



**March 15, 2018 from 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p. m. with Reception to Follow**

**Where:** Great Hall of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York  
42 West 44<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, NY 10036

**Organizers:** United Nations Committee of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York, International Development Law Organization (IDLO), UNWomen, Advocates for International Development (A4ID), Landesa Rural Development Institute, and HelpAge International

**Sponsors:** Bingham Center for the Rule of Law, Hoffman & Kessler LLP, Virginia & Ambinder LLP, King & Spalding LLP Women’s Affinity Groups, International Human Rights Committee of the Association of the Bar

**Introduction:**

Lawyers and members of the legal profession are among those most keenly aware of the role of the rule of law and of effective, enforceable, nondiscriminatory legal frameworks in the achievement of an environment conducive to sustainable development and to the protection and fulfillment of all human rights. The objectives of Agenda 2030 rely upon an understanding by law and policymakers and development actors of the essential role of empowering populations within these frameworks and of establishing the rule of law in order for development to be achieved. The 62<sup>nd</sup> Commission’s priority theme, “Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls,” presents an opportunity for development, law, and gender equality actors at executive- and case study-levels to convene to explore and analyze the critical and complex role of effective legal frameworks and legal empowerment initiatives in advancing development objectives, and the real challenges and limits to their effectiveness, for rural women across the spectrum of their concerns.

**Background:**

Rural women, comprising a quarter of the world’s population, provide 43 percent of the world’s agricultural labor and produce half of the world’s food, thus serving as key agents in development. Found to reinvest 90% of their income in their families, rural women and girls play significant roles in the eradication of poverty. Yet in spite of this, women own less than 20% of land worldwide and receive less than 10% of available credit.

Rural women face particularized problems differentiating their lives from urban counterparts. In a largely agricultural setting, issues affecting agricultural production such as access to land, credit and markets, inheritance, and natural resource rights have enormous importance. The Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and in particular Art. 14 and its General Recommendation No. 34 on the rights of rural women, represents global recognition of the specific disadvantages and discrimination encountered by rural women. Yet while efforts at remediation may be found in national legislation and justice institutions, discrimination in the law itself, lack of knowledge of the law, weak implementation and enforcement, and limited access to justice are major barriers in

rural settings, where the very rule of law may be fragile or absent. In many cases, rural women are not legally empowered to claim their rights, fight discrimination, and engage in and benefit from development processes, even within their own communities.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, by transforming previously recognized legal and human rights obligations into new development benchmarks, adds new impetus to the drive to craft effective interventions for the legal empowerment of rural women across the spectrum of their challenges. This high-level panel illuminates the nexus between the legal empowerment of rural women and the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, by examining legal interventions that have sought to solve the problems of rural women across several targets of the Sustainable Development Goals using the tool of the law, and invites conclusions regarding the relationship between legal frameworks and empowerment initiatives and the attainment of sustainable development.

### **Program:**

#### ***Opening Welcome and Introductions:***

- **Mr. Bret Parker**, Executive Director, Association of the Bar of the City of New York
- **Mr. Michael Cooper**, Chair, United Nations Committee of the Association
- **Mr. Phillip Kessler**, Development Board, Bingham Center for the Rule of Law
- **Ms. Katherine Ball**, Organizer, United Nations Committee of the Association

#### ***High Level Keynotes:***

- **Ms. Irene Khan**, Director-General, International Development Law Organization (IDLO)
- **Ms. Yasmin Batliwala, JP**, Chief Executive, Advocates for International Development (A4ID)

#### ***Interactive Panel:***

- ***Legal Framework Case Study: Target 1.4*** - **Dr. Justine Uvuza**, Sr. Land Policy Advisor on Gender, Landesa Rural Development Institute
- ***Legal Framework Case Study: Target 10.3*** - **Ms. Christine Carron, Ad. E., Retired Senior Partner at Norton Rose Fulbright Canada, LLP (for HelpAge International)**
- ***Programmatic Perspective: UNWomen*** - **Dr. Beatrice Duncan**, Rule of Law Advisor (Justice and Constitutions) and Focal Point on Indigenous Issues, UNWomen

#### ***Interactive Dialogue / Question & Answer with Live Inputs from Social Media***

***Moderated by:*** Ms. Kim Azzarelli, Co-Founder, Seneca Women

***Reception to follow.***

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***Today's event will be streamed via Facebook Live on both the International Development Law Organization and the New York City Bar Association pages.***

***Participants are encouraged to livetweet comments and questions to the following Hashtags: #legalframeworks #LawinDevelopment #CSW62 #GenderJustice #SDGs #RuralWomen @NYCBarAssnNews @IDLO @UN\_Women @Landesa\_Global @HelpAge @Irenekhan @Y\_Batliwala @kimazzarelli***

The beautiful art depicting rural women at today's event has been generously licensed for use by artist Veronica Smirnoff, a British artist of Russian birth whose versatile work in the medium of egg tempera has been exhibited internationally. She was the 2010 recipient of the John Moores Painting Prize UK.