



Panelists for the first segment of Gender Day listen as Tzili Mor addressed the audience. (Seated from left to right) Graciela Metternicht, UNCCD SPI; Tzili Mor, Director of Landesa; Sharon Taylor, UN Women; Elie Kodsi, UNDP; Verona Collantes-Lebale, UN Women; Ms. Lorena Aguilar, IUCN

On 8 September 2017 the Rio Conventions Pavilion at the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification's thirteenth Conference of the Parties (UNCCD COP 13) hosted Gender Day. The day was organized by the UNCCD, UN Women and the UN Development Programme Global Policy Centre on Resilient Ecosystems and Desertification (UNDP GCRED). The day began with a light lunch for participants and speakers to enjoy during the first segment, which gave the atmosphere a casual, communal feel.

The first segment of Gender Day concerned global perspectives of gender and land issues. Prof. Graciela Metternicht, member of UNCCD Science-Policy Interface (SPI) discussed the conceptual framework for land degradation neutrality (LDN). Metternicht focused on the guiding principles of LDN. She said, "Women are the main stakeholders of LDN" and stressed that women are active learners. Ms. Tzili Mor, Director of Landesa followed by presenting on gender-responsive LDN. Mor said, "Women are left out. The inclusion of women is critical." She pushed that to really help women work toward achieving LDN, legal frameworks, religious laws and data collection are needed to put gender related land issues on international and regional agendas.

Immediately thereafter, Mr. Elie Kodsi, Senior Technical Advisor, UNDP and Ms. Verona Collantes-Lebale, UN Women discussed UN system support for gender-responsive implementation of the UNCCD. Kodsi mentioned that UNDP has provided support for women’s empowerment and that the organization also has technical support to develop gender-sensitive programs. He went on to say that UNDP also mobilizes money and resources for implementation, and “the UNDP effectively promotes gender equality and female empowerment in the dry land through action.” Ms. Collantes-Lebale further discussed the issue, by saying UN Women “works to support government in setting norms, conducting research and so on, because “we need to provide evidence to show that gender equality is important.” She suggested specific guidelines are needed to strengthen efforts. To sum up the talk, Collantes-Lebale implored, “we need to ensure women’s full, equal and meaningful participation in order to access their knowledge, experience and capacities to contribute to the implementation of the Convention at all levels.”

Continuing the conversation about global perspectives of gender and land, Ms. Lorena Aguilar, Senior Global Gender Advisor and Global Director, International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) discussed the issue of gender within finance mechanisms and the unlocking of new funds to empower women in ways that will help to implement the UNCCD. She said, “unlocking new funds is not only the right the thing to do, but the smart thing to do.” To support her argument, she informed the audience that all major finance mechanisms and all implementing agencies have gender mandates, including the Green Climate Fund, which is a financial mechanism under the United Nations Framework-Convention on Climate Change.



Paulette Henry, Chairperson, Guyana Lands and Survey Commission presented experiences of working toward LDN in Guyana

The second segment of the day began promptly after a quick break. The programme centered on specific national experiences concerning gender and land issues. Paulette

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Henry, Chairperson, Guyana Lands and Survey Commission presented experiences of working toward LDN in Guyana. She said that while the country is one of the poorest in Latin American, it has been doing a fairly good job in its advances toward achieving LDN.



Stephen Muwaya, UNCCD National Focal Point, Uganda talks about gender responsive agriculture

A very convincing and gender equality supportive talk was given concerning gender responsive agriculture by Mr. Stephen Muwaya, UNCCD National Focal Point, Uganda. He said the government of Uganda empowers women to get the resources they need to use sustainable land management and increase the yields of their crops.



Winnie Lichuma, National Gender and Equality Commission summed up the segment by discussing inclusive implementation of the UNCCD.

Ms. Winnie Lichuma, National Gender and Equality Commission summed up the segment by discussing inclusive implementation of the UNCCD. She stressed that every person is equal before the law, therefore women and men have the right of equal treatment. Lichuma went on to say her organization's role is "to give governments advice and monitor what governments are doing". Her organization receives an annual report from

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governments to ensure what they have done. She concluded by saying, “we need to educate women that governments are providing the resources to women.”

The content of the session was well received, with many engaging discussions between the panelists and audience mixed throughout. Various participants thanked the panelists and organizers for their efforts in working towards gender equality and said they had learned a great deal from the engaging material.

“Gender Day-UN Woman, UNCCD and UNDP GCRED” Pictures













