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**Policy and Practice: Harvesting the Economic Empowerment of Women in order to Eradicate
Poverty and Extreme Hunger**

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I. Introduction

In 2000, the General Assembly signed the Millennium Declaration, powerfully reaffirming an international commitment to human rights, and emphasizing the need for global solidarity in their promotion.¹ Following this historic moment, world leaders and experts joined forces and engaged in an enlightened discourse that led to the manifestation of the Millennium Development Goals. Given the rapid, impressive harvesting of political momentum in this global fight against poverty, disease, and inequality, it may appear without further inquiry that the world is on the right track. However, the lofty movement has experienced serious shortcomings, and the looming 2015 deadline is looking ever-more daunting. The object of this report is to provide comprehensive insight into these shortcomings, and moreover, to identify policies that will be conducive to a prosperous final year of working through the MDG framework.

The Millennium Development Goals were meant to be the “road map for implementing the Millennium Declaration.”² However, the eight MDGs failed to capture the multi-dimensional nature of human rights agreements by trading in for simplicity and measurable objectives.² In so doing, the focus on structural poverty, equality, and solidarity were overshadowed by the pronouncement of blanket goals far too broad to capture the complex challenges the world faces in promoting human rights.² In order to create a successful platform in the final year before the MDG deadline, it is essential to recall the intended principles of the Millennium Declaration, and work them into all future international, national, and local policies. This task necessitates a heightened focus on the alarming differences between men and women entrenched in poverty.

A significant defect throughout the MDG framework is that each goal is stated as a binary end, yet fails to inform the global community the appropriate means to achieve that end.²

¹ UN General Assembly, United Nations Millennium Declaration, A/RES/55/2 (18 September 2000).

² UN Women in collaboration with ECLAC, Report of the Expert Group Meeting on Structural and Policy Constraints in Achieving the MDGs for Women and Girls, EDM/MDG/2013/REPORT, Mexico City, Oct. 2013.

One notable example is the goal to “achieve universal primary education” (MDG #2), which does not adequately incorporate the specific financial and social challenges facing girls.³ The United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative identifies several impediments to achieving gender equality in the education context, including lack of “gender-aware” teachers, discriminatory gender norms, extreme poverty, and violence against girls.³ Additionally, and honing in on the focus of this report, the goal to eradicate poverty and extreme hunger (MDG #1) similarly fails to capture harsh realities.² Poverty rates as reported by States often fail to take into account intra-household gender inequality in the allocation of resources.² Merely reporting the percentage of households entrenched in poverty runs the risk of ignoring significant differences experienced by *different members* of those households.² Additionally, women often receive the brunt of unpaid household work, with absolutely no valuation attached to those duties.² Not only does this unequal distribution of work contravene principles of equality that are part and parcel to the global human rights regime, as well as the Millennium Declaration; it prevents women from accessing other productive resources that could help propel them out of poverty.

Only by recognizing the substantive inequalities women all over the globe face, and identifying policies equipped to combat such differentials, can States abide by the sentiments announced at the Millennium Summit. Moreover, adopting a gender-specific perspective will be the means to strengthening the current MDG framework for a prosperous post-2015 agenda.

II. Poverty and Extreme Hunger

Around 1.2 billion people--one in seven worldwide--are living in extreme poverty.⁴ Six in ten of those people are women.⁴ In terms of the MDG initiative, the total poverty statistic counts

³ UN Girl’s Education Initiative. *All Girls Achieving and Learning: Policy Advocacy Agenda* (2013).

those living with an income of less than \$1 a day.⁴ That number is 700 million people *less* than those living in the same conditions in 1990.⁴ Although significant progress has been realized on par with the MDGs, it is apparent that an unacceptable portion of the world (*particularly women*) still suffers daily from these destitute conditions. In addition, one in eight people suffer daily from hunger and malnutrition.⁴ Although the total world hunger statistic, too, has dropped since the early 90s (23% worldwide to 15%),⁴ significant steps need to be taken in order to sustain the declining trend. Continuing the global initiative to eradicate these conditions, and before turning to how *gender inequality propels the problem*, it is first important to discuss what the root causes are of poverty and extreme hunger.

A. Root Causes

The United Nations World Food Program (WFP) cites the following six most important factors that contribute to extreme world hunger: 1) Poverty trap; 2) Lack of investment in agriculture; 3) Climate and weather; 4) War and displacement; 5) Unstable markets; and 6) Food wastage.⁵ Although each of these phenomena plays its own significant role, and it is important to note their existence in propelling the problem, the focus will be on the “poverty trap” for the purposes of this report. Families living in poverty cannot consistently afford nutritious food to sustain a healthy existence.⁵ In turn, this lack of food security contributes to a vulnerable existence that makes it more difficult to earn money to escape poverty and hunger.⁵ Additionally, WFP notes that the problem goes beyond the present.⁵ For many children living in these conditions, chronic malnourishment not only affects their day-to-day existence, but inhibits their ability to generate income in the future.⁵ Various families have limited access to a number of valuable resources.⁵ For example, many farmers in developing countries are unable to afford

⁴UN Department of Public Information, *We Can End Poverty: Millennium Development Goals and Beyond 2015*, Fact Sheet. September 2013.

⁵ UN World Food Programme, *What Causes Hunger?*, <http://wfp.org/hunger/causes> (last updated 2014).

seeds to grow crops, and thus are inhibited from providing food for their families.⁵ Others lack access to land, water, or education, which ultimately contributes to their demise.⁵ Because of the inability to afford vital resources, hunger thus manifests as a *symptom* of poverty; and in turn, *sustained poverty* manifests as a symptom of hunger, as undernourishment is maintained and any hope for economic and social progress remains grim.⁵ The following section describes how women are more entrenched in the poverty trap than men, and moreover, how gender inequality *propels poverty and economic instability* for all.

B. Gender-Specific Approach

The UN General Assembly stated in a resolution that “[p]overty eradication is the greatest global challenge facing the world today and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. In this regard, we are committed to freeing humanity from poverty and hunger as a matter of urgency.”⁶ Sustainable development is defined as “[d]evelopment that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”⁷ In the same resolution, the G.A. urges that “*people are at the center of sustainable development,*” and in order to create a world that is “*equitable and inclusive,*” the world must “work together to promote...inclusive economic growth, social development, and environmental protection... thereby to benefit *all.*”⁶ As such, it is apparent that the G.A. firmly supports the principles of equality and solidarity as being vital to the progress of the human experience. As mentioned earlier, such principles were also crucial components of the Millennium Declaration.² Yet, committing to the goal of equality without taking active steps to achieve it runs afoul of these global efforts. Therefore, UN member States must confront the harsh realities that women around the globe are facing in their persistent struggle toward equal acceptance and opportunity.

⁶ UN General Assembly, A/RES/66/288, July 2012.

⁷ World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future*. Oxford: Oxford University Press (1987).

i. Women experience poverty more adversely than men

Six out of ten of the world's poorest people are women.⁸ Additionally, two-thirds of illiterate people are women.⁸ And despite making up 50% of the population, women earn only 10% of the income and own 1% of property.⁸ Finally, a mere 19% of the world's parliaments and legislatures are comprised of women.⁸ The staggering statistics speak for themselves, but leave much to ponder for world leaders, experts, civil societies, and other relevant stakeholders.

According to the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Olivier De Schutter, discriminatory social, cultural, and legal practices against women and girls greatly impact their nutrition and food security.⁹ Barriers such as gender stereotypes, limited access to productive resources, and unequal distribution of household labor contribute to “time poverty,” as well as lesser ability to access education and stable employment opportunities.⁹ Hence, the poverty trap as discussed earlier entrenches women more adversely and in greater numbers than men.

ii. Gender inequality propels poverty

Forming a slightly different perspective, many stakeholders have observed that the poverty of women is not only a severe limitation on their *own* potential, but is a limitation on economic growth as a whole.¹⁰ The Beijing Platform for Action compiled a consensus among stakeholders that poverty reduction plans must account for gender disparities in order for states to achieve sustainable economic practices.¹⁰ The following illustrates such consensus:

“In order to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development, *women and men must participate fully and equally* in the formulation of macroeconomic and social policies and strategies for the eradication of poverty. The eradication of poverty *cannot be accomplished through anti-poverty programmes alone* but will

⁸ United Nations Development Program, Fast Facts: *Gender Equality and UNDP*. July 2011, available at <http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/fast-facts/english/FF-Gender-Equality-and-UNDP.pdf>.

⁹ Olivier De Schutter, *Advancing women's rights in post-2015 development agenda and goals on food and nutrition security*. EGM/MGD/EP.10 (21-24 October 2013).

¹⁰ UN Fourth World Conference on Women, *Beijing Platform for Action* (September 1995).

require democratic participation and changes in economic structures in order to ensure access for all women to resources, opportunities and public services.”¹⁰

Additionally, the World Bank has found that countries that maintain high levels of inequality experience less economic growth and sustainability.¹¹ Among their findings, the World Bank advocates for the use of “shared prosperity” as an indicator for the health and sustainability of an economy, which the most widely-accepted economic measurement, gross domestic product (GDP), fails to take into account.¹¹

Hence, it is clear that the poverty of women does not just affect women themselves. In fact, deep inequalities leaving women unable to maintain equal footing tend to yield more poverty *as a whole*. The following section explores some of the efforts, both progressive and regressive, that are being taken to combat the poverty of women. By focusing attention to policies which have proven to be effective, and taking steps to ensure their implementation, the world may achieve significant strides in diminishing gender inequality. Moreover, the global community may advance a step closer to eradication of poverty and extreme hunger for all.

III. The Continuing Fight for Equality and Non-discrimination

A. Background International Law

Article 2 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) declares that “States Parties condemn discrimination against women in all its forms, agree to pursue by *all appropriate means* and *without delay* a policy of eliminating discrimination against women and...undertake...all appropriate measures, including legislation, to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices which constitute

¹¹ The World Bank, *End Extreme Poverty and Promote Shared Prosperity* (2013), available at <http://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/WB-goals2013.pdf>.

discrimination against women.”¹² CEDAW defines “discrimination” as “[a]ny distinction, *exclusion*, or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of *impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women...*of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.”¹² Thus, it is grounded in international law that ratifying States have unequivocally agreed to take an affirmative stance against the exclusion of women in any capacity. To the contrary, women worldwide are being marginalized despite the unambiguous international commitment to do otherwise. This section tells the story of the efforts being conducted at the international, national, and local levels that are designed to confront this reality. Moreover, the section advises which policies should be pursued to drive progress in the movement toward greater equality.

B. International Efforts

A major area of focus for the international community has been equal access to education. On the 15th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action, the CSW in its outcome report of the 54th session urged states to “strengthen policies relevant for women’s economic empowerment aimed at addressing inequality affecting women and girls in access to and achievement in education at all levels, in particular to eliminate inequalities related to age, poverty, geographical location, language, ethnicity, religion and disability, adopting measures to promote non-discriminatory and gender-sensitive education that is free of gender-based stereotypes...”¹³ The report also recognized that, without equal access to education and employment opportunities, women will remain disenfranchised and less likely to improve their economic situation.¹³ Finally, in its most recent session the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution urging “multilateral donors...and banks to review and implement policies that support

¹² Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Article 2(f), (signed 18 Dec. 1979).

¹³ Commission on the Status of Women, *Report on the 54th Session*, E/CN.6/2010/11, Ch. 1, para. 10(a) (2010).

national efforts to ensure that a *higher proportion of resources reaches women and girls*, in particular in rural and remote areas.”¹⁴ It is clear that a focus on access to resources is well-established as a vital component of the prosperity and equality of women. Summing up the above international sentiments, and adding to the equation the growing body of evidence that connects *greater gender equality to overall economic sustainability*, UN Women backs the Beijing Platform for Action, CEDAW, and ILO conventions as crucial instruments for supporting the economic empowerment of women.¹⁵

C. National and Local Efforts

Thus far, this report has broadly declared that the eradication of poverty as a whole cannot be completed without confronting the disparate impact that poverty has on women. And as the prior section illustrates, there is consensus at the international level that only through developing the economic empowerment of women can their rights and freedoms attain equal status as men. However, international consensus is merely a threshold requirement for making equality a reality. It is imperative that efforts are streamlined into national and local levels in order to attain fruitful results in the advancement of MDG #1. Such efforts are explored below.

i. Crucial policies

a. Inclusive/Participatory Approach

Around the world, policy and law-makers speculate about problems that need solving, and develop policies that would yield effective results. This seems acceptable, given that governments are charged with the duty of *representing its people* and addressing their needs, and cannot do so without collaboration and hypothesizing. Yet, without the active participation of those *targeted* by such policies, it is difficult to argue that a government in that scenario is truly

¹⁴ UN General Assembly, A/RES/68/227, Dec. 2013.

¹⁵ UN Women, webpage on *Economic Empowerment*, available at <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/economic-empowerment>.

acting as an effective representative. Many in the academic community argue for direct consultation and participation of civil society in order to adopt policies meant to protect the rights and prosperity of all citizens.¹⁶ The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) argues that a system of *participatory governance* is a necessary feature to the achievement of the MDGs.¹⁶ In essence, to eradicate poverty, it is essential to consult with those *living* in poverty. The European Union is a good example of this participatory approach. The EU's Social Open Method of Communication (OMC) targets "social inclusion" as a policy goal in its own right, and not simply economic growth.¹⁷ Such social inclusion means having access to political, economic, and social processes.¹⁷ This practice deserves praise for viewing poverty as an indicator of marginalization from society, and in so doing, highlights the need to *tackle* such poverty in order to achieve true "social inclusion."¹⁷ To address the hardships women in poverty face so as to meet MDG #1, women should play an active role, by *consultation with policy makers* and *access to the political process*, in the development of policies that are ultimately being adopted to alter their destinies.

b. Gender mainstreaming

Another essential policy that has been introduced in many countries is the practice of gender mainstreaming, meaning the institutionalization of gender concerns at national and local levels. Such institutionalization is supported by UN Women, and is meant to ensure proper training in women's rights, as well as gender-sensitive adoption of policies for all agencies responsible for the administration of rights.¹⁸ A great example of gender-mainstreaming is

¹⁶ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Siddiqur Osmani, *Participatory governance and the millennium development goals (MDGs)*, 2008. Available at <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/UN/UNPAN028359.pdf>

¹⁷ E. Marlier and A.B. Atkinson, *Indicators of poverty and social exclusion in a global context*, Journal of Policy Analysis and Management. Volume 29, Issue 2. 10 March 2010.

¹⁸ UN Women, *Realizing Women's Rights to Land and Other Productive Resources*. HR/PUB/13/04 (2013).

illustrated by practice in the Philippines.¹⁸ A Special Order adopted by The Department of Agriculture in 2004 directed all agencies to mainstream gender concerns into their daily activities.¹⁸ This included incorporating gender-specific data collection, as well as gender-sensitive training for department officials, middle management, and employees.¹⁸ Additionally, the country's commitment to allowing for gender concerns in the development of national policy is evidenced by the passage of Republic Act 9710 or the "Magna Carta of Women," a profound anti-discrimination and gender equality law based on principles announced in CEDAW.¹⁹ As a country scoring high on global gender equality indices, the Philippines provides policy examples which, if garnered elsewhere, could lead to enormous strides toward MDG achievement.¹⁹

c. Gender-disaggregated data

Noted earlier in this report is the failure of certain data to be disaggregated for gender.² The example given was the fact that using the unit "household" when reporting poverty rates fails to reflect inequalities in the allocation of resources that may occur *intra*-household.² Given that women are often marginalized in the receipt of resources, due to cultural and/or social norms, reported poverty rates need to reflect such marginalization in order to avoid inaccurately understanding how to implement poverty reduction strategies. China provides an example of an appropriate gender-sensitive data collection.¹⁸ The All China Women's Federation conducts a nationwide survey every ten years on the social status of women, in cooperation with the National Bureau of Statistics.¹⁸ The survey compiles information on challenges and achievements in gender equality, which is then passed on to legislatures, organizations, and governmental bodies.¹⁸ This yields the adoption of policies which are gender-sensitive, and helps shape the platform of gender equality as a national policy goal.¹⁸

¹⁹ UN Women Philippines Project Office, *The Philippines*, <http://www.unwomen-eseasia.org/docs/factsheets/07%20PHILIPPINES%20factsheet.pdf>.

d. Raising Awareness

Often the problem with women accessing their rights is the mere fact that they lack awareness that such rights exist. Broad awareness campaigns facilitate the dissemination of information so that women understand the legal protections they are entitled to.¹⁸ Thus, these campaigns may help overcome social and cultural barriers which would otherwise inhibit the ability of women to economically and socially advance. Since land reform began in the early 2000s in Kyrgyzstan, the Centre for Agrarian Land Reform in the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Processing Industry has raised public awareness of national land reform legislation through publishing brochures on 25 topics related to the reform.¹⁸ Additionally, from 2002 to 2005, the Centre held over 800 training sessions on reform, organized specifically for women and men in rural areas.¹⁸ Information was also disseminated through radio, television, and newspapers.¹⁸ Without such awareness-raising, even women living in countries with meaningful laws in place may be deprived of their ability to exercise certain rights. Having knowledge of legal protection is an essential criterion for the economic empowerment of women.

ii. Rights-based approach

The above section clearly highlights the need for policy implementation that is sensitive to the economic and social status of women. Such gender-sensitivity facilitates the ultimate goal of closing the gap on gender equality. Yet, in order to ensure policy efforts are not frustrated, it is just as important to observe the global status of women from a rights-based approach. The exploration below is intended to shed light on how certain rights guaranteed under international law are often suppressed or completely taken away. Moreover, the section highlights good practices in the security of women's access to human rights and fundamental freedoms.

a. Labor rights

Articles 6 and 7 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) guarantee a woman's right to paid, decent work.²⁰ Additionally, Article 11 of CEDAW binds States parties to “eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment...in particular, the right to equal remuneration, including benefits, and to equal treatment in respect of work of equal value, as well as equality of treatment in the evaluation of the quality of work.”²¹ Despite these binding obligations, women everywhere struggle to gain equal footing in the employment context. A pervasive example of this persistent inequality, explored below, is the over-burdening of women managing unpaid care work.²²

In 2010, the United Nations Statistics Division reported that, in all regions, women facilitate at least twice as much unpaid care work as men.²² Unpaid care work includes caring for children, preparing meals, and performing various household chores.²² Additionally, the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights reports that, due to lack of water, energy, and sanitation infrastructure, women in rural areas of developing countries spend a significant amount of time collecting water and fuel for use in the home.²³ These duties disproportionately impact women, a trend which is illustrated by studies in sub-Saharan Africa, where 71% of the burden of collecting water falls solely on women and girls.²³ Such prevalence of unequal, unpaid care work sustains the poverty trap of women by undervaluing their daily contribution and disallowing time for them to seek out paid labor.²³ Moreover, the phenomenon affects their enjoyment of other human rights, including the *right to health* (ICESCR, Art. 12),

²⁰ International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), Articles 6 & 7 (16 Dec., 1966).

²¹ CEDAW, Article 11(1)(d), (18 Dec., 1979).

²² United Nations Statistics Division, *The World's Women 2010*. Available at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/Worldswomen/Executive%20summary.htm>

²³ Magdalena Sepúlveda Carmona, *Unpaid care work, poverty and women's human rights: challenges and opportunities for the post-2015 agenda*. EGM/MDG/OP.1 October 2013.

and the *right to education* (ICESCR, Art. 13; CEDAW, Art. 10), as well as hinders their advancement toward greater equality.²³ To combat such an engrained institutional barrier, States must reduce and redistribute unpaid care work to continue lessening the gender equality gap.²³ Factoring the disparity into policy agendas is essential to achieving a fruitful post-2015 agenda.²³

b. Right to land

Despite making up 50% of the world's population, women own only 1% of the property. This is largely due to discriminatory social and cultural practices against women in their enjoyment of the right to land.¹⁸ Watering down this right can have extraordinary implications, as it is profoundly linked to the enjoyment of many other human rights, including the right to equality, food, health, housing, water, and education.¹⁸ Thus, member States are obliged to afford precise attentiveness to this issue in order to avoid contravening their international obligations.

According to UN Women, land can include “farmland, wetland, pasture, rangeland, fishery, forest, as well as harvesting and hunting territories.”¹⁸ Additionally, the right *itself* entails the right to “own, use, access, control, transfer, inherit...and make decisions about land and related resources.”¹⁸ UN Women recognizes that allocating this bundle of rights to women is inextricably linked to global food security, sustainable economic development, the fight against HIV, and elimination of gender-based violence.¹⁸ Two national policy strategies which have enhanced women's right to land are examined below, including: 1) Incentivizing the allocation of land to women, and 2) Encouraging participation of women in the land distribution process.¹⁸

Incentivizing the allocation of land to women can yield positive results on achievement of the right.¹⁸ One example is a gender-sensitive policy implemented in Nepal in 2006, which offered a 10% tax exemption for land transferred to women.¹⁸ By 2009, the exemption had increased to 25%, and currently women's rights activists in the country are advocating that it be

increased to 50%.¹⁸ A gender-sensitive tax scheme such as this is likely to incentivize the acquisition of land by women, thereby increasing their ability to access productive resources and foster economic and food security.¹⁸

Additionally, encouraging the meaningful participation of women in the land distribution process is crucial to avoiding a continuation of watering down the right to land.¹⁸ A land tenure program established in Bangladesh in 1987 demonstrates how discriminatory practices can be avoided in this realm.¹⁸ The Khas Land Management and Distribution Policy gave landless peasants priority in receiving land, including joint ownership to married men and women, as well as widows and abandoned women.¹⁸ As a result, hundreds of women in the rural region own land in their name.¹⁸ Despite having endured tremendous struggle to combat forced eviction and other violent interferences, The Association for Land Reform and Development, a national NGO, publicized the many atrocities that occurred in the region, as well as consulted locally with families fighting to maintain their land tenure.¹⁸ Through awareness-building and training, the people largely succeeded in keeping their land; in particular, the landless women's movement sets an example for socioeconomic empowerment stemming from implementation of a gender-sensitive land tenure policy.¹⁸ The type of meaningful participation illustrated by this process is necessary to ensuring that women have an escape route from remaining entrenched in poverty.

IV. HRA Recommendations for Action

Recognizing the United Nations' pledge to fulfill the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, and the enormous efforts being taken to strengthen the global commitment to the realization of human rights, including the eradication of poverty, Human Rights Advocates:

1. Welcomes the European Union's Social Open Method of Communication as a policy imperative designed to promote *social inclusiveness*, and praises the practice for

recognizing that poverty continues to marginalize certain groups from equal opportunity in many forms, including education, work, and political participation. States are encouraged to consider the importance of making *social inclusiveness* a national policy goal *in its own right*, and not just economic growth alone.

2. Reiterates the importance of *gender-mainstreaming*, noting the efforts adopted in the Philippines and China to implement gender-sensitive policies, and reminds States that ignoring gender disparities slows their own economic growth and sustainable development. As such, States are urged to mainstream gender in the following ways:

- a. Ensure that *economic and poverty indicators account for gender*, specifically by highlighting the differences in the allocation of intra-household resources.
- b. Directing agencies at all levels of government to develop policies that are: 1) sensitive to gender concerns, keeping in mind the principles of *equality* and *non-discrimination*, as they are part and parcel to international human rights obligations, and 2) backed by data disaggregated for gender.

3. Recognizes that the participation of citizens is crucial to ensuring that all voices, without distinction of any kind, are given a forum to express concern in policy matters, and such participation is on par with enumerated rights in the ICCPR.²⁴ Noting the Khas land distribution process in Bangladesh as an example of such participation, HRA urges States to develop information dissemination of women's rights, so that women in civil society comprehensively understand their rights to productive resources, such as the right to land, so that they may be empowered to participate in all programs and reforms in a manner that will ultimately contribute to their own economic advancement.

²⁴ International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), Articles 19, 22, 25 (16 Dec., 1966).