



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

136th IPU Assembly

Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1- 5 April 2017



Promoting enhanced international cooperation on the SDGs, in particular on the financial inclusion of women as a driver of development

Resolution adopted unanimously by the 136th IPU Assembly (Dhaka, 5 April 2017)

The 136th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Affirming that sustainable development refers to the idea of development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs,

Expressing satisfaction that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is based on a holistic approach to sustainable development with a reasonably balanced emphasis on economic growth, social development and environmental protection,

Accepting that one challenge of implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is to make sure that developmental processes are inclusive and broad-based, allow wide participation from all segments of society, and are equally beneficial to all,

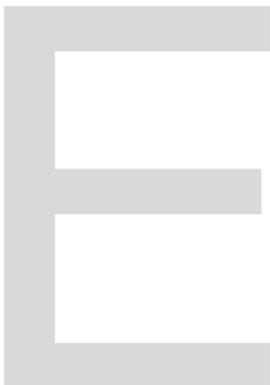
Acknowledging that another challenge of implementing the SDGs is to ensure effective delivery of public services by strict monitoring, regular evaluation and restructuring of public services, all of which will depend on the availability of basic infrastructure support, both in rural and urban areas,

Also acknowledging that eradicating poverty in all its forms is an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, and that to this end, sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth, as well as empowering the poor through education, health and skills development must all be promoted,

Recognizing that rural women are critical agents in poverty reduction, that they are crucial to providing food and nutrition in poor and vulnerable households and to environmental sustainability and that, in other ways, they are also critical to the achievement of all of the SDGs,

Also recognizing that women's financial inclusion is an engine of development that fights poverty, contributes to equitable economic growth, enables women's economic empowerment and thereby improves children's health, nutrition and schooling, whilst benefitting their families and communities,

Underscoring that, according to the Global Findex of the World Bank, women are 15 per cent less likely than men to have a bank account, and nearly 50 per cent of women across the world do not have a bank account,



#IPU136

Considering that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the 2030 Agenda) and its 17 SDGs recognize the importance of financial inclusion as part of eradicating poverty and achieving well-being for all,

Recalling that in 2016, the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, established the High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment to address the specific economic issues that affect women and to support both the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its promise to leave no one behind,

Bearing in mind that the Outcome Document of the General Debate endorsed by the 131st IPU Assembly (Geneva, 2014) points out that achieving gender equality and ending violence against women is the responsibility of both men and women, and that effective change requires both a strong institutional framework and national bodies with the power to take action,

Underscoring the importance of creating a favourable environment for the financial inclusion of women by ensuring equality before the law, especially in areas such as work, family, property and inheritance, and the importance of ensuring that women can live a life free from violence, enjoy their right to education and access health services,

Mindful that access to formal financing institutions helps to increase the equality of income between men and women, generate employment, reduce people's vulnerability to emergency situations, facilitate entrepreneurship, and foster both medium- and long-term saving and planning activities,

Stressing that financial education and financial literacy programmes are critical in achieving comprehensive and sustainable financial inclusion,

Reiterating that mobilizing domestic and international financial resources, as well as capacity-building and technology transfer to developing countries on favourable terms will all play a vital role in providing essential services, public goods and low-cost money transfers or remittances,

Recognizing that parliaments have a strong obligation to champion international law and human rights standards on the empowerment of women and adapt their national legislation accordingly,

Underscoring that the role of parliaments in embracing the financial inclusion of women as a driver of development should be conceived in accordance with international and national laws and with the 2030 Agenda,

1. *Invites* parliaments to promote the development of national, regional and international public policies and strategies that focus on eliminating the legal, cultural and logistical barriers that discriminate against women and prevent their full inclusion in the financial systems of each country, and to promote women's participation in those decision-making processes;
2. *Urges* parliaments to identify the needs and limitations of each region and society by making a complete diagnosis based on gender- and age-disaggregated information, which will allow the root causes of this challenge to be addressed, both according to its particular circumstances and from a gender perspective;
3. *Calls on* parliaments to take all appropriate measures to remove legal provisions that discriminate against women in areas such as work, family, property and inheritance, as a key step towards addressing the gender gap in financial inclusion;
4. *Also calls on* parliaments and governments to adopt legal frameworks and policies that increase financial inclusion in general, the financial inclusion of women in particular, and *invites* them to mainstream gender perspectives in all financial policies, including policies facilitating and promoting women's rights and opportunities to participate in the labour market;

5. *Proposes* that parliaments encourage the implementation of educational programmes for women and girls aimed at developing the knowledge and expertise of women to access financial services and financial literacy, including through the use of new technologies, and ensure they are accessible and responsive to the needs of women, including rural women and women in vulnerable situations;
6. *Requests* parliaments to promote the inclusion of women in the extensive use of widely accessible information and communication technologies that facilitate women's access to digital financial services, and enable innovative initiatives such as establishing digital payment systems, electronic money and access to accounts via mobile telephony, while addressing security and privacy concerns;
7. *Calls on* parliaments to encourage private companies and banks to design a wide range of attractive, low-cost financial products that provide incentives and banking facilities for women to develop good savings habits;
8. *Also calls on* parliaments and governments to adopt and promote policies and laws that enhance fair competition practices in the provision of financial services as a means of enhancing innovation and provision of quality services;
9. *Further calls on* parliaments to support the adoption of national financial inclusion strategies with policy objectives and quantitative targets on women's financial inclusion, and to actively monitor their implementation;
10. *Appeals to* parliaments to promote innovative financial services that are accessible to women in rural areas, such as itinerant banking services or village banks;
11. *Invites* parliaments to develop cooperative links with national, regional and international financial institutions for the implementation of programmes aimed at promoting the financial inclusion of women;
12. *Encourages* parliaments to promote partnerships with governments, the private sector and civil society so as to accomplish financial and digital inclusion, especially for women;
13. *Urges* parliamentarians to ensure that existing policies and programmes provide access to credit, as well as to financial and business training for women with lower incomes in order to facilitate their financial inclusion;
14. *Calls on* parliaments to ensure that women have continued access to formal credit and government support; and *invites* them to promote public policies and private sector initiatives that expand financial access for women-owned enterprises, as well as entrepreneurial education and training opportunities for women, in order to close the gender gap and empower women entrepreneurs worldwide;
15. *Strongly urges* parliaments to encourage reforms that offer women the right to access economic resources and financial services on an unbiased basis;
16. *Calls on* parliamentarians to encourage the private banking sector to reduce the costs of opening and maintaining a savings account and to tailor financial products to women's specific needs;
17. *Also calls on* parliaments and governments to take, where applicable, measures to facilitate women's access to personal identification, as a critical step towards their financial inclusion;
18. *Stresses* the importance of collecting, using and disseminating gender-disaggregated data to support evidence-based policymaking for the development of gender-inclusive financial systems;

19. *Invites* parliaments, governments and international stakeholders to step up efforts to reduce the digital divide between countries with regard to information and communication technologies and broadband connectivity in order to facilitate financial inclusion;
20. *Calls for* increased official development assistance to expand financial inclusion through, inter alia, developing new products tailored to the needs of financially excluded groups, supporting transition to digital payments, designing financial education programmes, and adopting strong customer protection frameworks, while addressing gender disparities;
21. *Calls on* parliaments to encourage the adoption of gender-responsive policies and regulatory frameworks that support financial inclusion while providing appropriate consumer protection against threats such as fraud, cybercrime, over-indebtedness or unethical business practices;
22. *Invites* parliaments to create an enabling environment that allows women to actively participate in the policy dialogue and decision-making on financial inclusion;
23. *Advises* governments, parliaments, the private sector and civil society to assume responsibility for championing the financial inclusion of women as a driver of development.