

CFS Side Event 12: Achieving Gender Equality, Food Security and Nutrition – Multi-Stakeholder Initiatives and Approaches

24 Oct 2023 13:30 - 14:45 CET

Moderator

- Jemimah Njuki, Chief of Economic Empowerment, UN Women

Speakers

- Dan Ericsson, State Secretary to the Minister for Rural Affairs, Sweden
- Renate Hahlen, Principal Administrator, European Commission, Directorate-General, International Partnerships
- John Bosco Murangira, JP RWEE National Coordinator, Rwanda, WFP
- Rachana Bhattarai, JP RWEE National Coordinator, Nepal, UN Women
- Déborah Badombena-Wanta, Food Security and Nutrition Technical Advisor, Togo, GIZ
- Annira Busch, Senior Policy Officer, Division for Food and Nutrition Security, Fisheries, Germany, BMZ
- Ambassador Gabriel Ferrero, CFS Chairperson

In his opening remarks Mr Dan Ericsson noted that while women produce nearly half of the world's food, their roles are yet to be appropriately recognized. The CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls Empowerment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition serve to acknowledge the important link between strengthening gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment on the one hand and improved food, security and nutrition on the other. Ms Renata Hahlen said in her opening remarks that women and girls assume multiple responsibilities in the food chain, guaranteeing household food security, acting as farmers, and in processing and trading of food, and contributing to socioeconomic progress for families, communities, and nations. Healthy women and girls who do not suffer themselves from malnutrition can assume these tasks much better.

Mr John Bosco Murangira presented on women's cooperatives as vehicles for change in empowering women and achieving food security in Rwanda. According to the global final evaluation of the UN Joint Programme on Rural Women's Economic Empowerment (JP RWEE), the cooperative approach emerged as a very powerful transformative element, with key elements being capacity and skills development; access to informal and formal credit and financial services as well to inputs and agricultural technologies; and linking groups to local extension services and local development planning processes. Ms Rachana Bhattarai, JP RWEE Nepal, highlighted interventions to engage men and boys in working to change social norms through faith leaders and local leaders in Nepal, and engaging men at household and community levels. The programme has lifted women out of subsistence agriculture and into commercial agriculture through transfer of technical knowledge and skills using the Farmer Field School approach. The programme also serves as a pilot initiative for the gender responsive implementation of the government of Nepal's Agriculture Development Strategy.

Ms Déborah Badombena-Wanta presented experiences from Togo on improving dietary diversity for women and learning from nutrition and food security programming. 'Programme multisectoriel sécurité alimentaire et renforcement de la résilience' uses a nutrition-sensitive agriculture approach which promotes nutritious crops, small scale poultry, small-scale processing and storage technologies, and development of income-generating activities, as well as a gender sensitive and transformative approach, by which women are main targets, gender dynamics are incorporated, and beneficiaries' access to land, knowledge and information, technology and finance/financial literacy is increased. Standardised and comparable data on women's diet in particular micronutrient adequacy and diversity are insufficient. Ms. Annira Busch presented on the minimum dietary diversity (MDD-W) indicator, which indicates micronutrient adequacy of women's diet. She called for political commitment to the Voluntary Guidelines, as well as sound measurement tools. Integrating the MDD-W indicator as an SDG2 indicator, which will be reviewed next year, would enable global data collection and comparison.

After a round of questions and answers, the CFS Chairperson Ambassador Gabriel Ferrero in his closing remarks noted that the Voluntary Guidelines are a major step forward in the gender equality agenda and called on stakeholders to adopt guidelines to push gender equality.

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