Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls lies at the centre of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In recognizing this, a High-level Event (HLE) “Step It Up Together with Rural Women to End Hunger and Poverty” held on 16 December 2016 in Rome, provided governments, UN entities, civil society and other stakeholders with the opportunity to identify challenges, gaps and collaborative actions to unleash the potential of rural women and girls to end food insecurity and poverty. Discussions at the HLE highlighted two important and interlinking areas:

• Promoting rural women’s economic empowerment
• Putting into practice gender transformative approaches

In the context of the sixty-first session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the European Union and the Slovak Republic, together with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the World Food Programme (WFP) and UN Women, will organize a side event aimed at continuing the dialogue initiated during the HLE.

Aimed at representatives of Member States, UN entities, non-governmental organizations and civil society, the side event will disseminate the key messages from the HLE, particularly with regard to three critical elements that were highlighted during the HLE deliberations:

• The crucial role that rural women play in ending hunger and poverty;
• The need for policies and programmes to accelerate rural women’s economic empowerment; and
• The importance of promoting transformative approaches to tackle the underlying socio-cultural and behavioural causes of gender inequality in rural areas.

11.30 - 11.40 Opening remarks by Carla Mucavi, Director, FAO Liaison Office in New York
11.40 - 11.50 Address by H.E. Esther Lungu, First Lady of the Republic of Zambia
11.50 - 12.35 Panel discussion:
  Kawinzi Muiu, Director of Gender Office, World Food Programme, WFP
  Maria Hartl, Senior Technical Specialist Gender and Social Equity, International Fund for Agricultural Development, IFAD
  Representative of UN Women
12.35 - 12.45 Closing remarks by the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations

Event moderated by: H.E. František Ružička, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Slovak Republic to the United Nations

To register please contact: David Maciejewski (maciejewski@un.org)