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INTERACTIVE EXPERT PANEL

The empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges

Focus: Economic Empowerment of Rural Women

THE REPORT OF THE EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON: ENABLING RURAL WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT: INSTITUTIONS, OPPORTUNITIES AND PARTICIPATION

by

MALIKA ABDELALI-MARTINI Socio-Economist, Community and Gender Analysis Specialist, International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) Algeria Excellencies, Distinguished delegates and keynote speakers, Dear colleagues, Honorable Ministers and representatives of Member States, Ladies and gentlemen: Rural women in agricultural and non-farm work: Farmers, producers, workers and entrepreneurs

Agriculture

EGM also noted the phenomenon of commercial land acquisition, often referred to as 'land grabbing'.

Rural women's access to research and technology

The extent to which rural women participate in technology research and development, together with their access to new technologies are important factors that affect women's economic empowerment, both in relation to agricultural production and other enterprises (e.g. value addition, processing, storage⁴). Women's needs, interests, and constraints, often differ from men's depending on their responsibilities, which are dynamic and change in response to social and economic conditions.⁵

In addition to the public sector

Ladies and gentlemen, allow me now to highlight the main recommendations adopted by the Expert Group Meeting:

Recommendations

The participants of the Expert Group Meeting recognize

- Rural women's and men's lives, livelihoods, are multi-dimensional and dynamic;
- Rural women as agents of change;
- Women as leaders, decision-makers, producers, workers, entrepreneurs, and service providers in national and local policies, alongside men;
- Diversity of rural women;
- Full enjoyment of indigenous women and men to land;
- Governments responsibility for human rights of rural women and men;
- Violence against women persists;
- Multifaceted characteristics of rural economies;
- Inequalities and challenges in accessing economic and social opportunities and services;
- Economic marginalization of rural women.

Therefore, a number of measures need attention:

New **rural development frameworks** need to take into account the **risks and opportunities** of rural women and men, and should respond to the **rights**, **aspirations and needs** of rural women and men.

National and international governance systems need to promote inclusive economic growth strategies. Effective decentralization can be an important strategy for rural women's economic empowerment. The green economy, can provide policy instruments to achieve sustainable development and help mitigate climate change for current and future generations.

The implementation of recommendations has to be in accordance with international conventions and human rights standards⁹.

The following **recommendations** are addressed to a range of different stakeholders including ministries of agriculture and natural resources (fisheries and forestry), agrarian reform, rural development, trade and finance, health, education, science and technology, labor, environment; national gender equality machineries; donor countries; multilateral agencies; funding agencies; research and academic institutions; employer organizations; trade unions; professional and trade associations; farmers' organizations; rural women's organizations; and the private sector.

The expert group recommends:

⁹ See full EGM report ibid. EGM report available at:

http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw56/egm.htm

- 1. Economic policies, growth and equality
 - 1. Ensure that economic policies fully prioritize decent work and employment generation;
 - 2. Facilitate an institutional and policy environment that promotes decent work for rural women;
 - 3. Increase investments in infrastructure;
 - 4. Develop and implement policies and programmes that support women in the agricultural sector;
 - 5. **Promote rural and indigenous women's knowledge, products and services**; and protect them;
 - 6. Develop and implement policies, programmes and incentives to enable rural women's active and effective engagement in the global value chain;
 - 7. Introduce tax systems and other fiscal and macro-economic measures that redistribute wealth to poor segments of society, including rural women;
 - 8. Develop and adopt measures that offset the negative impact of global and regional trade agreements on rural women's production and livelihoods;
 - 9. Emphasize channels for development, testing, application and dissemination of frameworks and tools;
- 2. Equal access to and control of land and other rural productive resources
 - 10. Ensure that national laws and policies guarantee women's right to land;
 - 11. Ensure that laws and policies on land are implemented and known by the target communities and titleholders;
 - 12. Support the development and implementation of gender-sensitive land and property laws, both statutory and customary;
 - 13. Promote changes in customary law to ensure women access to land, on an equal basis with men;
 - 14. Ensure that the option of joint titles is provided during land reform and records updates;
 - 15. Take measures for the consent of each spouse for the sale of land, or its use as collateral;
 - 16. Ensure that the registration of land for collective use is under the names of all female and male user-members of the community;
 - 17. Institute and enforce policies that limit the quantity of national land that foreign countries and corporations can buy; Hold Governments accountable for "land grabbing";
 - 18. Take measures to protect the rights of rural women affected by land expropriation;
 - 19. Ensure that changes in land administration or changes in land tenure systems do not cause environmental damage, do not destroy the ecosystems;
 - 20. Prepare resettlement plans for internally displaced people, refugees and returnees;

- 21. Enable small-holder farmers and agricultural workers, in particular women, to become more productive, competitive and profitable;
- 22. Recognize and support women as actors in climate change adaptation and mitigation, disaster risk reduction and resilience strategies;
- 23. Develop environmental service payment schemes (e.g. carbon, water) taking into account rural women's rights and capacities;
- 24. Ensure that rural women and men have access to productive resources and inputs;
- 25. Take measures to facilitate uptake of technology by rural women by involving them in all stages of research, training, entrepreneurship and innovation;

3. Provision of and entitlement to services

- 26. Necessary space and infrastructure for rural women's access to information, education and training;
- 27. Create mechanisms that empower rural producers' and women's organizations;
- 28. Promote South-South exchange and use of knowledge, technologies, ICTs and internet;
- 29. Ensure that access to essential service

5. Monitoring and evaluation

- 44. Ensure that data collected at all levels is disaggregated by sex, age, and other variables, and analyzed, published, and used for informed policy-making and planning and for the establishment of satellite accounts;
- 45. Promote the administration of time-use surveys and facilitate their use;
- 46. Ensure that the measurement of economic growth includes the contribution of rural women and men in paid and unpaid work;
- 47. Ensure that available data and information is widely disseminated and accessible;

9. Conclusion