

## 'Cooperatives have made important contribution to fight violence against women'

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Cooperatives have made a meaningful contribution across the world to fight violence against women and girls, Xiomara Nunez De Cespedes, president, Global Gender Equality Committee of the International Cooperative Alliance, Latin America, said. She spoke at a programme titled 'Empowering for equality: Women's crucial role in cooperatives as catalysts for transforming social inequity and patriarchal practices' organised by Working Women's Forum (India). It was organised as a side event for the 62<sup>nd</sup> session of the Commission for Social Development that is held from February 5 to February 14 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

"Cooperatives systematically conduct their education and the awareness programmes contain a provision focused on prevention of domestic violence and gender violence at work," she said.

Nandini Azad, president, Working Women's Forum (India) and Indian Cooperative Network for Women, India said, "The event is a platform for global stakeholders particularly women farmers, organisations to share its successful models, advocate for gender equality in agriculture, and contribute to the global agenda of sustainable development (including climate change). The focus on inclusive family farming structures and empowering women farmers is crucial for achieving long-term prosperity in rural communities worldwide."

Andreas Kappes, secretary general, International Raiffeisen Union, Germany, said cooperatives serve as network for women to connect and join forces as well as a platform for them to engage in economic activities and build financial resilience and enhance their leadership skills.

Hirofumi Kobayashi, executive director, Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia and Japan, and Pieter Nel Boogaard, head, FMO, agribusiness, food and water- including forestry, Netherlands, also spoke at the event.

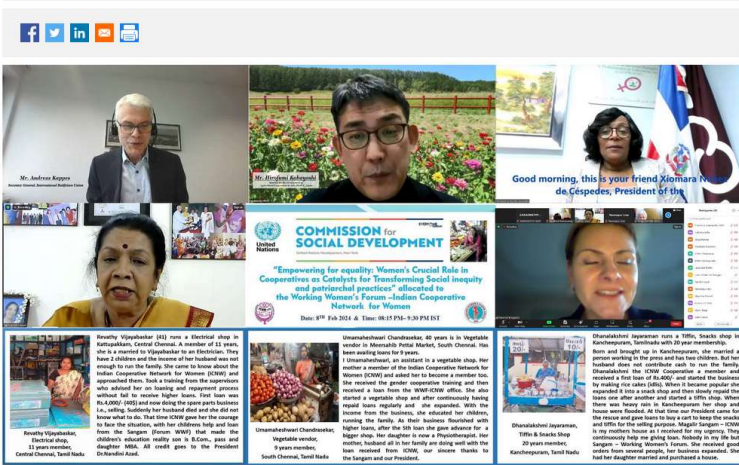
The H.S. Jaya Arunachalam Awards for Excellence were announced and nine women entrepreneurs from Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh have been chosen this year.



Home / United Nations Social Development Network

Empowering for equality: Women's Crucial Role in Cooperatives as catalysts for transforming social inequity and patriarchal practices

# Empowering For Equality: Women's Crucial Role In Cooperatives As Catalysts For Transforming Social Inequity And Patriarchal Practices



8 February 2024, CSocD62 Side Event organized by WWF-ICNW in Chennai, India: Dr. Nandini Azad, President, Working Women's Forum (India) and Indian Cooperative Network for Women, India welcomed participants from several continents. "This event is a platform for global stakeholders particularly women farmers, organisations to share their successful models, advocate for gender equality in agriculture, and contribute to the global agenda of sustainable development (including climate change). The focus on inclusive family farming structures and

empowering women farmers is crucial for achieving long-term prosperity in rural communities worldwide."

The Working Women's Forum and Indian Cooperative Network for Women H.Q., its CEO's, and I President Dr.Nandini Azad (WWF-ICNW) welcome and connected with all of the participants, from 40 countries, panellists and 300 grassroots women workers in India watching from several States of India namely Tamilnadu/Karnataka/Andhra Pradesh/ Telangana. Having reached 6,20,000 women in 270 trades in 13 branches of South India.

"Cooperatives systematically conduct their education and the awareness programmes contain a provision focused on prevention of domestic violence and gender violence at work," she said.

Andreas Kappes, Secretary general, International Raiffeisen Union, Germany, said cooperatives serve as a network for women to connect and join forces as well as a platform for them to engage in economic activities and build financial resilience and enhance their leadership skills.

Hirofumi Kobayashi, executive director, Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia and Japan, Africa etc. Focusing on training is very important alongwith credit provision he concluded with a best practice module and tabular tool for above.

Pieterneel Boogaard, head, FMO, agribusiness, Netherlands, said **evidence shows that 'gender neutral' approaches are ineffective in reducing gender inequalities and can even exacerbate pre-existing inequalities, or at least perpetuate current differences.** Therefore, gender sensitive solutions, such as improved access to finance, training, business development services and technical support, are important tools in promoting gender equality. **'It is FMO's aim to actively contribute to reducing inequalities by, amongst other things, actively seeking investment opportunities that positively contribute to the full inclusion of women in economic, social and public life'.**

Cooperatives have made meaningful contributions across the world to fight violence against women and girls, systematically educating them, Xiomara Nunez De Cespedes, President, Gender Equality Committee of the International Cooperative Alliance, said.

The H.S. Jaya Arunachalam Awards for Excellence were announced and nine women entrepreneurs from Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh have been chosen this year by the Working Women's Forum (India) and the Indian Cooperative Network for Women.

Dr. Azad continued today the WWF-ICNW's clout and its rise to global leadership wherein in 44 years they were key players on global high tables of policy with their voices and issues of informal sector women heard in all U.N. Cooperative forums, networks. Today all major networks have joined us, including male leaders informed to end patriarchal practices. <https://youtu.be/vfToygOAZyk>



# Empowering Co-ops: WWF-ICNW event at CSocD62 draws global attention

## Jaya Arunachalam remembered on the occasion

by [Staff Reporter](#) | [February 11, 2024](#) | in [Featured](#)



The Working Women's Forum – Indian Cooperative Network for Women (WWF-ICNW) hosted a landmark side event at the 62nd session of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD62) from the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

Held at the WWF-ICNW Headquarters in Chennai, India, the event focused on “Empowering for Equality: Women's Crucial Role in Cooperatives as Catalysts for

Transforming Social Inequity and Patriarchal Practices.”

Dr. Nandini Azad, President of WWF-ICNW, welcomed participants to this historic gathering, highlighting the significance of hosting the UNCSOD event in Chennai for the third time. The event brought together CEOs, panelists, grassroots women workers from India, and online participants representing 40 countries.

The session commenced with Dr. Azad's tribute to the late Padma Shri Dr. Jaya Arunachalam, the legendary founder of WWF-ICNW, on her 94th birth anniversary. Dr. Azad emphasized the organization's extensive reach across four southern states of India and its global leadership in advocating for the rights of informal sector women.

The event featured discussions on various topics, including gender inequality in agriculture, the inter sectionality of challenges faced by women, and the role of women's groups in promoting gender equality. Keynote speakers included Mr. Andreas Kappes from the International Raiffeisen Union (IRU) and Mr. Hirofumi Kobayashi from the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia (IDACA), among others.

Ms. Xiomara Cespedes, Chair of the Gender Equality Committee of the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA), highlighted the importance of addressing gender-based violence in financial inclusion efforts. Ms. Pieterse Boogaard from FMO, Netherlands, underscored the need for gender-sensitive solutions to reduce inequalities and promote women's economic empowerment.

A highlight of the event was the announcement of the Jaya Arunachalam Women Micro Entrepreneur Excellence Awards, recognizing nine women from South India for their outstanding contributions to their communities. These awardees, ranging from vegetable vendors to tailors, exemplify the transformative impact of microfinance and cooperative initiatives on women's lives.

In her closing remarks, Dr. Azad emphasized the importance of integrating financial inclusion with efforts to combat gender-based violence. She called upon cooperative leaders to adopt an integrated approach towards gender equality, involving both men and women in the process.

The event concluded with a Q&A session, providing participants with an opportunity to further engage with the speakers and delve deeper into the topics discussed.

Overall, the WWF-ICNW side event at CSocD62 served as a platform for global stakeholders to share successful models, advocate for gender equality in agriculture, and contribute to the agenda of sustainable development.



📁 BUSINESS, EVENTS & LAUNCHES, HOME, LIFE & STYLE, NEWS, PUBLIC NEWS

## “Empowering for equality: Women’s Crucial Role in Cooperatives” 62<sup>nd</sup> Commission for Social Development (CSocD62) from U.N. H.Q. New York, (WWF-ICNW Side Event)

👤 ADMINISTRATOR 🕒 FEBRUARY 8, 2024



**The United Nation Commission for Social Development UNCSocD 62 side event entitled: “Empowering for equality: Women’s Crucial Role in Cooperatives as Catalysts for Transforming Social inequity and patriarchal practices” allocated to the Working Women’s Forum –Indian Cooperative Network for Women”**

Dr.Nandini Azad, President, Working Women’s Forum – Indian Cooperative Network for Women (WWF-ICNW) welcomed all to this historic side event of **the U.N. Commission for Social Development (62nd session)** (8<sup>th</sup> February 2024) that has for the third time been held in the historic city of Chennai, Tamilnadu.

By the Working Women's Forum and Indian Cooperative Network for Women H.Q. The members, CEO's, the President Dr.Nandini Azad WWF-ICNW welcomed and connect with all of the registered online participants, from 40 countries, panellists and 300 grassroots women workers in India watching from several States of India namely Tamilnadu, Karnataka Andhra Pradesh & Telangana. Having reached 6,20,000 women in 270 trades in 13 branches of South India. Expressing gratitude to the UNCSocD62, for awarding today's panel from New York H.Q., entrusting largely poor women workers mass organization, the Working Women's Forum (with UN ECOSOC Consultative Status for 28 years).

Dr. Azad continued today the organizations clout and its rise to global leadership wherein in 44 years they were key players on global high tables of policy with their voices and issues of informal sector women heard. In New York, Germany, Netherlands, Japan. WWF-ICNW stands represented on both the global unions/alliances of International Cooperative Movement today through election by several countries apex cooperative bodies of several countries. An extraordinary coincidence for the first time globally by this powerful mass womens cooperative union and a active global player on gender and cooperative issues i.e., the poor women from the informal sector.

The panel at UNCSOD was divided into 3 sections both live and video. First a brief on new status report on the WWF-ICNW was given by President WWF-ICNW, Dr.Nandini Azad. Next **the International Raiffeisen Union (IRU)** Secretary General was the Keynote speaker. The IRU is the worlds oldest cooperative union from Germany and DGRV, the association of German Cooperative banks was represented **by IRU Secretary General, Mr. Andreas Kappes**. The very committed cooperative leader in Europe

and globally in his keynote address. While bringing in the flavour of European leadership in cooperatives, he was proud that IRU elected the ICNW President Dr. Nandini Azad as the first women on their global board in 50 years. Recently honoured WWF-ICNW re-electing Dr. Azad to the IRU board (second time in 100 years). He spoke about the role of women in IRU Cooperatives and international commitments for gender equality.

The Asian pioneer **Mr. Hirofumi Kobayashi**, Executive Director, Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia (**IDACA**) set up by the iconic Ja-Zenchu, the largest Japanese Agricultural Women's Cooperative participated from the IDACA institution, Japan. He **also spoke, on the Working Women's Forum / Indian Cooperative Network for Women, when they attended his International Grain Survey workshop**. Also IDACA experiences on the need for training and capacity building in cooperative/movements from **Japan, Asia, Africa etc. Focusing on training as very important alongwith credit provision he concluded with a best practice module and tabular column.**

**Ms. Xiomara Cespedes, Chair of the Gender Equality Committee of the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA)** sent a congratulatory message to the WWF-ICNW leadership, members, institutions Having had Dr. Nandini Azad as a former member of ICA Gender Equality Committee, Brussels.

**Ms. Pieterse Boogaard, Head of Agribusiness FMO, Netherlands, one of the biggest banks in the Netherlands spoke on efforts in reducing gender inequalities through financing.** A study that they commissioned to evaluate one of our investment funds active in Africa had this evidence.

**Evidence shows that 'gender neutral' approaches are ineffective in reducing gender inequalities and can even exacerbate pre-existing inequalities, or at least perpetuate current differences.** Therefore, gender sensitive solutions, such as improved access to finance, training, business development services and technical support, are important tools in promoting gender equality. **It is FMO's aim to actively contribute to reducing inequalities by, amongst other things, actively seeking investment opportunities that positively contribute to the full inclusion of women in economic, social and public life.**

- **Key Issues discussed in the event to summarize are:**
- **Gender Inequality in Agriculture;**
- **Intersectionality of Challenges:**
- **Gender Equality in Family Farming – The Way Forward  
The Case of Indian Cooperative Network for Women;**
- **Land Ownership and Financial Inclusion; Climate  
Financing;**
- **Climate Change and Gender;**
- **Role of Women’s Groups; Global Impact and SDGs;**

**Awards for Excellence amongst Women Entrepreneurs in Cooperatives – South India.**

Next, women micro entrepreneur excellence awards in South India were announced. 9 awards in 3 States of South India honouring poor women that helped their organization / cooperative survive by utilizing its services with commitment were awarded. Women members who for 37 years from Rs.200 (Euro 2 loans) to Rs.1,00,000 (1000 Euros) loans today have been able to through the various holistic services aspire, educate girls as doctors or children as engineers. Moving their children slowly into the formal sector.

Also moving to employing other women and are slowly into the formal sector. Till last 3 years – 24 such awardees have been honoured from South India who have employed 3 to 4 staff each. **Creating wealth and growth from the grassroots by poor women and girls.**

The 9 awardees each in their acceptance speech were grateful for the continuous training, loans that helped them enhance their work and life thanking their cooperatives, staff and President.

**The awardees include vegetable vendors, farmers, country cigar makers, floor cleaner manufacturers, tailoring, hotel business, electrical spare parts selling and also incense stick makers.**

**Micro entrepreneurs, who have taken subsequent loans from ICNW-WWF, increased employment, moved from informal to pre-formal sector, educated their children, empowered and involved in the WWF/ICNW women based activity). 9 awardees provided case studies from South India and their acceptance speech. (attached).**

**COMMISSION for SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**  
 "Empowering for equality: Women's Crucial Role in Cooperatives as Catalysts for Transforming Social Inequity and patriarchal practices" allocated to the Working Women's Forum - Indian Cooperative Network for Women  
 Date: 8<sup>th</sup> Feb 2024 & Time: 08:15 PM- 9:30 PM IST

**Revathy Vijayabaskar (41)** runs a Electrical shop in Kattupakkam, Central Chennai. A member of 11 years, she is married to Vijayabaskar an electrician. They have 2 children and the income of her husband was not enough to run the family. She came to know about the Indian Cooperative Network for Women (ICNW) and approached them. Took a training from the supervisors who advised her on loaning and repayment process without fail to receive higher loans. First loan was Rs.4,000/- (40\$) and now doing the spare parts business i.e., selling. Suddenly her husband died and she did not know what to do. That time ICNW gave her the courage to face the situation, with her childrens help and loan from the Sangam (Forum WWF) that made the children's education reality son is B.Com., pass and daughter MBA. All credit goes to the President Dr.Nandini Azad.

**Revathy Vijayabaskar,**  
 Electrical shop,  
 11 years member,  
 Central Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

**Umamaheshwari Chandrasekar,**  
 Vegetable vendor,  
 9 years member,  
 South Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

**Dhanalakshmi Jayaraman,**  
 Tiffin & Snacks Shop  
 20 years member,  
 Kanchipuram, Tamil Nadu.

**Dhanalakshmi Jayaraman** runs a Tiffin, Snacks shop in Kanchipuram, Tamilnadu with 20 year membership. Born and brought up in Kanchipuram, she started a person working in the press and has two children. But her husband did not contribute cash to run the family. Dhanalakshmi the ICNW Cooperative a member and received a first loan of Rs.4000/- and started the business by making rice cakes (Dals). When it became popular she expanded it into a snack shop and then slowly moved the loans one after another and started a tiffin shop. When there was heavy rain in Kanchipuram, her shop and house were flooded. At that time our President came for the rescue and gave loans to buy a cart to bring the snacks and tiffin for the selling purpose. Magaly Sangam - ICNW is my mother's house as I received all my savings. They continuously help me giving loan. Nobody in my life but Sangam - Working Women's Forum. She received good reviews from several people, her business expanded. She had her daughter married and purchased a house.

**Rayudu Kamala,**  
 Hotel Business  
 12 years member,  
 Bhimavaram, Andhrapradesh

**Rayudu Kamala runs a Hotel in Bhimavaram (Andhra Pradesh). She has taken loans for 12 years.**  
 Rayudu Kamalas husband is a farmer. They had some financial issues in the family. Children needed education. Thinking of our future Kamala approached the Indian Cooperative Network for Women (ICNW). Through a grassroots group in their village and took a loan of Rs.3000/- . With that started some work of milk business and received a loan of Rs.50,000/- Then the business picked up and expanded as a food court. The whole family is involved in our business and they are happy now. Today they are in good position. All credit goes to the President garu.

**Revathy Vijayabaskar,**  
 Electrical shop,  
 11 years member,  
 Central Chennai, Tamil Nadu

**Revathy Vijayabaskar (41)** runs a Electrical shop in Kattupakkam, Central Chennai. A member of 11 years, she is a married to Vijayabaskar to an Electrician. They have 2 children and the income of her husband was not enough to run the family. She came to know about the Indian Cooperative Network for Women (ICNW) and approached them. Took a training from the supervisors who advised her on loaning and repayment process without fail to receive higher loans. First loan was Rs.4,000/- (40\$) and now doing the spare parts business i.e., selling. Suddenly her husband died and she did not know what to do. That time ICNW gave her the courage to face the situation, with her childrens help and loan from the Sangam (Forum WWF) that made the children's education reality son is B.Com., pass and daughter MBA. All credit goes to the President Dr.Nandini Azad.

**Vasantha Dhanavendiran,**  
 Coconut Selling, Milk Vending  
 19 years member,  
 Adiramapattinam, Tamil Nadu

**Vasantha Dhanavendiran, 54 years is in Coconut business, Milk vending & Brick making in Adiramapattinam, Tamil Nadu has been availing loans for 19 years.**  
 A resident of Adiramapattinam, married in a of farmers family, they have been 3 children, she joined in the Sangam i.e., Indian Cooperative Network for Women (ICNW) received a loan of Rs.4000/- started with coconut business in the market. In the morning milk vending to the neighbours gave her good contact with people. To buy the cow, more loan given by ICNW as her repayment was regular and without any default. Further loan given to her for making brick was used for constructing the house. Her son joined in ITI and daughter studied MBA. She is working in a job now. The organization gave me awareness for girls higher education. During the Gaja cyclone, most of the houses in our area including our house were washed-out with water, most of our belongings were destroyed. ICNW rushed to our place even before the Government to help us. With assistance and support of Dr. Nandini Azad who visited us, we were able to come back to normally. Our sincere thanks to President Madam and the organization.



**Palaparthi Rajamani,**  
Milk Vendor  
18 years member,  
Narasapur, Andhrapradesh

Palaparthi Rajamani a Milk vendor from Mallavaram, Narasapur has been a loan member for 18 years.

Belonging to a most backward are of Mallavaram village, She has five children (among them three are daughters and two sons). Her husband worked with a landlord in the farm. After sometime he joined in the farm as a daily wage labourer. Income was not sufficient for the family are all daughters also worked in the field as labour. Her first loan Rs.600/- was used for her sons studies. In the later stage by stage she availed loans to buy buffaloes she now has 3 of them and the milk is sold to several families in the area. We are really very thankful to Madam and Working Women's Forum - Indian Cooperative Network for Women.



**Vijayalakshmi Govindaraj,**  
Tailoring  
12 years member,  
Bengaluru, Karnataka

Vijayalakshmi Govindaraj, 48 years is in Tailoring in Srirampuram, Bengaluru. She has been a member for 12 years.

A resident of Bengaluru she was got married to person working in a medical shop. He always gave half amount of his income to the family and the expenses. They have 2 children. She says luckily she met a supervisor of ICNW who was guided her, towards the loan office, taken training from them. Started by getting loan, first being Rs.4000, with that amount invested in buying cut piece blouse pieces. Selling it to more customers, they also came to her for blouse stitching for "saris". Then her business developed getting next higher loan she purchased a tailoring machine. Later I was able to provide work to other lady workers to do the stitching. The designs came out well, more and more material was used for petticoats (accessory to sari and other garments). Simultaneously the work was recognized by my husband also. Now our children well educated as graduates and post graduates, leading a peaceful life. All credit lies with the President of ICNW and I thank her now.



**Rathna Athithiyam,**  
Floor Cleaner Manufacturer  
30 years member,  
Vellore, Tamil Nadu

Rathna Athithiyam, 48 years is in Floor cleaner manufacturer (Homemade product) in Vellore. Has been availing loans for 30 years.

She was married to a painter in Viruthampattu village an alcoholic. Suffering immensely with her children, when she came to know about Indian Cooperative Network for Women (ICNW) and received a first loan of Rs.400/- 30 years back. Beedi rolling (country cigar) was her work for running the family, educating the children. Her husband passed away. The Sangam (Forum WWF) gave her a higher loan to make floor cleaner. She received training for it and started selling it on a large scale. Her son became an Engineer and now she in a good position and she her job. She is grateful to Dr. Nandini Azad, President ICNW for her life transformation and with good status/respect in the society/ business.



**Rathnamani Praburaj,**  
Country Cigar, Incense stick  
22 years member,  
Channapatna, Karnataka

Rathnamani Praburaj Arasu, 57 years of age is in Beedi, (country cigar) Incense stick from Channapatna area as a member 22 years.

She was born and brought up in Mandya district. Married and we have 4 children. Families financial problems i.e., insufficient money and get her childrens education, she fortunately met a group leader of the WWF-ICNW guided her to receive her first loan of Rs.600/- (60\$). With that amount some raw materials for making incense stick, she rolled them in her house and gave it to shops for sales. When people liked it, more orders followed. She improved the business with higher loans. Also started some beedi work (country cigars) alongwith this. Income focused for her to make children study. Higher loans were received to expand the work. The whole family is involved in the business; children married after education. Thanks to our Sangam and the President for the timely assistance and support.



**Umamaheshwari Chandrasekar,**  
Vegetable vendor,  
9 years member,  
South Chennai, Tamil Nadu

Umamaheshwari Chandrasekar, 40 years is in Vegetable vendor in Meersahib Pettai Market, South Chennai. Has been availing loans for 9 years.

I Umamaheshwari, an assistant in a vegetable shop. Her mother a member of the Indian Cooperative Network for Women (ICNW) and asked her to become a member too. She received the gender cooperative training and then received a loan from the WWF-ICNW office. She also started a vegetable shop and after continuously having repaid loans regularly and she expanded. With the income from the business, she educated her children, running the family. As their business flourished with higher loans, after the 5th loan she gave advance for a bigger shop. Her daughter is now a Physiotherapist. Her mother, husband all in her family are doing well with the loan received from ICNW, our sincere thanks to the Sangam and our President.



**Dhanalakshmi Jayaraman,**  
Tiffin & Snacks Shop  
20 years member,  
Kancheepuram, Tamil Nadu

Dhanalakshmi Jayaraman runs a Tiffin, Snacks shop in Kancheepuram, Tamilnadu with 20 year membership.

Born and brought up in Kancheepuram, she married a person working in the press and has two children. But her husband does not contribute cash to run the family. Dhanalakshmi the ICNW Cooperative a member and received a first loan of Rs.400/- and started the business by making rice cakes (idlis). When it became popular she expanded it into a snack shop and then slowly repaid the loans one after another and started a tiffin shop. When there was heavy rain in Kancheepuram her shop and house were flooded. At that time our President came for the rescue and gave loans to buy a cart to keep the snacks and tiffin for the selling purpose. Magalir Sangam – ICNW is my mothers house as I received for my urgency. They continuously help me giving loan. Nobody in my life but Sangam – Working Women's Forum. She received good orders from several people, her business expanded. She had her daughter married and purchased a house.



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## Working Women’s Forum – Indian Cooperative Network for Women organises side event of UN’s 62nd Commission for Social Development at Chennai

 RADIANCE NEWS SERVICE  15 FEB, 2024  DELHI

 Working Women’s Forum – Indian Cooperative Network for Women, organises side event, of UN’s 62nd Commission for Social Development at Chennai

**The Working Women’s Forum (India) – Indian Cooperative Network for Women (WWF – ICNW) is the only women’s cooperative privileged to be awarded a side event on ‘Empowering for equality: Women’s Crucial Role in Cooperatives as Catalysts for Transforming Social inequity and patriarchal practices’ during the 62nd Session of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD62) (UN HQ) on 8 February 2024. The event was held at Chennai.**

Dr Nandini Azad, President, Working Women’s Forum – Indian Cooperative Network for Women (WWF-ICNW) welcomed all to the historic side event of the UN Commission for Social Development (62nd session). This is the third time it has been held in Chennai, Tamil Nadu (near the tip of the South Asian sub-continent for the readers outside). Th city is also the headquarters of the Working Women’s Forum and Indian Cooperative Network for Women.

Cooperative leaders had come from far off to tell their story and connect with all of the registered online participants, from 40 countries, panelists and 300 grassroots women workers in India watching from several States of India namely Tamilnadu, Karnataka Andhra Pradesh & Telangana.

WWW-INCW has 6,20,000 women connected in 270 trades through 13 branches of South India. Dr Azad expressed gratitude to the UNCSocD62 for awarding the panel from New York, entrusting largely poor women workers from mass organisations, the Working Women’s Forum (with UN ECOSOC Consultative Status for 27 years).

In her opening remarks, Dr Nandini Azad paid tribute to the legendary founder Late Padma Shri Dr Jaya Arunachalam, whose 94th birth anniversary is today. As is customary in Asia as she initiated, organized unregulated informal sector women into this mass organisation.

Today the organisation’s clout and its rise to global leadership is evident in 44 years and they are key players in global policy formulation with their voices and issues of informal sector women heard in all parts of the globe: New York, Germany, Netherlands and Japan.

WWF-ICNW is represented on both the global unions/alliances of International Cooperative Movement today by being elected to several countries’ apex cooperative bodies.

The panel today was divided into 3 sections, both live and video. First a brief on new status report on the WWF-ICNW was given by the Dr Nandini Azad. The International Raiffeisen Union (IRU) Secretary General was the Keynote speaker. The IRU is the world's oldest cooperative union from Germany and DGRV, the association of German Cooperative banks was represented by IRU Secretary General, Andreas Kappes, very committed cooperative leader in Europe and globally.

In his keynote address, while bringing in the flavour of European leadership in cooperatives, he was proud that IRU elected the ICNW President Dr Azad as the first woman on their global board in 50 years. Recently WWF-ICNW was re-elected to the IRU board (second time in 100 years). He spoke about the role of women and international commitments for gender equality.

**The Asian pioneer Hirofumi Kobayashi, Executive Director, Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia (IDACA) set up by the iconic Ja-Zenchu, the largest Japanese Agricultural Women's Cooperative participated from the IDACA institution. He also spoke, on the Working Women's Forum / Indian Cooperative Network for Women, in its International Grain Survey and IDACA experiences on the need for training and capacity building in cooperative/movements from Japan, Asia, Africa etc. He said that focusing on training was very important along with credit provision.**

Xiomara Cespedes, Chair of the Gender Equality Committee of the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) sent a congratulatory message to the WWF-ICNW leadership, members, institutions having had Nandini Azad as a former member of ICA Gender Equality Committee, Brussels. She emphasized the need for Gender violence solutions as essential with financial inclusion.

Pieter Boogaard, Head of Agribusiness FMO, Netherlands, one of the biggest banks in the Netherlands spoke on efforts in reducing gender inequalities through financing and a study that they commissioned to evaluate one of our investment funds active in Africa. Some of the findings were:

Evidence shows that 'gender neutral' approaches are ineffective in reducing gender inequalities and can even exacerbate pre-existing inequalities, or at least perpetuate current differences. Therefore, gender sensitive solutions, such as improved access to finance, training, business development services and technical support, are important tools in promoting gender equality. It is FMO's aim to actively contribute to reducing inequalities by, amongst other things, actively seeking investment opportunities that positively contribute to the full inclusion of women in economic, social and public life. FMO has committed to gender equality in a Position Statement and is a signatory of the 2X Challenge initiative to mobilize \$3 billion in capital towards women's economic empowerment. FMO has developed a gender lens approach for Financial Institutions' investments. Yet, a gender approach for agribusiness investments remain less evident and thus a task ahead.

Key Issues discussed in the event to summarise were:

Gender Inequality in Agriculture;

- Intersectionality of Challenges;
- Gender Equality in Family Farming - The Way Forward The Case of Indian Cooperative Network for Women;
- Land Ownership and Financial Inclusion; Climate Financing;
- Climate Change and Gender;
- Role of Women's Groups; Global Impact and SDGs;

The Jaya Arunachalam Women Micro Entrepreneur Excellence Awards in South India was also announced today. 9 awards in 3 States of South India honouring poor women that helped their organization / cooperative survive by utilising its services with commitment were awarded. Women members who for 37 years from Rs 200 (2 Euro) to Rs 1,00,000 (1000 Euro) loans today have been able to educate girls and boys as doctors or as engineers moving them slowly into the formal sector. They are also employing other women and are slowly into the formal sector.

Till last 3 years – 24 such awardees have been honoured from South India who have employed 3 to 4 staff each creating wealth and lifting poor women and girls from the grassroots.

**Jaya Arunachalam awardees that were announced for 2023-2024 are:**

1. Revathy Vijayabaskar, Electrical Shop, Central Chennai, Tamil Nadu (T.N.).
2. Umamaheshwari Chandrasekar, Vegetable vendor, South Chennai, T.N.
3. Vasantha Dhanavendran, Coconut business, Milk vendor, Adiramapattinam, T.N.
4. Rathna Athithiyan, Floor cleaner manufacturer, Vellore, Tamil Nadu.
5. Dhanalakshmi Jayaraman, Tiffin, Snacks shop, Kancheepuram, T.N.,
6. Vijayalakshmi Govindharaj, Tailoring, Bengaluru, Karnataka
7. Rathnamani Prabhuraj Arasu, Beedi, (country cigar) Incense stick, Channapatna, Karnataka,
8. Palaparthi Rajamani, Milk vendor, Narasapur, Andhra Pradesh,
9. Raidu Kamala, Hotel, Bhimavaram, Andhra Pradesh.

The awardees include vegetable vendors, farmers, country cigar makers, floor cleaner manufacturers, tailoring, hotel businesses, electrical spare parts sellers and also incense stick makers.

They are micro entrepreneurs, who have taken subsequent loans from ICNW-WWF, increased employment, moved from informal to pre-formal sector, educated their children and got empowered and involved in the WWF/ICNW women-based activity). 9 awardees provided case studies from South India during their acceptance speech.

The side event at the 62<sup>nd</sup> session of the Commission for Social Development provides a platform for global stakeholders particularly women farmers, organisations to share its successful models, advocate for gender equality in agriculture, and contribute to the global agenda of sustainable development (including climate change). The focus on inclusive family farming structures and empowering women farmers is crucial for achieving long-term prosperity in rural communities worldwide.

Gender based violence solutions are important to Women's Human Rights, the right to live in dignity as women, entrepreneurs, home managers and community leaders. President WWF Dr Azad said that Youth forums against gender violence, through street theatre and sports, provide training to resocialise men away from patriarchy towards gender equality for its cooperative members too.

WWF-ICNW's generational equality and alliance with men and boys' forums for gender equality is along with the Independent Commission on People's Rights and Development (ICPRD), a sister concern. It shows its integrated approach to prevent gender violence by bringing in women mentors to resocialise boys into combating patriarchy and gender violence. Gender equality becomes an agenda for the community, cooperatives, nation and globally with onus not only on women alone.

The visit of Hillary Clinton as US Secretary of State to the WWF/ICNW headquarter was historic. World leaders have appreciated the gender and equity model. 6,20,000 members have been the beneficiaries in 4 states of South India across the 270 trades.

Dr Nandini Azad, have a clarion call to the male/female cooperative leaders to integrate financial inclusion with Gender violence – i.e., the Gender based violence product in micro finance.



## உழைக்கும் மகளிர் சங்கம் - இந்திய மகளிர் கூட்டுறவு இணைப்பு மையம் பங்கு பெறும் மகளிர்க்கான நியூயார்க் ஐநா தலைமையகத்திலிருந்து கானொளி காட்சி மூலம் சர்வதேச மகளிர் நலன் ஆர்வலர்களின் 62வது அமர்வு கூட்டம்



சென்னை, பிப்.10-  
உழைக்கும் மகளிர் சங்கம்  
மற்றும் இந்திய மகளிர் கூட்டுறவு  
இணைப்பு மையம் பங்கு பெறும்  
மகளிர்க்கான நியூயார்க்  
ஐநா தலைமையகத்திலிருந்து  
கானொளி காட்சி மூலம்  
சர்வதேச மகளிர் நலன்  
ஆர்வலர்களின் 62வது அமர்வு  
கூட்டம் நடைபெற்றது..

இந்த அமர்வில் சென்னை  
யிலிருந்து உழைக்கும் மகளிர்  
சங்கத்தலைவர் நந்தினி ஆசாத்  
கலந்து கொண்டு சிறப்புரை  
ஆற்றினார்.

அவரது உரையில்,  
உலகமக்கள் தொகையில்  
சரி பாதியாக இருக்கும்  
மகளிர்க்கு அதற்கான  
உரிமைகள் கிடைப்பதில்லை.

பொருளாதரத்திலும்,  
விவசாயதொழில்செய்வதிலும்,  
குடும்ப சொத்துகளை  
பெறுவதிலும் பாராபட்சம்  
காட்டப்படுகிறது..

தொழில்முனைவோராக  
கயசார்புடன் விளங்கும்  
குடும்ப தலைவிகள்  
இணையர்கள் தாக்குதல்,  
அடித்தல், நற்பெயருக்கு  
களங்கம் விளைவித்தல்  
போன்றவன்கொடுமைகளுக்கு  
ஆளாகிறார்கள்.

ஆத்யோன்றகடினமான  
நேரத்தில் தன் பிள்ளைகளை



கொண்டு தடுத்தல், தாக்கும்  
போது இடைமறிப்பது போன்ற  
செயல்களால் ஆண்கள்  
மனரீதியாக வன்கொடுமை  
செய்யுமள நிலையிலிருந்து  
மாறுவார்கள்.

இதன் மூலமாக குடும்ப  
வன்முறை ஒழிந்து அமைதி  
நிலவும் அதேபோன்று வங்கி  
முகவர்களின் செயல்பாடுகள்  
வன்கொடுமைக்கு திராகிவே  
உள்ளது.. அதற்கான தீர்வுகள்  
எட்டப்பட வேண்டும்.

சமூகமேம்பாட்டுக்கான  
62 வது ஆணையம்  
அமர்வு கூட்டம் பூரூன்  
தலைமையகமான நியூயார்க்கில்  
இருந்து இது நடைபெறுகிறது  
சென்னையில் அமர்வில்  
உழைக்கும் மகளிர் சங்கம்  
இந்திய மகளிர் கூட்டுறவு  
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நந்தினி ஆசாத் கலந்து கொண்டு  
சிறப்புரை ஆற்றினார்.

இந்நிகழ்வில் விவசாயத்தில்

பெண்களுக்கான பங்கு  
சமத்துவமாக இல்லை  
நில உரிமை மற்றும் நிதி  
கையாளுதல், வேலைவாய்ப்பில்  
, ஊதியம் வழங்குவதில்  
பாராபட்சம் காட்டப்படுகிறது  
என்று அவர் பேசினார்.

மேலும் இந்நிகழ்வில்  
தென்னிந்தியா தழுவி தொழில்  
முனைவோர்களில் சிறந்து  
விளங்கும் 9 மகளிர்க்கு ஐயோ  
அருணாச்சலம் விருதுகள்  
வழங்கும் அறிவிப்பை நந்தினி  
ஆசாத் வெளியிட்டார்

விருது பெற்றவர்களில்  
காய்கறிப் பணியாளர்கள்  
விவசாயிகள் நாட்டு கட்டு  
தயாரிப்பாளர்கள் தரையை  
சுத்தம் செய்பவர்கள்  
கையில் நாலு மாநிலங்களில்  
270 வர்த்தகங்களில்  
6,20,000 உறுப்பினர்களை  
கொண்டுள்ளது இந்த  
கூட்டுறவு தலைவர்களுக்கு  
டாக்டர் நந்தினி ஆசாத் மூலம்  
பாலின வன்முறையுடன் நிதி  
சேர்க்கையை ஒருங்கிணைக்க  
அதாவது மைக்ரோ  
பைனான்ஸரில் பாலின  
அடிப்படையிலான வன்முறை  
தயாரிப்புடன் ஒருங்கிணைக்கும்  
ஒரு தெளிவான அழைப்பை  
வெளிப்படுத்துகிறது

**TRANSLATION:**

**Working Women's Forum - Indian Cooperative Network for  
Women will participate**

**62nd Session of International Women's Rights Activist meeting via video from the New York UN Headquarters for Women** The 62nd Session of International Women's Activists was held via video from the New York UN Headquarters for Women, with the participation of the Working Women's Association and the Indian Women's Cooperative Alliance.

Nandini Azad, president of Working Women's Association from Chennai, attended the session and delivered a keynote address.

In her speech, women, who make up half of the world's population, do not get the same rights as men.

Discrimination is shown in the economy and in agriculture and also in acquiring family property.

Household heads who are self-reliant as entrepreneurs are subjected to peer assaults, beatings and defamation.

In such a difficult time, men will change from the mental state of violence by preventing their children and intercepting them when they are attacked.

As a result of this, domestic violence has been eradicated and peace prevails, and the activities of bank agents are tantamount to cruelty. Solutions should be found.

62nd Session of the Commission for Social Development UN It is headquartered in New York. Nandini Azad, President of Working Women's Association of India Women's Cooperative Linkage Center attended the session in Chennai and delivered a keynote speech.

In this event the role of women in agriculture is not equal. He spoke of discrimination in land ownership and financial management, employment and payment of wages.

Also on this occasion Jaya Arunachalam awards to 9 outstanding members who are good who excel in South Indian Entrepreneurship; The announcement was made by Nandini Azad.

Among the awardees are vegetable workers, farmers, country cigar makers, floor cleaners, 620000 members in 270 trades. This cooperative presents a clarion call to leaders by Dr. Nandini Azad to integrate financial inclusion with gender-based violence i.e. integrating gender-based violence product in microfinance.

உள்ளூர் முதல்  
உலகச் செய்திகள் வரை  
அன்றாடம் அற்புத வேண்டுகோ?  
தவறாது படிங்கள் :  
"செய்தி அலசல்" நாள்நாள்  
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## சர்வதேச மகளிர் நலன் ஆர்வலர்களின் 62-வது அமர்வு கூட்டம்

சென்னை, பிப்.12-  
உழைக்கும் மகளிர் சங்கம் மற்றும் இந்திய மகளிர் கூட்டுறவு இணைப்பு மையம் பங்கு பெறும் மகளிர்க்கான நியூயார்க் ஐநா தலைமையகத்திலிருந்து காணொளி காட்சி மூலம் சர்வதேச மகளிர் நலன் ஆர்வலர்களின் 62வது அமர்வு கூட்டம் நடைபெற்றது.

இந்த அமர்வில் சென்னையிலிருந்து உழைக்கும் மகளிர் சங்கத் தலைவர் நந்தினி ஆசாத் கலந்து கொண்டு சிறப்புரை ஆற்றினார்.

அவரது உரையில் உலக மக்கள் தொகையில் சரி பாதியாக இருக்கும் மகளிர்க்கு அதற்கான உரிமைகள் கிடைப்பதில்லை.

பொருளாதாரத்திலும், விவசாய தொழில் செய்வதிலும், குடும்ப சொத்துகளை பெறுவதிலும் பாராபட்சம் காட்டப்படுகிறது.

தொழில் முனைவோராக சுயசார்புடன் விளங்கும் குடும்ப தலைவிகள் இணையர்கள் தாக்குதல், அடித்தல், நற்பெயருக்கு களங்கம் விளைவித்தல் போன்ற வன்கொடுமைகளுக்கு ஆளாகிறார்கள்.

அதுபோன்ற கடினமான நேரத்தில் தன் பிள்ளைகளை



கொண்டு தடுத்தல், தாக்கும் போது இடைமறிப்பது போன்ற செயல்களால் ஆண்கள் மனரீதியாக வன்கொடுமை செய்யும் மன நிலையிலிருந்து மாறுவார்கள்.

இதன் மூலமாக குடும்ப வன்முறை ஒழிந்து அமைதி நிலவும் அதே போன்று வங்கி முகவர்களின் செயல்பாடுகள் வன்கொடுமைக்கு நிகராகவே உள்ளது.. அதற்கான தீர்வுகள் எட்டப்பட வேண்டும்.

சமூகமேம்பாட்டுக்கான 62 வது ஆணையம் அமர்வு கூட்டம் யூஎன் தலைமையகமான நியூயார்க்கில் இருந்து இது நடைபெறுகிறது சென்னையில் அமர்வில் உழைக்கும் மகளிர் சங்கம் இந்திய மகளிர் கூட்டுறவு இணைப்பு மையம் தலைவர் நந்தினி ஆசாத் கலந்து கொண்டு சிறப்புரை ஆற்றினார்.

இந்நிகழ்வில் விவசாயத்தில் பெண்களுக்கான பங்கு சமத்துவமாக இல்லை நில உரிமை மற்றும் நிதி கையாளுதல், வேலைவாய்ப்பில், ஊதியம் வழங்குவதில் பாராபட்சம் காட்டப்படுகிறது என்று அவர் பேசினார்.

மேலும் இந்நிகழ்வில் தென்னிந்தியா தழுவிய தொழில் முனைவோர்களில் சிறந்து விளங்கும் 9 மகளிர்க்கு ஜெயா அருணாச்சலம் விருதுகள் வழங்கும் அறிவிப்பை

நந்தினி ஆசாத் வெளியிட்டார்

விருது பெற்றவர்களில் காய்கறிப் பணியாளர்கள் விவசாயிகள் நாட்டு சுட்டு தயாரிப்பாளர்கள் தரையை சுத்தம் செய்பவர்கள் கையில்நாலு மாநிலங்களில் 270 வர்த்தகங்களில் 6,20,000 உறுப்பினர்களை கொண்டுள்ளது இந்த கூட்டுறவு தலைவர்களுக்கு டாக்டர் நந்தினி ஆசாத் மூலம் பாலின வன்முறையுடன் நிதி சேர்க்கையை ஒருங்கிணைக்க அதாவது மைக்ரோ பைனான்ஸில் பாலின அடிப்படையிலான வன்முறை தயாரிப்புடன் ஒருங்கிணைக்கும் ஒரு தெளிவான அழைப்பை வெளியிட்டுத்துகிறது

## **Translation:**

### **62nd Sessional Meeting of International Women's Activists.**

The 62nd Session of International Women's Activists was held via video from the New York UN Headquarters for Women, with the participation of the Working Women's Association and the Indian Women's Cooperative Alliance.

Nandini Azad, president of Working Women's Association from Chennai, attended the session and delivered a keynote address.

In her speech, women, who make up half of the world's population, do not get the same rights as men.

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Household heads who are self-reliant as entrepreneurs are subjected to peer assaults, beatings and defamation.

In such a difficult time, men will change from the mental state of violence by preventing their children and intercepting them when they are attacked.

As a result of this, domestic violence has been eradicated and peace prevails, and the activities of bank agents are tantamount to cruelty. Solutions should be found.

62nd Session of the Commission for Social Development UN It is headquartered in New York. Nandini Azad, President of Working Women's Association of India Women's Cooperative Linkage Center attended the session in Chennai and delivered a keynote speech.

In this event the role of women in agriculture is not equal. He spoke of discrimination in land ownership and financial management, employment and payment of wages.

Also on this occasion Jaya Arunachalam awards to 9 outstanding members who are good who excel in South Indian Entrepreneurship; The announcement was made by Nandini Azad.

Among the awardees are vegetable workers, farmers, country cigar makers, floor cleaners, 620000 members in 270 trades. This cooperative presents a clarion call to leaders by Dr. Nandini Azad to integrate financial inclusion with gender-based violence i.e. integrating gender-based violence product in microfinance.

## महिला सहकारी समितियों को सशक्त बनाने की आवश्यकता: डॉ. नन्दनी आजाद

**कामकाजी महिला मंच - भारतीय सहकारी नेटवर्क फॉर वुमेन के सचिव डॉ. नन्दनी आजाद ने संयुक्त राष्ट्र संघ के सामाजिक विकास आयोग के 62वें सत्र का आयोजन**



सहकार सृष्टि

चेन्नई। कामकाजी महिला मंच - भारतीय सहकारी नेटवर्क फॉर वुमेन के



सचिव डॉ. नन्दनी आजाद ने संयुक्त राष्ट्र संघ के सामाजिक विकास आयोग के 62वें सत्र में महिला सहकारी समितियों को सशक्त बनाने की आवश्यकताओं पर बल दिया। एक ऐतिहासिक साइट इवेंट में मेजबानी की। भारत के चेन्नई में डब्ल्यूडब्ल्यूएफ-आईसीएनडब्ल्यू मुख्यालय में आयोजित यह कार्यक्रम समानता के लिए सशक्तिकरण-सामाजिक असमानता और पितृसत्तात्मक प्रथाओं को बदलने के लिए उद्यम के रूप में सहकारी समितियों में महिलाओं को महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका- पर केंद्रित था। डब्ल्यूडब्ल्यूएफ-आईसीएनडब्ल्यू की अध्यक्ष डॉ. नंदनी आजाद ने तीसरी बार चेन्नई में यूएनवीएसओडी कार्यक्रम की मेजबानी के महत्व पर प्रकाश डालते हुए इस ऐतिहासिक सभा में प्रतिभागियों का स्वागत किया। इस कार्यक्रम में भारत के सीईओ, पैरलिट, जमीनी स्तर की महिला कार्यकर्ता और 40 देशों का प्रतिनिधित्व करने वाले ऑनलाइन प्रतिभागी एक साथ आए। सत्र की शुरुआत डब्ल्यूडब्ल्यूएफ-आईसीएनडब्ल्यू की प्रसिद्ध संस्थापक, दिवंगत पद्मश्री डॉ. जवा अरुणाचलम को उनके 94वीं जयंती पर डॉ. आजाद की ब्रह्मंजलि के साथ हुई। डॉ. आजाद ने भारत के चार दक्षिणी राज्यों में संगठन की व्यापक पहुंच और अनौपचारिक क्षेत्र की महिलाओं के अधिकारों की फसल में इसके वैश्विक नेतृत्व पर जोर दिया। इस कार्यक्रम में कृषि में लैंगिक असमानता, महिलाओं के सामने आने वाली चुनौतियों की अंतरसंवेधता और लैंगिक समानता को बढ़ावा देने में महिला समूहों की भूमिका सहित विभिन्न विषयों पर चर्चा हुई। मुख्य बकाओं में अंतर्राष्ट्रीय एग्रीकल्चरल युनिवर्सन (आईआरयू) के एडिटास कम्पस और एशिया में कृषि सहयोग विकास संस्थान (आईडीएसीए) के हिरोफुमी कोबायशी शामिल

थे। अंतर्राष्ट्रीय सहकारी गठबंधन (आईसीए) की लैंगिक समानता समिति की अध्यक्ष सुश्री शिवोभा सेस्पेडेल ने वित्तीय समावेशन प्रयासों में लिंग आधारित हिंस को संबोधित करने के महत्व पर प्रकाश डाला। एफएमओ, नीडलैड से सुश्री पीटरसन ब्यूगर्ड ने असमानताओं को कम करने और महिलाओं के आर्थिक सशक्तिकरण को बढ़ावा देने के लिए लिंग-संवेदनशील समाधानों की आवश्यकता को रेखांकित किया। इस कार्यक्रम का मुख्य आकर्षण जवा अरुणाचलम महिला मुसुम उद्यमों उत्कृष्टता पुरस्कारों की घोषणा थी, जिसमें दक्षिण भारत की नौ महिलाओं को उनके समुदायों में उत्कृष्ट योगदान के लिए सम्मानित किया गया। ये पुरस्कार विनोद, सच्ची शिकोताओं से लेकर दर्जी तक, महिलाओं के जीवन पर माइक्रोफाइनेंस और सहकारी पहल के परिवर्तनकारी प्रभाव का उदाहरण देते हैं। अपने सम्मान भाषण में, डॉ. आजाद ने लिंग आधारित हिंसा से निपटने के प्रयासों के साथ वित्तीय समावेशन को एकीकृत करने के महत्व पर जोर दिया। उन्होंने सहकारी नेताओं से लैंगिक समानता के प्रति एक एकीकृत दृष्टिकोण अपनाने का आह्वान किया, जिसमें इस प्रक्रिया में पुरुषों और महिलाओं दोनों को शामिल किया जाए। कार्यक्रम का सम्पन्न प्रस्ताव सत्र के साथ हुआ, जिससे प्रतिभागियों को बकाओं के साथ आगे जुड़ने और चर्चा किए गए विषयों को गहराई से समझने का अवसर मिला। कुल मिलाकर, सामाजिक विकास आयोग के 62वें में डब्ल्यूडब्ल्यूएफ-आईसीएनडब्ल्यू साइट इवेंट ने वैश्विक हितधारकों के लिए सकल मॉडल साझा करने, कृषि में लैंगिक समानता की फसल करने और सतत विकास के एजेंडे में योगदान करने के लिए एक मंच के रूप में कार्य किया।