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***Access to Justice for Women and Girls: Advancing Social Development  
Commitments from the Doha Political Declaration of the World Social Summit***

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***Side Event on the Occasion of the 70<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women***

***10 March 2026, from 1:15 to 2:30 PM at United Nations Headquarters***

***Background***

The priority theme of the 70<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW70) focuses on ensuring and strengthening access to justice for all women and girls, including through inclusive and equitable legal systems, the elimination of discriminatory laws, policies, and practices, and the removal of structural barriers. This focus is closely aligned with the Doha Political Declaration of the Second World Summit for Social Development (A/RES/80/5), which affirms that access to justice is a fundamental human right and a cornerstone of social development, inseparable from efforts to advance women's empowerment, social protection, decent work, health, and education.

The Doha Political Declaration calls for the removal of legal, social, and economic barriers to women's empowerment, the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, the redistribution of unpaid care and domestic work, and the strengthening of inclusive, accountable, and people-centred institutions. It places particular emphasis on strengthening social protection systems, investing in families, promoting women's economic empowerment, and ensuring inclusive participation across the life course—commitments that highlight the need for integrated social and legal approaches.

Access to justice also depends on the social conditions that enable women and girls to exercise their rights, including access to social protection, quality public services, education, care systems, decent work, and supportive family and community environments. Persistent inequalities in these areas often translate into barriers to justice and limit women's ability to seek remedies and protection. Against this backdrop, the side event will explore how social development and family-centered policies can serve as effective pathways to strengthening access to justice for women and girls, including by supporting inclusive and equitable systems, eliminating discriminatory laws, policies, and practices, and addressing structural barriers, in line with the CSW70 priority theme and the Doha Political Declaration.

***Objectives***

1. Highlight the link between social development and access to justice, emphasizing how social protection, education, care systems, and inclusive public services enable women and girls to claim rights and seek remedies.
2. Examine structural barriers to justice faced by women and girls—including poverty, unequal care burdens, exclusion from decent work, and discrimination within families and communities—and how integrated social policies can help address access to justice.
3. Promote family-centred and inclusive policy approaches that support women's economic empowerment, strengthen social cohesion, and contribute to the prevention of discrimination.
4. Contribute to CSW70 outcomes by identifying practical policy pathways, inspired by the Doha Political Declaration, that integrate social development, family well-being, and justice to advance the empowerment of all women and girls.