

UN-Women
In cooperation with FAO, IFAD and WFP

Expert Group Meeting
Enabling rural women's economic empowerment: institutions, opportunities and participation

Accra, Ghana
20-23 September 2011

**PROCEDURES FOLLOWED IN EXPERT GROUP MEETINGS
ORGANIZED BY UN-WOMEN**

1. The use of expert group meetings as part of the work of UN-Women in implementing the United Nations programme for gender equality and the advancement of women is guided by the mandate of the Economic and Social Council set out in its resolution 1987/24 on the long-term work programme of the Commission on the Status of Women, which reads (para.4):

Recommends, as part of the regular programme of work of the United Nations Secretariat in areas related to the advancement of women, [...], when regular budgetary or extra-budgetary resources are available, the convening of expert group meetings, as required by the Commission, to assist in the preparation of the work of the Commission on priority themes; the expert groups should be composed of an appropriate number of specialists, taking into account equitable geographic distribution and the involvement of non-governmental organizations, in the field or fields of study addressed under specific priority themes in order to prepare an analysis and preliminary proposals to assist the Commission in making informed, practical and action-oriented policy recommendations; each expert group meetings should be[...] timed so as to permit the results of the meeting to be made available to Member States in advance of sessions of the Commission.

2. The objective of the expert group meeting is to provide inputs that will assist the Secretary-General, through UN-Women, in making recommendations to the Commission on the Status of Women.

3. In conformity with this mandate, the experts participating in these meetings are selected on the basis of their ability to provide information and ideas that can lead to findings that reflect the current state of knowledge about a given issue and propose practical and action-oriented policy and programmatic measures to best address the issue. In addition, observers from Governments, the United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and other organizations of civil society, including the private sector, may

participate in the expert group meeting.

4. Expert group meetings are purely advisory to the Secretary-General and, as such, have no decision-making power nor can they bind anyone other than the experts themselves. The way in which discussions proceed is very much shaped by the main purpose of the meeting, which is to put forward a wide variety of ideas, experiences, lessons learned and good practices and to develop a set of concise and action-oriented recommendations. Approaches to achieving this goal can vary.

5. UN-Women, and before its establishment, the Division for the Advancement of Women, have taken its orientation in guiding some 40 expert group meetings organized since 1986 from the practices of the Commission on the Status of Women. The procedures followed in expert group meetings are as follows:

- The experts elect their own officers: a Chairperson, a Vice- or Co-Chairperson, and a Rapporteur who take responsibility for the organization of the meeting.
- The experts determine themselves which issues need to be addressed in order to implement their mandate.
- The process of discussion is organized in a manner which allows the experts to hear the views of observers, whenever the experts believe this will contribute to the discussion and outcome.
- The experts are responsible for the report of the expert group meeting. The report of the expert group meeting, including its conclusions and recommendations, should be adopted by consensus at the conclusion of the meeting.

6. The organization of the expert group meeting is facilitated by UN-Women. Whenever procedural difficulties are encountered in a meeting, an effort is made to find a solution that will satisfy all of the participants.