



**Women's Major Group Intervention to the High Level Political Forum (HLPF):
"Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality:
Perspectives of LDCs and LLDCs"
11:00 AM on July 10, 2019**

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Good morning, my name is Chika Mercedes Ibeh, representing Education as a Vaccine (Nigeria) and the Women's Major Group.

In my experience working in the African region, where many of the LDCs are located, I have witnessed devastating instances of women who are trapped in patriarchal societies that deny women basic human rights. In West and Central Africa over four out of 10 women under 18 are forcibly married. Only 53% of girls in LDCs have completed primary school. 85% of women in the LDCs are vulnerably employed in positions such as domestic workers or local vendors. In countries such as Afghanistan and Bangladesh, women's employment rates are half of men's. Unpaid care work further reduces women's opportunities and increases violence for at risk populations, including indigenous, refugee, migrant, disabled, younger, older and gender nonconforming people.

Realising the 2030 Agenda requires recognising that LDCs and LLDCs are not facing isolated challenges. Gendered systems of inequality and injustice undermine women's rights and sustainable development.

Developed countries must take responsibility for contributions to shared commons. Africa is losing approximately US\$50 billion annually through illicit financial flows. This results in high levels of poverty, inequality, inadequate provision of social services, and dysfunctional public institutions, which entrench gender inequality.

Sustainable development requires a financial framework that curbs illicit financial flows and progressive taxation to reduce concentrations of wealth and economic power. It requires corporations to pay taxes, refrain from predatory practices, and ensure labour

rights, decent work and working conditions. It requires a multipronged strategy to strengthen women's organizations and movements.

We need a revolution in responsibility and accountability, not business as usual.