



Government Offices of Sweden



ADVANCING WOMEN'S ECONOMIC RIGHTS IN LAW AND PRACTICE

*Side event organized by the International Development Law Organization (IDLO)
with the support of the Government of the Netherlands and Government Offices of Sweden, in
partnership with the OECD, Landesa, and Stand for Her Land Campaign, on the occasion of the 70th
Session of the Commission on the Status of Women*

Tuesday, 10 March 2026

10:00 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.

Conference Room 8, United Nations Headquarters, New York

[UN WebTV](#)

While there have been great strides, discriminatory laws continue to persist and hinder women's full enjoyment of their economic rights. Evidence consistently points to serious gaps in ensuring legal protection for women and girls across various economic spheres – including access to property, land, employment, finance and credit, and business opportunities.

Today, women only enjoy less than two-thirds of the legal rights available to men. Forty percent of women and girls worldwide live in countries where the level of discrimination in social institutions, defined as formal and informal laws, norms and practices, is estimated to be high or very high.¹ Moreover, even where laws exist to promote women's economic rights, countries on average have only established less than 40% of the systems needed for full implementation. Social inequalities, lack of access to resources and opportunities, and the absence of women's voices in many areas of public and political life continue to exacerbate these inequalities. Furthermore, unresponsive justice systems further impede women from seeking redress when their rights are violated.

The rule of law is a powerful tool for change. Strong legal frameworks and effective justice institutions can enable an equal playing field for women's economic opportunities, shift discriminatory norms and stereotypes and hold institutions accountable for implementation and redress.

It is therefore imperative for countries to focus on eliminating existing legal impediments and designing appropriate incentives to increase women's participation in the economy. Addressing legal constraints to women's employment, entrepreneurship, and financial inclusion can drive countries' economic growth, enhance development outcomes and contribute to stability.

As job markets evolve, addressing these challenges and ensuring that women can access emerging sectors is critical for long-term development. This event will showcase persistent challenges and

¹ OECD Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) 2023 Global Report.

proven examples of rule of law interventions that have strengthened women's economic rights. Speakers will be invited to address the following questions:

- Why is the rule of law, including legal frameworks and justice institutions, important for women's economic empowerment?
- What new and existing challenges do women encounter when seeking legal protection for their economic rights?
- What concrete rule of law approaches, lessons and good practice examples are recommended for replication and scale up?

Agenda

Moderator

Jan Beagle, Director-General, IDLO

Special Remarks

- **Dr. Lenita Freidenvall**, Deputy Director-General and Head of Division for Gender Equality, Ministry of Employment, Government Offices of Sweden
- **Tihamér Czika**, Gender Equality Lead, Human Rights Division, European External Action Service
- Representative, Government of the Netherlands

Panel Discussion

- **Hyeshin Park**, Head of the Gender and Development Unit, OECD Development Centre
- **Samah Hadid**, Global Executive Director, Musawah
- **Lilian Adriko**, Chief Executive Officer, Uganda Association of Women Lawyers (FIDA)
- **Clara Park**, Senior Gender Officer, FAO
- **Esther Mwaura-Muiru**, Global Advocacy Director, Stand for Her Land Campaign

Interactive Discussion