holistic and integrated action in relation to climate change, the environment and disaster risk reduction requires significantly increased financing from Governments, development cooperation agencies, international financial institutions, philanthropists and the private sector. Public and private sector financing should be increased for women's organizations and women-led and women-owned enterprises, including women's informal businesses, that are advancing gender-responsive climate and environment action, including through gender bonds, highly concessional loans, risk guarantees and grants, reducing the need for collateral, which many women lack.

15. The widespread lack of gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data for monitoring the risks and impact of climate change, environmental degradation and disasters is one of many factors that render women and girls, and their needs and priorities, invisible to policymakers, thus hindering the integration of gender perspectives into climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes. Filling data gaps on the gender-environment nexus, including on climate change and disaster risk reduction, is a key step in informing policies and programmes to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

16. Ministers are invited to consider the following questions to help to focus the dialogue:

(a) What steps are Governments taking to advance coordinated and integrated gender perspectives in climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes?

(b) What investments are Governments making to increase the availability and accessibility of high-quality financing for gender-responsive climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes?

(c) What measures are Governments taking to increase the collection, analysis, dissemination and use of gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data on the risks and impact in relation to climate change, the environment and disasters?

Women's voice and agency: good practices towards achieving women's full, equal and meaningful participation and decision-making in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes

17. Women and girls are taking climate and environment action at all levels, but, their significant contributions notwithstanding, women's participation and leadership fall short of gender parity and lack the critical mass necessary to influence decisions, policies and strategies. These gender gaps are of critical concern, given that the equal participation and leadership of women make climate, environment and disaster risk governance more effective. The representation of women in national parliaments has led countries to adopt more stringent climate change policies, resulting in lower emissions, according to a recent study across 91 countries. At the local level, their participation in natural resource management is associated with better resource governance and conservation outcomes, and the application of gender quotas enhances conservation and climate interventions and leads to more equal sharing of benefits.

18. Ensuring the full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership of women at all levels of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction governance includes national institutions and delegations to meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Rio conventions and other decision-making forums, taking appropriate special measures, including quotas, with particular attention paid to enabling the participation of young women. This also means leveraging the participation and influence of women in managing the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, including in conflict and crisis-affected settings.

19. Women's, and especially young women's, civil society organizations face multiple barriers to participation and leadership, from shrinking democratic space and diminishing funding to threats to the physical security of their members. Nevertheless, they hold deep knowledge of community needs and priorities and are key to combating climate change and environmental degradation, reducing disaster risk and building resilience at all levels.

20. Ministers are invited to consider the following questions to help to focus the dialogue:

(a) What steps are Governments taking to achieve the full, equal and meaningful participation and representation of women in climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes?

(b) What measures are Governments taking to consult and engage with women's organizations in the formulation and implementation of action to tackle climate change, environmental degradation and disaster risk reduction?

(c) What good-practice policies and programmes exist to remove structural barriers and close gender gaps to enable the full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership of women and girls in climate, environmental and disaster risk reduction action?