



## Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General  
9 December 2013

Original: English

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### Commission on the Status of Women

#### Fifty-eighth session

10-21 March 2014

**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women  
and to the special session of the General Assembly entitled  
“Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace  
for the twenty-first century”: implementation of strategic  
objectives and action in critical areas of concern and  
further actions and initiatives**

### **Statement submitted by Equidad de Género: Ciudadanía, Trabajo y Familia, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council**

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.



## Statement

In the past five years, reaching the indicators for Millennium Development Goal 3, promote gender equality and empower women, has been given greater priority with the launch of several significant efforts on behalf of donor countries and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) to increase women's political participation. However, these efforts have frequently ignored the central challenge for women in exercising their political rights, namely their unpaid domestic and care workload.

A recent initiative launched in Mexico by Equidad de Género: Ciudadanía, Trabajo y Familia and three other women's rights organizations in alliance with the National Women's Institute and UN-Women, called Initiative SUMA, Democracy is Equality, has seen first-hand the results of this omission.

Between 2011 and 2013, these four organizations developed and implemented a comprehensive strategy for increasing the number of women politicians at the municipal and state levels as well as in the federal congress. Although these efforts have shown remarkable results in the two most recent election cycles (2012 and 2013), with a significant increase in women municipal presidents and counsellors as well as state and federal congressional representatives, there are many more women who were not able to achieve their political goals, in part because of their unpaid domestic and care workload. This is also the reason identified for why those women who have reached political office tend not to remain there.

Mexico is one of the few countries where time-use surveys have been applied. According to the most recent surveys from 2009, Mexican women devote 37.1 hours per week to unpaid domestic and care activities, whereas men devote only 10.8 hours. The value of this work in 2009 was equivalent to 21.8 per cent of Mexico's gross domestic product. Childcare activities constitute a significant part of women's unpaid domestic and care workload. According to data from 2009, 39 per cent of the population participates in the care of children between the ages of 1 and 5. Of this percentage, 74 per cent are women. Notably, the amount of time women dedicate to childcare does not change significantly when they work outside the home.

The above-mentioned initiative takes into consideration these elements and offers political training to women leaders by experts in the field which specifically addresses women's unpaid domestic and care workload both in a theoretical and personal manner. However, there is a need for additional governmental support and recognition in order for women to be able to make a permanent advance in their political participation.

As the Commission on the Status of Women reviews the challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls at its fifty-eighth session, it is important that delegates keep in mind the underlying factors that contribute to the full exercise of women's and girls' rights. In this sense, any recommendation emanating from the Commission to the post-2015 sustainable development agenda process should require that women's unpaid domestic and care work be recognized, reduced and redistributed.

In addition, it is necessary to continue to fund initiatives, such as the one mentioned here, which employs a gender perspective, and therefore it is essential that any future development agenda address limited financing as a key barrier to advancing sustainable development, including women's rights and gender equality.