



AKATEEMISET NAISET
KVINNLIKA AKADEMIKER
UNIVERSITY WOMEN



NAISJÄRJESTÖJEN KESKUSLIITTO



NNKY-KFUK-YWCA



13th International Helvi Sipilä Seminar

RURAL WOMEN IN A CHANGING WORLD

Monday, 12 March 2018
2.30 - 3.45 pm

Conference Room Gallery
4 W 43rd Street, N.Y.

PROGRAM

OPENING

Anne Pönni

Secretary General, YWCA of Finland

SPEAKERS OF THE PANEL DISCUSSION

Kati Partanen

Chair of the World Farmers' Organisation's (WFO) Women's Committee
"Rural women, key for food security"

Malayah Harper

General Secretary, World YWCA

&

Nirmala Gurung

Young Women's Coordinator, YWCA of Nepal
"Young Women's Leadership in a Changing Rural Setting"

Anne Meskanen

Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women Issues and Gender Equality,
Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

"Women in fragile contexts. Insights on Kosovo and Afghanistan"

CHAIR OF THE SEMINAR

Anne Pönni

Secretary General, YWCA of Finland

The seminar is organized jointly by the Finnish Federation of Graduate Women, the National Council of Women of Finland, the Coalition of Finnish Women's Associations – NYTKIS, Finland National Committee for UN Women and the Young Women's Christian Association of Finland YWCA.

CONCEPT NOTE

CSW62 – 13th INTERNATIONAL HELVI SIPILÄ SEMINAR

12 March 2018

THE INTERNATIONAL HELVI SIPILÄ SEMINAR series addresses challenging issues that affect women and their lives locally and globally in the 21st century. The event organized during the CSW62 is the 13th seminar in this series.

With the title **Rural women in a changing world** the seminar focuses on the role of rural women and the variety of challenges they are facing in the changing world.

The empowerment, equal participation and leadership of women are crucial to the global sustainable development. The changing world entails both challenges and opportunities for rural women and these have to be thoroughly assessed. How ensure rural women and girls access to education, infrastructure and technology, food security and nutrition? How to best address the specific needs of rural women and girls? How to support women in fragile contexts?

These questions will be examined at the Helvi Sipilä seminar from different angles by four distinguished speakers:

Kati Partanen is a farmer, M.Sc. (agriculture) and agriculture economist. She's a facilitator and chair of the World Farmers' Organisation's (WFO) Women's Committee. Her presentation of *Rural women, key for food security* she brings up preconditions for reaching rural women's full potential for food security and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

It is important to give young rural women voice and the presentation "*Young Women's Leadership in a Changing Rural Setting*" by **Malayah Harper**, General Secretary of World YWCA, and **Nirmala Gurung**, YWCA Nepal, will provide an insight on this topic.

In her presentation "*Women in fragile contexts. Insights on Kosovo and Afghanistan*" **Anne Meskanen**, Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women Issues and Gender Equality, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, shares her experience from missions in Afghanistan and Kosovo.

Helvi Sipilä Seminar at the CSW since 2006

Helvi Sipilä was a Finnish lawyer, diplomat and the first female Assistant Secretary-General of the UN. Sipilä received numerous national and international awards including twelve honorary doctorates, and she was granted the honorary title of Minister in 2001.

Helvi Sipilä also held leadership position in several associations, including the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, International Federation of Women Lawyers and the International Council of Women.

Helvi Sipilä's profession in law was exceptional at the time. When she announced the opening of her own law firm in 1943, she became the second woman in the Finnish history to practice as a lawyer. She ran her own law firm for 30 years. Private entrepreneurship enabled her to engage in extensive social activities, including service as a member of governmental missions.

While Assistant Secretary-General, she was appointed Secretary-General of the UN World Conference on Women in Mexico 1975. She continued to work as a consultant for the UN until 1981, in order to promote the UN Voluntary Fund for the Advancement of Women, later known as UNIFEM, set up during the UN Decade for Women 1976 - 1985.

Helvi Sipilä was a well-known and respected advocate for equality and women's rights. Her important legacy will live on. The first international Helvi Sipilä Seminar was organized at the CSW50 in 2006 by the Finnish Federation of University Women (FFUW) in collaboration with four other Finnish Women's organizations to honor the work of Minister Helvi Sipilä.