The power of ENGAGEMENT:
Gender, volunteerism and governance in the post-2015 development agenda

Side event during the 58th Commission on the Status of Women

**Date and Time:** 18 March; 1:15 pm - 2:30 pm
**UN Headquarters, Conference Room D (CB)**

**Content:** CSW 58 will examine the achievement of MDGs in terms of their impact on women’s lives, highlighting advances and gaps across the board. This will be an opportunity to reassess the cross-cutting nature of gender equality and its centrality to achieving all development objectives. Experience has shown, that development challenges can only be addressed in a sustainable and holistic manner when women are actively engaged in shaping their livelihoods and wider societies as well as in the related decision making processes.

Volunteerism, as a form of civic engagement, provides an avenue for women of all ages to expand their roles and enlarge their spaces of action in society. Through volunteering, women can embark on an empowering journey of self-discovery in their construction as social subjects, durably changing attitudes, mindsets and behaviors. Volunteering has the potential to change women’s positioning in the public sphere, contributing to social capital and social cohesion.

When well facilitated and inclusive, volunteering is a way to strengthen governance at local and national level by enhancing the dialogue between citizens and the government, while fostering ownership for local development solutions. Engaging people in addressing development challenges through increased participation and voluntary action, beyond gender stereotypes, can have a cross-cutting catalytic effect on the implementation of a holistic post-2015 development framework.

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme will facilitate a discussion on approaches and recommendations with regards to synergies between gender, volunteerism and governance in the Post-2015 development framework. Representatives from UN Women, Member States as well as volunteer-involving organisations with a global presence, will outline their approaches to and experience with facilitating civic engagement of women and its impact on development effectiveness in the long term.

**Speakers**
Moderator: Rosemary Kalapurakal, **Deputy Executive Coordinator, UNV**

- John Hendra, **Assistant Secretary-General, Deputy Executive Director for Policy and Programme, UN Women**
- H.E. Ms. Sophie Kalinde, **Ambassador, Chair of the Malawi Human Rights Commission**
- H.E. Ms. María Cristina Perceval, **Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations (TBC)**
- Sapreet Saluja, **Deputy Chair of the World Board, World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS)**
- Catherine Nixon, **Community Health Worker and Mobilizer in Nepal, Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO)**

**Statements**
- Mtisunge Kachingwe, **Volunteer for women’s health projects in Malawi, World YWCA**
- Karen Scheuerer, **Youth and Volunteerism Specialist, Peace Corps**