

**PSM Plenary Session – Gender Equality and Women’s  
Empowerment**

**February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

**Meghan Sapp, Planet Energy**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the Private Sector Mechanism, I would like to thank Burkina Faso and Finland for their excellent work on the Terms of Reference. The PSM fully endorses this document as a basis for work on the important issue of Women in Agriculture, and the need for greater gender equity and empowerment in this field.

Today we highlight the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

*“Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and unalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.”*

We know that to achieve this right to true equality women in agriculture need practical interventions at all levels. Women deserve:

- The right to land and other productive resources, such as financial services, business registration and operation and employment opportunities.
- That their leadership and expertise feed into work on food security, including helping to develop guidelines and initiatives related to land, investment and nutrition.
- Access to proper reproductive, prenatal, postnatal and maternal services, particularly proper nutrition in the first 1000 days for

both mother and child.

Beyond being important producers of food, women play vital roles in household nutrition. And yet still in some systems they are too often among the last to be fed. We think it is important to emphasize the need for women and girls to receive good nutrition.

Women are also a vital part of the food system supply chain. In this regard, women too often face discrimination in access to financial services and entrepreneurship training. We hope that the gender negotiations will take into account practical interventions such as agricultural extension and entrepreneurship training that will support women's economic empowerment.

With concrete suggestions, these Voluntary Guidelines could do much to advance gender equity globally and to build a better food system. Furthermore, we hope CFS can assist the robust community working on gender equity and women's empowerment to collaborate and coordinate even more. We want to ensure that women receive the full suite of needed services to help them support themselves, their families and indeed the entire food system.

Thank you.