



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
1 December 2016

Original: English

Commission for Social Development

Fifty-fifth session

1-10 February 2017

Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: priority theme: strategies for the eradication of poverty to achieve sustainable development for all

Statement submitted by Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, Drammeh Institute, Global Youth Action Network, International Council of Psychologists, International Union of Psychological Science, National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Nigerian Network of Women Exporters of Services, Southern Diaspora Research and Development Center and Tiye International, non-governmental organizations 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

Psychosocial Contributions towards the Eradication of Poverty, with special focus on the Sustainable Development of African-Descendants, Indigenous Communities and Other People of Color

Sexism, racism, and ethnic discrimination are continuing sources of inequalities, disadvantage and marginalisation among people in all regions of the world, in spite of the fact that the majority of Member States of the United Nations (UN) have ratified or acceded to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979). For example, in the first year of the International Decade for People of African Descent, the Committee for the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women urged Member States to take preventative and remedial steps to address disparities from the intersection of sexism and racism. The Committee found, however, that many States do not focus on underlying structural racism affecting women and girls. Thus, the increasing intersectionality-related discourse at the UN is not being followed in practice by application of intersectional approaches, including the use of cross-tabulated disaggregated data, for the analysis and evaluation of policies, programmes and practices, including those targeting the eradication of poverty.

Consistent with the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals commitment to Leave No One Behind (UN,2015), an intersectional approach to eradicating poverty and achieving sustainable development for all is urgently needed at the local, national and international levels.

Therefore, the sponsor of this statement, the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, and co-sponsoring organisations affiliated with the NGO Committee for the Elimination of Racism, Afrophobia, and Colorism and the Psychology Coalition of Accredited Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) at the UN call upon all stakeholders to incorporate the following recommendations into their action plans for the eradication of poverty, especially among African-descendants, indigenous communities and other people of colour.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We strongly urge Member States, UN entities, NGOs and all other stakeholders to:

I. Implement Intersectional Approaches to the Eradication of Poverty, especially among African-descendants, indigenous communities and other people of colour (Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 5 and 10). Intersectionality is an approach, that focuses on interlocking systems of oppression and privilege in societal structures, and the interlocking categories of identity (e.g. gender, race, class, etc.) connected to them.

1. Incorporate approaches based upon the intersectionality of gender/race/ethnicity into policy, program, research, and evaluation interventions for the eradication of poverty.

2. Provide training for all stakeholders on intersectional methodologies, including cross-tabulated disaggregated data, for analysing problems or evaluating progress.

II. Promote the Psychosocial Empowerment and Resilience of All, including African-descendant/indigenous persons/groups (SDGs 3, 4, 5, and 8). Empowerment is a multi-dimensional psychosocial process that involves individuals and groups gaining control over resources and decision-making about their lives.

1. Educate persons of all diversities about their human rights, and their strengths, skills, and resources against gender/racial/ethnic discrimination.

2. Provide opportunities for persons of all ages to plan and operate economic projects to promote development of ownership, optimism, and efficacy/confidence in their ability to be successful.

3. Provide access to productive employment and decent work, which promotes psychosocial empowerment by treating workers with respect and dignity, providing earnings for an adequate standard of living.

4. Promote women- and men-owned and led cooperatives that could prove to be an important strategy for enhancing their economic and social empowerment.

5. Reduce the physical and mental burden of paid and unpaid work carried out by women/girls by providing access to simple tools and technologies (such as solar ovens, pump wells, reliable electricity, indoor plumbing, cell phones and the internet).

6. Provide access to quality mental health care within primary health care, including accessible multidisciplinary social and employment service centers and mobile vans to provide one-stop services.

7. Eradicate all violence against women/children, in families, schools, and work places.

III. Promote the Educational Development, and Occupational and Professional Advancement of All, especially African-descendant/indigenous Persons/Groups (SDGs 4 and 10). Higher rates of educational attainment have been found to account for 50% of a country's economic growth, half of which has been attributed to the education of girls.

1. Provide all children with free, public primary and secondary education, facilitating access to quality schools, qualified teachers, and basic educational resources.

2. Strengthen access to quality vocational and tertiary education for all ages as important pathways to psychosocial empowerment and decent work and provide stipends and scholarships as necessary.

3. Promote gender/racial/ethnic equality through the use of gender/racial/ethnic-inclusive language in the curriculum, books, videos, websites, and other materials used to educate children, adolescents, and adults.

4. Change sex/race/ethnic stereotypes in language usage through men and boys working with women and girls in public educational campaigns.

5. Educate children about gender/racial/ethnic inequalities in occupational and professional education and employment and about how these inequalities impact young people, as well as whole communities that would benefit economically from the advancement of all groups.

6. Increase and strengthen opportunities for training marginalised persons/groups about entrepreneurship and income-generating activities and provide training for the development, profitability, and sustainability of independent businesses.

7. Promote the building of networks that encourage women running independent businesses to learn from and support each other and to do effective outreach to policymakers in their region.

8. Invest in and promote girls' and women's exploration of previously male-dominated fields such as science, technology, medicine, engineering, and mathematics.

IV. Develop and Implement Policies and Practices to eliminate All Economic and Work-related Discrimination, including Discrimination Against African-descendant/Indigenous Persons/Groups (SDGs 4 and 8). There is an urgent need to dismantle discrimination based on gender and racial/ethnic identity because it significantly hinders the ability to achieve decent work.

1. Review and replace laws, policies, programs and practices at all levels of the economy and workforce that discriminate against people on the basis of their gender, race, or ethnicity.

2. Develop and implement policies governing "Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value" and conduct annual salary/wage audits to check for and rectify gender/race/ethnicity-related inequalities.

3. Develop policies setting a minimum percentage of diverse gender/racial categories of qualified workers in leadership positions at the various levels of the organisation.

4. Provide an institutional office for the filing and timely non-discriminatory resolution of complaints.

5. Establish clear and validated criteria for hiring and promotion and ensure that these criteria are applied consistently across applicants and candidates to reduce the possibility that gender/racial/ethnic biases will influence decision-making.

6. Mandate annual evidence-based harassment training in the workplace to eliminate gender/racial/ethnic barriers to equality, integration and productivity within the workplace.

7. Reduce gender stereotyping of work by educating men/boys that caring for the home and family members is family work to be shared by all.

8. Develop economic policies that call for employment practices to recruit men and women of diverse racial and ethnic groups into all sectors of the economy and workforce.

V. Develop and Implement Effective Workplace-Family Policies to Enhance the Economic Empowerment of all, including African-descendant/indigenous Persons/Groups (SDGs 8, 10 and 16) Countries at the top of the gender equity index who have implemented policies that address mandatory maternity and paternity leave tend to rank higher on the World Economic Forum Global Economic Competitive Index.

1. Evaluate current family-workplace policies of governments, institutions and organisations at all levels related to gender and racial equity.
 2. Promote occupational and career advancement among all employees, representative of their gender/race/ethnicity.
 3. Implement increased and improved family-workplace policies that support both mandatory maternity and paternity leave, with liveable wages for female and male employees.
 4. Study effective family-workplace policies, including work-life balance, of other Member States and agencies that have increasing gender/racial/ethnic equality in the workplace.
 5. Support research that evaluates the economic impacts of workplace-family policies, as well as the psychosocial impacts of these policies on female and male employees and their families.
 6. Advocate for increased funding for policies and programs that promote equal care-giving responsibilities among males and females in the family.
 7. Provide access to quality affordable infant day care and early childhood programs that enable mothers and fathers to meet family and work responsibilities.
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