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Economic and environmental questions: women and development

Statement submitted by International Health Awareness Network, 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 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2012/100.

Statement

Capacity-building for sustainable development is a life-long process and requires the full participation of all members of the society. The full and equal participation of women in all walks of life, decision-making, peacebuilding and public policies is essential.

The International Health Awareness Network, an NGO affiliated with the Department of Public Information, and in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council has been working to achieve productive capacity-building through health and education at the global level.

Women are living longer in many parts of the world. We call on the human family to build on the wealth and experience of older women and include them in part-time or full-time education, apprenticeship and mentoring for younger and marginalized members of the society, as they provide an important source of sustainable development and growth for all communities. In most communities, mothers are the ones who provide support and consistency of care for their family, thus providing fertile ground for the growth and development of the younger generation. We must, therefore, focus on providing opportunities for education and income-producing skills and access to adequate health care for women.

Women are firm in their responsibility to their society. They are key factors in the environmental, economic, and social dimensions of their community. They could be key players in improving the environment and climate change. People with disabilities should receive proper training in the workforce for sustainable development. In many societies, rural women, youth, indigenous people and ethnic minorities are often disproportionately held back by disadvantages and barriers based on power inequalities related to gender, age and ethnic identities. Poverty and gender inequality have been forever entwined. Furthermore, gender inequality perpetuates and intensifies poverty.

Support should be provided for rural women. International Health Awareness Network, through health and education, has helped not only in the empowerment of women, but it also supports the inclusion of the elderly for a sustainable environment. Research shows a clear link between increasing women's productivity and earnings to better health and education outcomes for the family. By lowering household poverty, children's lives are improved and families prosper. The Network, for the past 25 years, has been working to raise awareness about a healthy lifestyle from childhood to maturity, healthy eating habits, physical activities and mental health. It supports inclusive and intergenerational partnerships of women of all ages in all activities of society.

Recreational centres should be provided for cultural and art education for children and elders, as they keep people engaged and their minds stimulated. They bring the community together, nurturing the old and teaching the young. By including women, girls, boys, young and old in the society, we will build a solid foundation for a more sustainable community globally and we will reduce poverty. With the partnerships of non-governmental organizations, non-profit organizations and the United Nations, we can together eradicate, once and for all, global poverty.