Rural women: crucial partners in the fight against hunger and poverty

Side Event Report

WORLD FOOD SUMMIT
Five years later
10-13 June 2002
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Rural women: crucial partners in the fight against hunger and poverty

Introduction

The World Food Summit (WFS): Five years later took place in Rome 10 to 13 June 2002 to follow up, reaffirm and reinforce the commitments made at the WFS in November 1996, at which governments pledged their political will and their collective common and national commitment to achieving food security for all and to an ongoing effort to eradicate hunger in all countries, with an immediate view to reducing the number of undernourished people to half their level no later than 2015.

The half-day side event on Rural women: crucial partners in the fight against hunger and poverty took place 12 June 2002. The event served to enhance the visibility, recognition and support for the important role and contributions of rural women, and in particular women farmers, in achieving the targets of the World Food Summit of 1996. The purpose was to mobilize increased political will and resources for removing persisting gender inequalities, with a specific focus on the access to, control over, and sharing of the benefits from natural resources and related services. The side event was organized by FAO’s Gender and Population Division with the financial contribution of the Government of Sweden. It was co-chaired by Ms Margareta Winberg, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Sweden and Mr Narend Singh, Provincial Minister, Department of Agriculture and Environmental Affairs, South Africa.

The side event gathered approximately 450 delegates from Governments, NGOs and other institutions. There were six formal presentations from the podium, including the opening address by H.E. Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda (Programme in Annex 1). Two specially invited speakers, Ms Rosalina Tuyuc, Guatemala and Dr Vandana Shiva, India each made a presentation to the forum to stimulate the rich open dialogue with the audience that followed. Twenty-eight participants, including several Ministers and NGO representatives, contributed with short interventions from the floor during the open dialogue. A short Message from Rome to Johannesburg in support of rural women, drafted by the Secretariat and circulated to all participants received general support, while many speakers made concrete suggestions of how to strengthen it further before transmitting it to the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg (Rio+10). (The final version of this Message is included as Annex 2). An oral summary report of the discussions was made to the WFS:fyl plenary by Mr Narend Singh (Annex 3).

The main message from the audience was that, in order to enhance the status of rural women and promote gender equality in agriculture and rural development, rural women will need equal access to and control of natural and productive resources and rural women should be empowered to fully participate as agents for change in policy-making at all levels and throughout development activities. It was noted that failing to listen to rural women will slow down and constrain the effectiveness, equality and sustainability of development response strategies, because rural women are the experts and the owners of their local ecosystems and the related biodiversity.

The meeting manifested a strong political will to recognize rural women’s participation on an equal footing with men. This needs to be coupled with financial and other resources so that rural women can fully participate in, and share the benefits of, rural and agricultural development.
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Opening

The Co-chair, Margareta Winberg, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Sweden, briefly opened the meeting by welcoming all and introducing herself, and the participants on the podium:

- H.E. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda
- Mr David Harcharik, FAO Deputy Director General
- Mr Narend Singh, Provincial Minister, Department of Agriculture and Environmental Affairs, South Africa
- Ms Sissel Ekaas, Director Gender and Population Division, FAO
- Ms Rosalina Tuyuc Velásquez, founder and coordinator of the National Coordinator of Widows in Guatemala
- Ms Vandana Shiva, Director, Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology (India)
- Mr Jacques Eckebil, Assistant Director General, Sustainable Development Department, FAO

Opening Statement by His Excellency Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda¹

"In the framework of the activities of the World Food Summit, I am particularly proud to carry out the task of drawing the attention of the international community to an essential aspect of the anti-hunger and anti-poverty programmes we are currently discussing, that is, to address the particular issues of rural women.

Let me thank the Director General of the Food and Agricultural Organisation for this excellent initiative and at the same time pay tribute to the active contributors to food security. It is a pleasure and honour for me to open this side event on "Rural Women: Crucial partners in the fight against hunger and poverty".

On Monday in my address to the plenary, I was particularly pleased to report on the substantial progress made in my country to increase food production and ensure food availability. These achievements have been made in six years, thanks to the well-focused objectives aiming at intensifying agriculture by the use of productive inputs such as fertilisers, high-yield seeds and technology, with the active participation of the rural population, notably the women.

There is now consensus that women’s role in the sustainable development of rural areas is crucial and that they, therefore, need and deserve all the resources and means to enable them to participate fully in that process. Traditionally a woman’s value in rural Rwandan society was related to her status as wife, mother, and provider of the family; in other words, to her household and procreative functions. But we know that our rural women can do a lot more than that; and we in Rwanda have not spared any effort to address the needs of our rural women and to engage them in the reconstruction of our country, the reconciliation of our people and the development process.

The situation in Rwanda after the 1994 genocide is that women represent 54% of the whole population, and most of them live in the rural areas. 35% of all the households are headed by women. These women have had to take on new roles and responsibilities out of sheer necessity, and they have had to develop

¹ The text of this speech is a copy of HE Kagame’s written manuscript. Minor editing for consistency and grammar has been done.
new skills. Because women constitute the majority of the adult working population in Rwanda, they are central to economic development and reconstruction.

It is important to note that over 90% of Rwandans live in rural areas, and that agriculture contributes over 40% of the Rwandan economy. It is also noteworthy that the bulk of the country's total agricultural output is attributed to women. Generally speaking, women now shoulder a greater burden of economic activity in Rwanda. Consequently, rural women are the main agents of reconstruction in Rwanda today. There is, therefore, no doubt that they are the crucial partners in the fight against hunger and poverty, now and in the foreseeable future. This is why any consideration of Rwanda's future must take into consideration the special needs of the rural women and their contribution to fighting hunger and poverty.

The Government of Rwanda has made significant strides in promoting equal rights and opportunities for women in the last six years. Several efforts have been deployed to ensure gender equality and empowerment of women so that they participate in the development process.

These include:

• Involvement of Rwandan women as key players in the drafting of Rwanda’s new constitution, so that they put in place a gender-sensitive mechanism that will rectify the imbalance that has traditionally penalised women.
• Creation of women committees at the various administrative levels (cell, sector, district province and country). These grassroots structures consist of 10 women who are elected in women-only elections to represent women’s concerns at each level of government.
• Amendment of discriminatory customary laws and promulgation of new laws, notably the law on matrimonial regime and inheritance.
• Economic promotion of women through self-promotion funds and other forms of financial support created in local rural areas.
• General mobilisation of the population geared towards sensitising all Rwandans about the important role women can play.

All these measures are intended to advance the situation of women in general and that of rural women in particular. Rural women need to continually be empowered and enabled to participate in policy-making and in decision-making at all levels of society. Although women in Rwanda face peculiar difficulties, the situation in other developing countries is not substantially different. Generally speaking, the rural women bear the brunt of underdevelopment. They are engaged in agricultural production that is not part of the market economy.

In the present day and age, we must recognise the fact that women should have the:

• Right to land
• Access to credit
• Right to share the benefits of agricultural output
• Right to education and various training programmes that enhance women’s personal development
• Right to inherit property
• Equal rights to participate in local government (within the context of decentralisation) to influence policy change that takes rural women’s special circumstances into account.

These are policy issues that any Government which values the development of its people should, and must implement. In short, rural women must be nothing less than equal partners in the fight against poverty.

Another major issue that we must all address, as a matter of urgency, is the change in attitude.
A sensitisation campaign to all stakeholders: Government, private sector, civil society, women and men, is necessary. However, to be successful, it should be the duty and obligation of Government to provide leadership in this change of attitude.

In opening this side event, I have felt compelled to share with you the above reflections as the leader of a country where women have played a key and invaluable role in the rehabilitation process. You can count on me as a supporter and advocate of the cause of rural women. I am personally convinced that the fight against hunger and poverty needs the full participation of all, men and women alike, enjoying the same rights and provided with the same opportunities. To me those are the prerequisites of an equitable and sustainable socio-economic development.

Rural women are not only crucial partners in the fight against hunger and poverty but they are the major partners in the overall development process, especially if we are serious about reducing the poverty level by half by 2015."

Comment from Winberg:
“It is important that you are here. This is also a message saying that leaders must in a better way highlight the crucial role of women. And you are a very good model.”

Welcoming remarks

David Harcharik, Deputy Director-General of FAO

“Hunger and poverty are enemies of human dignity; and women are the primary victims of hunger and poverty. Yet women are also crucial partners in finding sustainable solutions to these twin scourges. Without women, the target we all set in 1996 to halve the number of hungry in the world by 2015 will not only remain elusive; it will become impossible to attain. It is time to move beyond considering gender equality as a women's issue – it is time to think about humanity, justice and development. This being so, it is both ethically and economically imperative that women participate fully in development and receive an equal share of the opportunities, resources and benefits associated with it. This morning's session has been organized by FAO, with the generous support of the Government of Sweden, to promote true partnership with rural women farmers and entrepreneurs to achieve food security and sustainable development for all.

According to an old Chinese proverb, “women hold up half the sky”. In the battle against hunger and poverty, women, and especially rural women, most certainly hold up the heavier half. While many of you, especially those from industrialised countries, may still picture a man on a tractor when you think of a farmer, in most low-income food-deficit countries, where agriculture is less mechanised, the majority of food producers are women, and they are not sitting on tractors. In Sub-Saharan Africa, women produce up to 80 percent of basic foodstuffs, both for household consumption and for sale. It is estimated that 78 percent of India's economically active women are involved in agriculture, 35 percent as cultivators and 43 percent as labourers. They are tirelessly fighting the battle for household food

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2 The text of this speech is a copy of Mr Harcharik’s written manuscript.
security on increasingly marginal land, and with meagre resources. Often, their time, energy, and simple hand tools are their only assets.

During the past decades, gender gaps in political and economic life have been reduced at a pace unprecedented in history in most parts of the world. However, progress for women and girls living in rural areas in the poorer countries has been slow and poor. In a rural context, hunger and poverty are usually consequences of limited access to, and control of, natural resources and related services. For example, women own only about one percent of all land, while accounting for the lion’s share of small-scale food production. Studies carried out by FAO in the early 1990s concluded that only about 5 percent of services provided by agricultural extension workers reached women farmers, although they constituted the majority of food producers in many developing countries. In addition, the studies revealed that the majority of those living in absolute poverty were women.

To strengthen our partnership with rural women, one of the vital challenges will be to support their continued empowerment. This is viewed as a necessary catalyst to ensure that they can fulfil their potential and participate on an equal footing with men in the formulation and implementation of agriculture and rural development policies and programmes.

Several instruments for bringing about this change are already available. In 1979, the international community reached a milestone with the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which contains important legally-binding provisions in support of women in agriculture. I note that most FAO member countries have adhered to this Convention, and I take this opportunity to invite these countries to ensure that the provisions of the Convention are implemented fully.

The 1996 World Food Summit Declaration and Plan of Action also include important commitments for the advancement of rural women, and for gender equality and equity in the agricultural and rural development sector. FAO has expressed these commitments in its Gender and Development Plan of Action (2002-2007), which was unanimously endorsed by the FAO Conference, in November last year. One of the key objectives and priority areas for action in the Plan is to eliminate persisting gender inequalities in access to natural resources. This has also been a key demand of the major stakeholder groups involved in the preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), which will take place in Johannesburg in August this year.

Food for all is an ambitious goal, but it is not an impossible dream. The targets set in 1996 can still be met. What we need now is political will and resources to implement fully the commitments already undertaken.

Effective implementation also requires broad-based partnerships with diverse stakeholders, united by the common objective of improving food security for all. FAO’s partnership portfolio is continuously expanding. I should like to thank all of you who, in your various capacities, have distinguished yourselves through your commitment, dedication and energy in the work for, and with, rural women. Your presence here today is appreciated and will certainly enrich the discussions and further strengthen partnerships in support of women farmers.

Where there is a will, there is a way. We are certain that the mobilization of political will, coupled with the needed human and financial resources will show that the battle against hunger can be won and human dignity restored in all corners of this globe.

This time, the road leads from Rome. Johannesburg will be another stop on the way. In the end, rural women and girls, but also men and boys, will enjoy the benefits of food security and sustainable development. Thank you all for being here. I wish you an energizing and fruitful meeting.”
Margareta Winberg, Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Sweden

"On behalf of the Swedish government, who is co-arranging this side event together with FAO, let me wish you a warm welcome to this seminar. Women are the poorest of the poor. All over the world women pay a high price for the gender inequalities that can be found in all countries and cultures. This is a paradox, because if women were to have equal rights to men and if they were not discriminated against, women would be able to help themselves, their families and their communities to move out of poverty. I think many here today are familiar with the saying that “educate a man and you help him, educate a woman and you help a family”. Gender equality is thus both a goal in itself – and a means to combat poverty, strengthen democracy and increase implementation of human rights.

The purpose of today’s seminar is to highlight the vital roles that rural women play in agriculture, rural development and the fight against hunger and poverty – roles that much too often have been neglected. Men often prepare the soil but women sow, weed, harvest, preserve, store, cook and feed. In most developing countries women produce between 60 and 80 per cent of the food according to the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations 6/2002/9.

We also need to acknowledge that in many countries, women are the ones to eat least and last in families. They are thus subject to hunger more than men to an extent that we still need to assess.

Furthermore, difficulties that influence the lives of poor people usually have worse effects on women than on men. HIV/AIDS clearly illustrates this. Because women often lack sexual rights, they have little possibility, both for economic and cultural reasons, to say no to unwanted or unsafe sex. It is also the burden of the woman to care for those who are sick – and for her when she is ill. A study from Tanzania shows that the time women spend in agriculture is reduced by sixty percent when their husbands fall ill. With fewer members of the family fit to participate in agriculture, only what is needed for day-to-day survival is cultivated. This may lead to increased poverty, less varied cultivation and deterioration in soil quality as well as in nutritional value of the food. Already poor families have to use all available resources, be it time, money or other assets such as livestock, to supply and pay for treatment, care and – eventually funeral costs.

Action against gender-based discrimination will enhance poverty eradication. Poverty reduction, establishing food security and promoting gender equality must be seen as one coherent undertaking. This has, so far, not been the case. Let us send a clear message from this seminar and this summit to all other decision makers, to the delegates of the Johannesburg summit later this summer and to the international community that gender equality is a prerequisite for the eradication of poverty and hunger and for promoting growth and a sustainable development for all, particularly in three crucial areas: to increase women’s access to participation in decision making, to ensure access to resources on equal terms with men, including land rights and to provide women with adequate health, including reproductive and sexual rights. Thank you".

3 The text of this speech is a copy of Ms Winberg’s written manuscript. Minor editing for consistency and grammar has been done.
Narend Singh, Provincial Minister, Department of Agriculture and Environmental Affairs, South Africa

“It is important to remind ourselves of the objective of this event, which is to gain visibility, recognition and support for the role and contributions of rural women in achieving the targets of the World Food Summit of 1996. The purpose is to mobilize increased political will and resources for removing persisting gender inequalities, with a specific focus on the access to, control over, and sharing of the benefits from natural resources and related services. It is hoped that the event will produce a strong message in support of rural women, from FAO and its constituency gathered in Rome, which will be transmitted to the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg 26 August to 4 September.

In South Africa we have taken many actions to strengthen the role of rural women, in political as well as in productive areas. For South Africa it has been important not only to pay lip service with regard to gender equality. South Africa has a strong focus on women’s human rights, and has a gender commission, a gender budget and a quota system indicating that one-third of the political representatives must be women. Women hold six of the Ministerial offices in the South African Government, like the Ministers of foreign affairs, housing, mining, and also the Minister of intelligence is a woman.

South Africa can show similar statistics as in Rwanda. During the Apartheid era, men migrated from the rural areas to work at the industries situated in urban areas, and women were staying behind in their homestead where they were responsible for taking care of the children, providing food on the table, and carrying out other necessary chores that usually required both parents. Women are also considered to be the main agents in the reconstruction of South Africa in the post-Apartheid era, as they are in Rwanda.

Women should move beyond the subsistence level, and women’s transition into the cash economy should be facilitated. There are many progressive programmes being implemented in South Africa, targeting women in their roles as entrepreneurs of agribusinesses. Awareness is created through programmes like for example “Female farmer of the year”, where female farmers are participating in different categories, like subsistence farming, middle income farmers, and farmers producing cash crops. To build institutional capacity at farmer union level is crucial. Women are being encouraged to play an integral and important role in these institutions, so that they can influence them more directly. South Africa also wants to make sure that women constitute at least one third of the beneficiaries of the land reform.

The Government is aiming at more than food security. The Government is actively involved in integrated development, which includes education, health and environmental concerns.”

Comment from Winberg: “I am glad to hear about what you are doing in South Africa. All leaders coming to Johannesburg should be able to see what you are doing and learn from you.”

4 The text of this speech by Mr Sing has been reconstructed from the minutes taken during the side event.
FAO and Rural Women: Partners in the fight against hunger and poverty, Sissel Ekaas, Director, Gender and Population Division, FAO

“It is with great pleasure that I in my capacity as Director of the Gender and Population Division here in FAO join the Deputy Director General in welcoming you to this side event on the theme Rural women: partners in the fight against hunger and poverty.

The Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action adopted at the World Food Summit in 1996 recognized the important role that rural women, as producers and consumers, play in assuring food security and reflected this to some extent in all its seven commitments. For example, Commitments 1 and 2 underline the importance of equality of access for all to productive resources such as land, inputs, improved seeds and plants, appropriate technologies and farm credit. The fact that both women and men are farmers, as well as users and preservers of natural resources was recognized already back in 1979; when the UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

While all the provisions of the Convention should apply equally to all women, whether they live in rural or urban areas, Article 14 on Rural Women is of specific interest to us. This Article stresses the importance of ensuring equal access to resources including land and credit, for both rural women and men, as well as their equal participation in, and sharing in the benefits of, sustainable development.

Numerous international conventions have been developed to protect the planet’s natural resources. Some more recent conventions are:

- Convention on Biological Diversity (1992)
- Convention to Combat Desertification (1994)
- International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, which was adopted by the FAO Conference, on 3 November 2001.

The recently adopted international conventions developed to protect the planet’s natural resources do acknowledge the value of local knowledge and participation of communities. However, the specific knowledge, contribution and role of rural men and women respectively to sustainable management of natural resources is inadequately understood and recognized.

So, why are we then today focusing specifically on women as farmers? Because, despite CEDAW and the Rome Declaration and Plan of Action, the fact that women are farmers and the principal food producers in most low income countries with a food deficit continues to be ignored by policy makers, legislators and investors. The result is an immense waste of human potential and resources. For example,

5 The text of this speech is a copy of Ms Ekaas’ written manuscript.
in Latin America women produce some 40% of staple foods and between 60-80% in Asia and Africa. (IPGRI, Gene flow 2001) Women also provide a significant part of agricultural labour for other crops in the developing world. Nevertheless, rural women still do not enjoy equal access with men to natural resources. Additional efforts have to be made to remove persisting gender inequalities and obstacles to men’s and women’s equal and active participation in agriculture and sustainable management of natural resources.

Let me briefly explain some of the actions FAO has undertaken to support its member countries in this area, with a view to increasing food security for all and in emphasizing especially the importance of understanding the gender division of labour and responsibilities in a given socio-cultural context and therefore the different needs and interests of women and men farmers.

In November 2001, during the last FAO Conference, the Gender and Development Plan of Action (2002-2007) was endorsed. The plan emphasizes that a transformed partnership, based on the principle of equality between women and men, is an essential condition for people-centered, gender-sensitive and sustainable agricultural and rural development.

The Gender and Development Plan of Action is the framework for FAO to promote gender equality and integrate a gender perspective in all major activity areas of FAO. In pursuit of FAO’s mandate to help build a food-secure world, the Plan specifically aims at promoting gender equality in access to productive resources such as: natural resources, agricultural support services, decision-making, technologies and employment opportunities.

The Plan is organization-wide and is implemented by 24 technical divisions of FAO. Each division has reviewed its own Medium-Term Plan for 2002-2007, selected gender sensitive indicators, designated one or more gender focal points and made commitments to promote gender equality in their activities in four priority areas. The four priority areas are: food and nutrition; agricultural support systems; agricultural and rural development policy and planning; and natural resources.

All of these are equally important, but given our focus here today, let us pick natural resources as one of the four priority areas and have a closer look at land, water and agro-biodiversity resources. Land and water resources form the basis of all farming systems. Their preservation and sustainable use is crucial to food production. Privatization, population pressure and the dissolution of customary land tenure systems have reduced the amount and quality of land available to rural communities. Women’s ability to use scarce land and water resources sustainably is undermined by these processes. Also, women’s inferior or insecure rights to inherit land and property are becoming an acute issue in rural communities heavily affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

In many countries women have home gardens where they keep a multitude of different plant varieties. A recent study found about 230 different plant species in 60 home gardens in an Asian village, with each garden containing between 15 and 60 species. (IPGRI Gene Flow 2001) Women as well as men are custodians of local knowledge, and often responsible for seed management. However, this local knowledge is sometimes neglected and, as a result, local plant varieties of crucial value for present and future food supply are lost at an alarming rate.

How does FAO address these challenges?

- FAO develops gender-sensitive guidelines and training material, for instance on how to increase women’s participation in water users’ associations and in on-farm water management.
- FAO strengthens institutions of the member countries, while providing training and capacity-building in socio-economic and gender analysis.
- FAO also develops gender responsive policy advisory material for different institutions. For instance, the fact sheet on gender and land issues.
- With the help of gender disaggregated data and gender sensitive indicators field projects have tools to identify needs better and to measure change processes.
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- FAO builds partnerships with different institutions in member countries. For example: The LinKS project in Eastern and Southern Africa provides a framework of support to project partners working in the field of gender, agro-biodiversity and rural farmers local knowledge systems.

The objective of this side event today is to:

- Increase the visibility and recognition of the key role that rural women play in the fight against hunger and poverty;
- Mobilize political will and resources to reaffirm and implement gender-related commitments made in 1996;
- Focus on the links between agriculture and environment in the fight against hunger and poverty from a gender perspective, and thereby link the agendas of the World Food Summit and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg.

Let us work together to formulate a strong and clear message from today’s meeting which we can send to the Summit in Johannesburg and to important events beyond Johannesburg, to support all stakeholders in their efforts to strengthen the status of rural women and farmers and promote gender equality in agriculture and rural development to the benefit of all people”.

Comment from Winberg: “Thank you and we appreciate what FAO is doing in terms of gender equality, and this is much thanks to you.”

Linking Gender, Food Security and the Environment, Rosalina Tuyuc Velásquez, CONAVIGUA, Guatemala

Rosalina Tuyuc Velásquez is the founder and coordinator of the National Coordinator of Widows in Guatemala (CONAVIGUA) - a grassroots organization founded to help the thousands of women, and their families, who lost their husbands during the 36-year civil war. Through CONAVIGUA human rights issues have been brought to the forefront of political debate in Guatemala, and the voices of Guatemala’s women and indigenous majority have been put in the country’s political agenda. Ms Tuyuc has committed herself tirelessly to the search for justice and in defence of women and indigenous peoples’ rights. Ms Tuyuc has been an active spokesperson on several issues crucial to women’s rights, especially those for women threatened with violence and human rights abuses, such as the discrimination of indigenous women and their lack of justice. Other important goals in her struggle have been the fight against impunity and militarization. Moreover, Ms Tuyuc has held posts in women associations and trade unions. She has also contributed to create crucial spaces for women organizations and civil society in decision-making processes, also as one of the first Guatemalan women to sit in Congress. During her practise as a Congress Deputy, she also served as Third Vice-president in the Congress of the Republic of Guatemala. She has also been a key personality in the accomplishment of the Guatemalan Peace Agreements. Ms Tuyuc has been awarded several prizes for her fight in favour of women and indigenous people, and has won both national and international awards in Spain, Japan, France and USA.

“In order to guarantee the achievement of food security, it is necessary to combat the current disparities, since there are a lot of people who get sick or die because they eat a lot, and on the other hand there are millions who die because they do not have enough food”.

6 The text of this speech is based on the translation from Spanish to English of Ms Tuyuc’s written manuscript. Minor editing for consistency and grammar has been done.
A fraternal greeting to all of you. I would like to thank you for inviting me to share our thoughts on GENDER, FOOD SECURITY AND THE ENVIRONMENT.

I represent an indigenous Organization of Mayan women and survivor women from the genocide that occurred in Guatemala. Our husbands, fathers and relatives were kidnapped, tortured, missing and abandoned in clandestine cemeteries. We are women who have suffered discrimination, poverty and, in many cases, even extreme poverty. In my country’s history there has not been a government interested in investing in women in general, nor in rural women, in particular. We were also considered women unable to contribute to development because we had no access to formal education.

We rural women are the crucial force for human development, despite the fact that public policies have not guaranteed us subsistence, nutrition, health, and just salaries. Our permanent contribution to our household, culture, society, and country has never been valued, nor even recognized.

In Guatemala more than 50% of the population is female, and we struggle to eliminate the huge differences between men and women. Our contribution has been continuous and is characterized by concrete proposals and demands to use and to have access to land and tenure security. We have also demanded access to economic resources to support projects for women in order to achieve food security for us, our sons and our daughters.

**Gender**

We need to understand gender as equal rights for men and women, which means eliminating "machismo", exclusion and imposition, and conceding more spaces of control, management and leadership.

Many people associate gender only with women. Nevertheless we understand that it is also talking about shared responsibilities, work and projects with a consideration of both men and women. If we understand gender in this way, we could share a new future vision with equal opportunities and rights.

Gender means that women have to claim their rights that have been denied to them historically both in legal and practical terms. And here we are discussing how to promote the implementation of the agreements related to the elimination of the inequalities in the use of, access to and control over natural resources.

Nowadays, we are asking for more opportunities to formulate, develop and manage programs that benefit women, and this means that men have to concede more spaces to women. A lot of men think that women are not prepared; nevertheless, we can say that in practice women have demonstrated capacity, honesty, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness in implementing different activities.

I know that there have been some changes in gender issues and that the concept is creating awareness and changing minds, but we need to move further to achieve equality. For many men, it is still hard to understand that gender does not mean women, and that gender is not only a woman’s issue. In this regard it is important to highlight the permanent work of thousands of women all over the world and their effort in formulating concrete proposals to eliminate current disparities. Our governments have signed important agreements and conventions. If there were political will to implement them, the development and benefits to women would also be a step towards combating the problems we face in different parts of the world.

If we want to talk about gender, we need to start promoting policies that benefit women, and this does not mean that women just have to be mentioned in programs and projects. To include effectively women in those programs and projects, it is necessary that women fully participate and benefit from development activities. We do not want women suffering hunger; we do not want malnourished women; we want to be builders, and we want to transform our lives with gender equality and equity. Women will continue to promote and pursue a better future.
Poverty, exclusion and hunger are a shame for governments that have never thought of the welfare of their societies. But this new millennium cannot go by without the participation and leadership of women. We are women who have even risked our lives, and we are convinced that the development policies are not going to change without our participation, our work, our dedication.

Women and men need to help each other and be more organized to change inequalities between rich and poor people. Struggling against gender inequality is fundamental to achieve sustainable development, since not only men but also women have made important contributions to the development of our countries.

**Food security**

This issue is about satisfying hunger. It is widely recognized that food insecurity affects particularly women and children. In addition, women face social exclusion and mistrust. In Guatemala, as in many other Latin American countries, the percentage of female-headed households is increasing as a result of armed conflicts, abandonment and single motherhood. We have a lot of widows as a consequence of violence. Those women live without any support from governments, institutions or donor agencies.

Rural women are therefore often illiterate, malnourished; they do not have a decent house, nor access to resources and receive inadequate salaries for their work. In some communities a number of public and private institutions have implemented projects for women; nevertheless, in some cases, women were not able to repay loans to banks and other credit institutions and so have lost all their personal belongings. They are desperate because they do not have any collateral for repayment of loans.

Women in rural areas, with their hands, produce vegetables and fruits. They are involved in all areas of crop production from seed selection to planting, harvest, storage, processing and marketing. Nonetheless, they face limitations in accessing markets and obtaining just prices for their products and services. Women are responsible for providing food for their families and they also have to guarantee their wellbeing. Moreover, some women farmers face risks in some work places because they are in contact with insecticides and other hazardous products which threaten their health.

Many of you know that Guatemala is one of the poorest countries in Latin America and most of its inhabitants live in extreme poverty. A lot of women, boys and girls die of hunger and malnutrition. This situation affects especially people who live in rural areas and indigenous groups.

But this is not just in Guatemala where boys, girls and women die of hunger. This happens in many Latin American countries where external debt impoverishes poor people and where some governments exacerbate even more the situation by plundering national resources.

Food insecurity, hunger and malnutrition affect the more vulnerable groups, particularly indigenous peoples and women. The situation of indigenous peoples is particularly serious where starvation is widespread. This situation could change if governments and donors were willing to support and invest in women’s projects in order to guarantee adequate food supply.

**The environment**

I have to say that the contribution of rural women to the preservation of the environment stems from our culture, our respect for the earth, for our mother nature. In the history of indigenous peoples, this special consideration for the natural environment has been the cornerstone of the equilibrium among men, women, God and nature. Based on that, thousands of women produce, provide and prepare food for their families based on the relationship and respect for the environment.

Rural women and indigenous groups develop their activities in a sustainable way, although often they have been accused of the depletion of natural resources. They do not know that we have a deep respect for the environment and this means respect for our Mother Nature, for the air, water, sun, moon, rivers, animals and plants.
Women plant and cultivate according to the moon cycle. With our hands we produce and guarantee food for our households and communities, although this effort is not sufficient to achieve food security. Our lands do not produce enough to meet our needs; but better lands are not cultivated, since they are in the hands of people who do not work on them. Our lands are exhausted or even overexploited, but we are aware of our responsibilities in the preservation of our environment.

Unfortunately, technology, globalization and neo-liberal programmes are depleting our scarce resources. We have seen that in the name of development, our environment, our communities and our cultures have been polluted and destroyed.

We are not against development; we are only requesting that development programs guarantee harmony with the environment and respect for our cultures. If these issues are at the root of development policies, then our communities will overcome poverty and underdevelopment, and our environment will provide all the resources necessary to sustain human life.

The harmonious relationship between human beings and the environment depends on ourselves.

Finally, I would like to tell you that I wish there were agreements signed by governments, institutions and civil societies to consider and recognize the contribution of women and indigenous people to food security. I would also like to share with you the following reflections:

1) It is necessary to guarantee food for women who feed babies because they generate life, and this is food security.

2) It is right to ask rich countries to avoid producing food for animals, because I believe it is worthy to give that food to poor men, women and children who die of hunger.

3) It is important to request an agreement to preserve our earth, because it is our mother, our life and a guarantee for producing safe food. We do not have to see the land just as a means of trade and wealth for a few people. We should recognize the equal rights of men and women to access the land, water and our other resources.

4) It is necessary to respect the right to produce according to our traditions and cultures. But it is also important to recognize that we face problems on how to use and conserve natural resources. If you want to produce food, you need land and money, and poor people do not have money and land. Since we do not have money and land, we cannot produce food nor generate income. If we do not generate income, we do not eat. The result is a vicious circle of hunger and poverty.

5) In this new millennium it is urgent to call for the right to self determination of peoples, in order to define the best way to use and conserve natural resources to achieve food security and sovereignty.

6) In order to guarantee the achievement of food security, it is necessary to combat the current disparities, since there are a lot of people who get sick or die because they eat a lot, and on the other hand there are millions who die because they do not have enough food.
Creating the Future: building on the present,
Vandana Shiva, Research Foundation for Science,
Technology and Ecology, India

20 years ago, Vandana Shiva, founder of the Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology in India, aimed to safeguard and conserve biodiversity and develop alternatives to centralized systems of monoculture in forestry, agriculture, and fisheries. Since then, she has continued to address the most significant ecological and social issues of our times, both as a researcher, activist, and writer. Originally trained as a Physicist, Dr. Shiva's academic and research contributions have increasingly focused on the crossroads between women's and human rights and ecology. Her thinking is captured in numerous books and articles, and most recently in the widely distributed book Water Wars.

What stands out in particular with Dr. Shiva's engagement is the strong link between research and action. She has set up educational centres, worked with farmers to explain trade-related intellectual property rights (TRIPS), and founded several organizations and movements to protect biological diversity; and campaigned world-wide against genetic engineering. Dr. Shiva has also served as an adviser to governments in India and abroad as well as NGOs such as the International Forum on Globalisation, Women's Environment and Development Organisation and Third World Network. Dr. Shiva has received many international and national awards, including the 1993 Alternative Nobel Prize (Right Livelihood Award). She has also been awarded by the A SIA W E E K Magazine as one of the top five most powerful persons in Asia, and she has been recognised as one of the 50 most powerful ecologists of our times.

"I want to congratulate the Gender and Population Division for joining up with the Swedish Government to take this initiative. I was just thinking what kind of declaration would have come out, if it had been left to a room like this.

My personal life was changed dramatically by working with and fighting with rural women in the high Himalaya to defend the natural forests during the early days of the Chipko movement, which was the movement of women coming out to embrace the trees, saying these are our lives - without our forests our livelihoods and our lives' securities are destroyed. If I have given up the practice of physics and my passion and obsession with quantum theory, it is because rural women became my teachers, they became my leaders. That is why I personally get a little restless, when we always talk of rural women as women needing patronage. I think it is time we started to recognize that they are the reservoirs of the knowledge, the ethics, the politics and the economics that are needed for the future.

"We always talk of rural women as women needing patronage. I think it is time we started to recognize that they are the reservoirs of the knowledge, the ethics, the politics and the economics that are needed for the future."

"We had the President of Rwanda, from a society that went through one of the worst genocides - but every society is on the verge of genocide, my own country, one of the centres of compassionate faiths - it gifted compassion to the world, is in the bowl of violence. I think some of this violence is linked to the way we have created political, economic, technological systems that did not take guidance from women in general and rural women in particular. We would have built very different systems and we need to build those different systems because

3 The text of Ms Vandana's speech has been reconstructed from recordings made of the session. Minor editing for consistency and grammar was done.
we do not move on a very fast track to shift gears. The very survival of our species, I think, is at stake.

We are here for the Food Summit, five years after, and the discussion continues about feeding the world, but I think it is time to take stock of who really feeds the world. I think one and a half decades ago I did a report for the FAO on how most farmers of the world and in India are women. Women are not only more in number; they produce more, using fewer resources. We are in a period where we have to address the triple crises of a shrinking resource base, higher levels of people excluded from rights and larger numbers on this planet and that is why we have growing hunger. As a scientist, I know if you have got to stretch fewer resources further, you start to use fewer resources to produce more.

All our technological systems that have been evolved in the last twenty to thirty years, for food and farming, have been systems that have been brilliant at wasting natural resources, wasting people, while creating a tremendous economy for poisons and fossil fuels and everything else. We have been smart at creating technologies that are a threat to the planet and displace people.

I have done studies linking the dispensability of rural women to some of these technologies. In India you can just do a map and do an overlay of the regions where there is the highest practice of female foeticide, and you can have a one to one correlation with the highest utilization of technologies that dispense with women; that do not recognize their contribution to farming or their knowledge of alternative systems of farming. In these last 15 years, as I learn and work with rural women in India, I have learnt one thing, that the only way the world will be fed is if our biodiversity is preserved; not only because it is necessary for ecological security, but, in fact, it is the only way to produce more food.

One reason we did not see that is because of what I have called ‘monocultures of the mind’. You can reduce the base of the world food supply to two or three crops. It used to be wheat and rice and corn, now it is becoming Soya bean - it is like without Soya bean we can not survive. But this displacement of the hundreds and thousands of crop species in thousands of varieties is actually shrinking our output per acre and increasing the resource input per acre. We are creating water stress; we are creating land stress and we are destroying our biodiversity because we adopted, what I call, patriarchal categories of assessing “more”. Women’s assessment of what is “more” is closer to the ground. It is closer to figuring out how to stretch that little, half acre, one acre of land, how to stretch every plant that grows in companionship.

Women’s models of agriculture are based on maximising biodiversity intensification, not chemical intensification, and through biodiversity intensification so much of the data that is available has been generated by the FAO itself: how small biodiverse farms produce thousands of times more food than large, industrial monocultures. In Java, small farmers cultivate 607 species in their home gardens with an overall species diversity comparable to natural deciduous forests in the tropics. In the Chiapas the entire agriculture system was destroyed because they said their corn production was too little, but women in the Chiapas do not just produce corn; they grow squashes and fruits and, per acre, 20 tons of food is produced in the amazing biodiversity of the small farms, where women’s knowledge is the main input.

For me personally, I sometimes find it amusing, it is like a joke being played on women and humanity. The golden rice story is my favourite. Golden rice has been much discussed here. It is actually one of the examples of why the declaration, that has come out of this Summit, is so heavy in putting its hopes on bio-technology. I notice there is not one word in the declaration, not once has biodiversity been mentioned. Now biodiversity is not raw nature. Biodiversity is
women’s knowledge, embodied in the species that grow on our farms, in our forests, in our rivers and, there is no biodiversity that is not embodied cultural diversity, embodied knowledge. But just as women are turned into the second sex – into raw material – their knowledge is turned into raw material, or ignored. Now, Indian women use about 250 kinds of greens, some of them producing 14,000 micrograms per 100 grams of food. I have just done a collection through the movement we have built called Navdanya of a Red Rice in the high Himalaya - much more iron and huge quantities of beta-carotene (vitamin A). Women’s knowledge has already given us the vitamin A that billions of dollars of expenditure will put into rice for creating Golden Rice. It is because there is a possibility to shut out that knowledge, along with the shutting out of the biodiversity, it becomes possible to then think of Golden Rice and biotechnology and the corporate monopolies that go with it, as the only way that the world will be fed.

The declaration has talked about being committed to study, share and facilitate the responsible use of bio-technology in addressing development needs. It would be wonderful if the divisions here, working on sustainability and on gender, would undertake a serious study of the nutritional value of new varieties as compared to that of local and traditional agro-biodiversity managed by women farmers8. We would then basically have an honest base of where we are really gaining when we say we have got a new way of providing vitamins to the poor of the third world. This honest study also needs to be done in partnership with the risks that go with some of the new technologies: risks of genetic pollution in the homeland of corn in the Mexico, risks of contamination of our food, the big Starlink scandal in the United States, where cattle-feed could not be separated from the human food chain in corn, and as we move into the next generation of genetic engineering, with vaccines built into it, with “contraceptive corn”. Can you imagine “contraceptive corn” escaping through genetic pollution? We will have sterilization on a large scale when we did not intend to.

There are two related issues when we become blind to women’s knowledge and biodiversity that is the embodiment of that knowledge. The first is new property rights’ regimes. So much has been said about increasing women’s access to resources. Usually that discussion stops with land. Sometimes it goes on to water. But we often forget there are new property rights being created to biodiversity, to genetic resources through intellectual property rights - through the trade-related intellectual property rights. The movement that I am part of, which is called ‘Diverse women for Diversity’ has a very clear sense of where we need to go in the future, in terms of the review of some of these assumptions that are embodied in TRIPS. I really read TRIPS as a patriarchal document that suffers the patriarchal illusion of invention through contact. The false claim to invention then leads to ownership of life, piracy of indigenous knowledge, and the denial of the very women who have done the collective, cumulative innovation over centuries, to the resources that they have shaped and used and gifted for future generations.

We believe biodiversity is a gift of nature. We have used our biodiversity and knowledge co-operating with other life forms. We have created and sustained the basic knowledge which meets our societies’ need for food, health, clothing and shelter. Our knowledge is now being pirated and locked up in patents. Our relationship with the earth and all its beings is ruptured and poisoned. Our community rights are being destroyed. Biodiversity, deprived of its local roots and rights, is being turned into a commodity. In the face of corporate take-over, such defence and recreation of community rights require solidarity, co-operation between people and

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8 This sentence has been reformulated to capture general meaning of proposal made as exact wording was not understandable from audio tape.
between species. We call upon Governments to abolish patents on life and recognize community rights and strengthen the convention on biological diversity for this purpose.

Much has been talked about the road from Rome to Johannesburg. But there is one other stop beyond where some of these incomplete agendas will need to be carried. Next year will be the next ministerial of the World Trade Organization in Cancun, in Mexico and I think there are three major issues in the W.T.O. that need to be revisited from a gender perspective. The first are paradigms of technology and I think we need to have far more input from women, especially rural women, about really productive technologies, technologies that minimize vulnerability and risk, while producing more for human need. We also need to revisit property rights in life. We need to revisit the trade system and the trade paradigm itself, because it’s a trade system that privileges corporations, while more and more women and children are pushed to deep marginalization.

I have visited villages in India in the last two or three years, as food scarcity has started to hit areas where there never was food scarcity, partly because of the kind of terms of trade, between rural and urban areas, between food and inputs. In so many places there are homes, where women have been sold, where children have been sold. There are regions in India where farmers are committing suicide, because the costs of production have risen so high. New seeds, pesticides and herbicides are creating such deep debt for farmers, that farmers drink the poison to commit suicide, sell themselves, sell their kidneys, sell their children, and sell their wives. A lot of the sexual trafficking around the world is related to a deep economic crisis, an economic crisis in which we do look at the incomes, but we do not look at the cost. We do not look at the cost that nature paid, the price that women paid, the price that households paid.

Minister Winberg talked about women eating last and least. We’ve built an economy in which women are the remainder. I think we need to build an economy and change the terms of trade, so that food security centred on women and households becomes the design for the global economy and markets get the leftovers, global markets get the remainder – not the women. We need to turn things around and this needs to be turned around particularly because, as the cover story of Terra Viva today talks, we have now got an even more asymmetric world order in which 20 billion U.S. dollars of subsidies will distort prices further, undercut women’s labour and its value, wipe women out as producers, as artificially cheap commodities are dumped on third world societies, and wipe out the possibility of women shaping the future on the basis of sustainability, on the basis of sharing and on the basis of looking forward, not just to the next generation, but looking forward all the way to the seventh generation as is the ethics in my society and in the indigenous societies in the Americas.

That seventh generation logic, based on serious sustainability, is the road from Rome to Johannesburg and beyond and being part of a movement, I do get disappointed when leaders do not take their full responsibility. I do get disappointed when, in absentia, they influence outcomes without caring about either the people of the world, the women of the world, or the future generations, but that disappointment does not stop us from building our alternatives, celebrating our lives and celebrating the leadership of rural women. That is the leadership we really need, not the pseudo leadership that is not showing us the way to the future and to a secure world for all.

Thank you."
Open dialogue

1. Stefania Prestigiacomo, Minister of Equal Opportunities, Italy

“The challenge of the Summit in terms of the role of rural women and the fight against hunger means shifting from nice-sounding words to facts and action, and I believe this is the message we have to get across to Johannesburg. The Millennium Declaration and CEDAW are two of the international instruments we have to remove all forms of discrimination women face. There are too many obstacles in the way for women to achieve full participation. Women have difficulties getting access to land and property rights; only men have property rights. Sometimes when a husband dies, his wife who is left behind does not have any rights left. It is very important for women to be helped to overcome these hurdles. Bangladesh has made success based on trust in women, but trust is not enough. Women must be considered as a subject. In Niger, during the difficult war years, we had positive action where women were selected to be educated in educational centres. Women need adequate training, et cetera, to achieve the goal of providing food for the population. If not, under-nourishment and death can be the consequence. War also deprives women and men. We need development strategies to bridge the gulf and discrepancy between women and men. The international community plays a role, and we should enhance productivity of women, and encourage LIFDCs and FAO to focus on right standards and cultural standards, because all this can represent hurdles. A yardstick should also be to remove social and cultural discrimination of women that are obstacles to development. Italy plays a crucial role in southern Mediterranean. Men are immigrating and women are left behind to till the land. We want to encourage all initiatives that put women on our planet on an equal footing.”

2. Kirsten Vaerdal, President of the Norwegian Farmers’ Union

“The key for a successful fight against hunger is organized farmers and farmers’ unions. Unions will enable farmers’ voices to be heard in the society, and they should be involved in strategies. I will as strong as I can give priority to organization building, as my colleague from Guatemala also underlined. I have been the president of IFAP (International Federation of Agricultural Producers) and we want to encourage the collaboration with FAO.”

3. Caroline Trapp, President of the Federation of Swedish Farmers

“I am maybe the second woman to chair a national farmers’ union. The importance of organizing women farmers and their requests for power in society is lacking from the Declaration. The Swedish Farmers’ Union has been successful in many areas, and we can share our experience with other people. As in the food chain, the women farmers or labourers are often the weakest element in the agricultural production chain. This is reflected in the minimum share of the income that they receive. The income does not reach the men and women of the grassroots.”

4. Jeanne Ebanba Boboto, Ministry of Social Affairs, Democratic Republic of Congo

“I have a suggestion on the Message, especially with regard to women. Rural women have to be trained. We are here to talk about how to combat hunger, but in Africa we have warfare which is an underlying cause of poverty. We are fighting against other people and also against hunger. Civil strife does not enhance the struggle against hunger. We must understand that rural women represent a reservoir.”

5. Shawna Shona Larson, Alaska Community Action on Toxics

“Food issues are also affecting us in the Arctic. In Alaska we have food, but toxics contaminate our food, like PCBs and other pesticides that are found in the food web and in ourselves. As indigenous women, we turn to our elders for advice. They tell us they never before saw tumours on the fish and other animals. We are afraid to eat the very foods that have sustained us from the beginning of time. We are concerned about toxics blowing in to us and contaminating our water. Everywhere there is cancer, and not only in us, but also in our animals. Without our culture and traditional food, we are indeed impoverished. We cannot eat indigenous foods, but are pushed to marketed food, containing contaminants as well. I have seen FAO’s logo and I am here to demand healthy and safe food.”

9 The text from the Open dialogue has been reconstructed from the minutes taken during the side event.
6. Lena Klevenås, Swedish Policy Group on Global Food Safety
   “450 million people are waged agricultural workers. The majority of them are women, and they have marginal salaries, often as little as 1 dollar per day. Higher income is needed. Employment is central to the objective of poverty reduction. The waged agricultural workers should be recognized as an important group. The role of waged agricultural workers and their trade unions to global food security must be recognised. A new form of slavery is forming in Europe consisting of illegal immigrants working without decent wages for rich farmers, and they do not have the possibility to organize themselves in unions. The issue of waged agricultural workers, to increase their wages, securing women’s rights and their rights to organize themselves in unions, should be incorporated in the Message or as a separate point.”

7. Paola Ortensi, International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP) and Confederazione Italiana Agricoltori
   “It is true that most people in poor areas are women. We believe that women are the hope to overcome the first hurdle against hunger. Secondly, we need a strongly built bridge between women in industrialized countries and in LIFDCs. We need to network, and even if we are different, there are so much similarity and unity. We are stronger if we work on this together. We believe that many women can become farming business women. It is a man’s world, but women can have a place in it.”

8. Maryam Ammed Moustafa Mousa, Minister plenipotentiary for Agriculture, Egypt
   “Rural women suffer from hunger and underdevelopment twice: first because she lives in a rural area and second because she is a woman. So we ask you to give more place for, and investment to, women in the development plans. Cultural change is urgently needed in order to ensure that all our programmes and process for women development will succeed and not fail. One way of doing this can be through scientific and study programmes for cultural change. Statistics and information about rural women are so poor, so without the power of information and statistics, we as women cannot plan or even change our world. There is an urgent need for legal change, because this is a main obstacle. And after all, we talk about the political dimension and the will for change.”

   “In Niger 95% of the rural women are involved in agricultural production. Agriculture is the most important sector in our country. Women from Niger work in average 16 hours a day. With limited means they achieve miracles. We have serious wind erosion, but women restore areas thanks to their networks and 18 million CFA. I want to congratulate the Italian government who have financed this project. I want to highlight that the battle against food insecurity can not be won without women, and we need to remove some obstacles. We must pay special attention to women’s access and means of production. A written strategy will be delivered to the chair. We must acknowledge the talents of rural women, and they must themselves come and tell other women of their own experiences. This meeting shows women’s talents and role. However, very few rural women are here. Next time more rural women should tell us of their experiences.”

10. Katarina Lindahl, Swedish Association for Sexuality Education
    “This is a discussion of the future and the youth should be mentioned in the message. There is a growing number of child headed households, this is often due to HIV/AIDS. They have limited food production, but they do not know how to do it. It is necessary to support young people, to give them skills for food production, and to support them in sexual reproductive rights so they can protect themselves against HIV/AIDS.”

11. Rae Frampton, International Council of Women (ICW), New Zealand
    “ICW has since 1888 worked to improve women’s rights, nutrition and food security. We urge governments to support the campaign for Food for All. ICW small project fund has provided assistance to many countries, like support to small agricultural and horticulture projects and training projects. ICW made a presentation to the plenary.”

12. Bongiwe Njobe, Director General, National Department of Agriculture, South Africa
    “With respect to the message, I do not think it goes far enough. A lot of the language is historically correct, but new issues have also emerged and new language is therefore needed. Sustainable
development and market access are essential and important issues for women. Agriculture and regional emphasis is in the text, but words like women and men alike should be changed. We can rather say common but differentiated responsibilities between men and women. My second point is that we must show that we have made positive strides. We should elevate examples of success and provide best examples. We will show younger women that it is worth being part of these struggles.”

13. Alagie Kebbeh, President of the National Youth Association for Food Security, Gambia
“I strongly support the need to emphasize the younger generations. Youth is hardly present at this forum. My organization is here as a follow-up of an international youth forum. The bond between the mothers and the youth, and also the young women and youth, should not be forgotten. Rural young women have no right whatsoever in the compound, to ownership, inheritance, marriage, etc. Many therefore feel that they have to deliver a male child in that compound. Young women and youth role models are important. The youth is being marginalised and not listened to.”

14. Julia Valenzuela, Member of the Congress of Peru
“The situation is deteriorating in rural areas. Poverty has increased from 60 to 70% in the last few years, and there are 2 million new poor people in the country. Violence is normally associated with wars. Violence is also pornography with children and trafficking in women and children. Food insecurity is also violence. Women and men should struggle for equality in the legal system, in our homes and in society, states and countries. Peru is struggling, and the rural people are abandoning the rural areas. We want rural women to live satisfactorily on the land. Measures should be taken to help countries to enable a worthy standard of living, including education and prevention.”

15. Pablo Eyzaguirre, International Plant Genetic Resource Institute (IPGRI)
“My institute also believes biodiversity intensification is important. How do we intensify biodiversity? Our experience is to follow the spaces and niches that women create. It may be small crops which have all kinds of names. This biodiversity and these crops are women’s patronage and not ours. The next step is to protect this biodiversity. One of the things we have experienced is that women are worried and ask if we improve the crops, will they then loose control? When IPGRI goes into an area we identify women’s institutions and local institutions where they are in control, and then we can provide and build technology under their patronage. Suggestion to Message from Rome to Johannesburg, point 6: “Local institutions (formal and informal) that women have created to manage resources for livelihoods should be recognised and supported in development actions to enhance food production, biodiversity and quality.”

16. Margotzata Piotrowska, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Poland
“Regulations exist to protect women’s work and these are considered “privileges” of women. Women have family responsibilities and are afraid to loose their jobs, and men are often being hired instead. We have new government ministers of equal status of women and men, but Central and Eastern European countries are not aware of gender equality, and there are few organizations working with women’s rights. There is still a lack of local partner initiatives between NGOs and local government. It is important that local government make sure that women are represented.”

17. Mercy Karanja, Chief Executive, Kenya National Farmers Union
“We have to start from the grassroots, and incorporate women in the system and institutions that have been dominated by men. We must mainstream women into the movements to be partners in development and decision-makers. We must put down the paternalistic traditions. The kind of technologies that are geared towards farmers’ inputs and outputs do not take women’s situation into account.”

18. Francesca Ronchi Proja, Permanent Representative to FAO, International Federation for Home Economics
“We must emphasize the role and importance of young people. We need to train and educate boys to also take responsibility and participate within the family. We must also make sure that girls are not discriminated against in education. We must emphasize the importance of education for the future generations.”
19. Abigail Booth, Food First Information and Action Network (FIAN), Swedish Section
“FIAN is committed to the right to food. The states represented here at the WFS must agree to commit
themselves to the right to food. To secure the right to food is a fundamental human right, and this is a
major global effort to combat hunger and malnutrition. We will call on all states to make sure that they
include a gender sensitive interpretation for this right to food.”

20. Ulla-Maija Finskas, Perm. Representative of Finland to FAO in Rome
“In the Message from this side event we must make sure that it includes that women are the reservoir of
knowledge and biodiversity.”

21. Elva Azucena Paz, President, National Congress Agricultural Commission, Argentina
“Rural women are being trained to use their skills and earn money for their families. The high tariff
barriers from the developed world take money away from social infrastructure. A recommendation is to
divert one cent of each dollar to be invested in rural development and women.”

22. Nafatoumata Traore, Assistance Director Ministry of Family, Women and Children, Cote
d’Ivoire
“Women play a key role in food security. Women help organize cooperatives and they provide foods for
the large towns. It is true in most countries that women are a vital element in producing food. To
achieve the goal of this summit, any policy on agriculture and sustainable development must be based on
the principles of equality and equity. Through international mobilisation and awareness-raising we can
influence people and decision-makers. FAO, please strengthen the assistance to Cote d’Ivoire.”

23. Anthony Gonzales, International Indian Treaty Council, USA
“Food security is developing in a human rights approach that will add to the question of accountability.
We are concerned with farming and biodiversity, and the excessive use of herbicides, pesticides and
insecticide which in turn contaminate the soil and table water. Contaminated produce are liberally sold
and encouraged in developing countries. In some areas in California cancer clusters are emerging due to
continuous dumping of pesticides. We are concerned with the subsidies on commodity foods that are
being dumped in some areas. The third comment is to recognize the negative impact of the WB policies,
in particular on indigenous peoples.”

24. Luul-Glas Gebreab, National Union of Eritrean Women
“Conducive government policies are crucial. In the Eastern Horn of Africa, harmonising customary laws
with progressive laws, like ownership of land, is a big issue. With regards to gender equality in the legal
system and in the society as a whole, we need a lot of sensitization and networking in many parts of the
world. A crucial point is to empower rural women. The grassroots’ way of working is a sustainable way of operation.”

25. Wafá Al-Dikah, Director of Agro-industry and Food, Ministry of Agriculture, Lebanon
“We want to address Johannesburg, because many agricultural programmes and projects only let rural women play a marginal role. These programmes should aim specifically at women. Women are under injustice twice, firstly as a woman and secondly because she is working under unjust conditions in rural areas. Statistics do not show her contribution as producer and real worker.”

26. W. Peter, Swiss Ministry of Agriculture/ Bio Suisse
“Too few rural women are present here at this conference. A practical suggestion is that FAO could have a list of all rural women’s organizations and association in as many countries as possible. Invitations should be sent to all these associations and to their respective government ministries. Then rural women could get funding from their governments, FAO or others to participate. This would give women the possibility to raise their voices.”

27. Teresa Assensio Brugiatelli, President of the International Federation of Women in Legal Professions
“Following the reform of family rights in agricultural communities, it is still the case that women work without being recognized or paid. Female agricultural work must always be paid in some form.”

28. Anki Elcken, President, Swedish Women’s Lobby
“The Swedish Women’s Lobby were the only women’s umbrella organization present at Bali in the preparatory meeting (prep com) for Johannesburg. If women are to be on the arena as equal partners, women must be put forward in the UN system. More women must be around the peace and negotiation table. In the world only 10% of the parliamentarians and 6% of the ministers are women. We must mobilise the young women for equality.”

29. Ana Lilia Pedrosa, SEDESOL, Mexico
“Poverty has the face of a woman and the body of a native. The situation for women in rural areas in Mexico is not much different than in the rest of the world. We want to contribute to the improvement of living conditions, and we are trying to break the link between poverty and hunger. Since we started a programme for health and education in 1997, we have reached 3.2 million families.”

Wrap up and summary

Narend Singh, Co-chair, South Africa
There has certainly been a strong will from all the delegates and participants at this side event, and your comments and contribution will be incorporated in the report that will be presented to plenary this evening. I look forward to seeing you all in Johannesburg.

Margareta Winberg, Co-chair, Sweden
To summarize this discussion I would like to list some of the expressions, points and ideas that have been brought up at our seminar today:

- Harmony with nature and culture
- A quota system to increase women’s participation
- A bridge between women in different parts of the world
- Rural women know best about their situation
- To organize women farmers is important
- A list of organizations of rural women
- Do not produce food to be eaten by animals
Rural women: crucial partners in the fight against hunger and poverty

- Women take responsibility for the environment
- A growing number of child-headed households
- Indigenous people has the right to produce food, and they need land and money
- Biodiversity must be preserved and conserved
- Female Minister of Intelligence
- We have made positive strides
- Listen to the youth and especially young women!
- Get rid of the "machos"!
- Implement the proposals

In her concluding remarks, Sissel Ekaas, Director of FAO’s Gender and Population Division and Secretary to the side event, thanked all participants and informed them that an oral report would be made by Mr. Narend Singh, on behalf of the two co-chairs, to the Plenary of the WFS:fly that same evening. She also informed participants that a final version of the Message from Rome to Johannesburg would be prepared by the Secretariat and circulated to all participants who had completed the mailing form. It would also be posted on the FAO website and made available to delegates at the WSSD in Johannesburg.

She then invited participants to continue the dialogue by joining the electronic forum on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development to be launched by FAO from June 24 to August 17, 2002. She urged participants to stress gender issues when discussing the three themes: Access to Resources, a Global Campaign on Fair Conditions of Employment in Agriculture and Good Practices for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development. The forum would serve as a bridge between Rome and Johannesburg.

Ms Ekaas then thanked her staff and all others who had contributed to the successful organization of the side-event, as well as the donor, The Government of Sweden, and the two co-chairs. Who had skillfully facilitated the very rich dialogue.

In paraphrasing Swedish author, Thomas Tranströmer, she then concluded by noting that “Every person is a half-open door, leading to a room for all” and we have opened our doors and our hearts here today and come together on a common strong message to Johannesburg in support of rural women”.

For more information about the side event, please see the following links:

- [www.fao.org/worldfoodsummit/sideevents/papers/Y6832e.htm](http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsummit/sideevents/papers/Y6832e.htm) (the objectives, background and points for discussion)
- [www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/004/Y6948E.htm](http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/004/Y6948E.htm) (Declaration of the World Food Summit: five years later with special reference to paragraphs 4 and 13)
Annex 1: Programme side event

Rural women: crucial partners in the fight against hunger and poverty

ROME, 12 JUNE 2002

Venue: Green Room, First Floor, FAO building A. - 09:00 – 12:30

Co-Chairs:    H.E. Margareta Winberg
              Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
              Sweden

H.E. Narend Singh,
Provincial Minister Department of Agriculture and
Environmental Affairs, South Africa

Secretary:    Sissel Ekaas
Director, Gender and Population Division
FAO

09:00 – 09:05 Opening
  • H.E. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda

09:05-09:30 Welcoming remarks:
  • Deputy Director-General of FAO, David Harcharik
  • H.E. Margareta Winberg and H.E. Narend Singh

09:30 – 09:40 FAO and Rural Women: Partners in the fight against hunger and poverty
By: Sissel Ekaas

09:40 – 10:10 Presentations
  • Linking Gender, Food Security and the Environment
    By: Rosalina Tuyuc Velasquez
    CONAVIGUA (Guatemala)
  • Creating the Future: building on the present
    By: Vandana Shiva, Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology (India)

10:10 – 12:10 Open dialogue on Message from Rome to Johannesburg

12:10 – 12:20 Wrap up and summary by the Chairs

12:20 – 12:25 Concluding remarks by Sissel Ekaas
Annex 2: Message from Rome to Johannesburg

World Food Summit: five years later
Side event 12 June, 2002:

Rural women: crucial partners in the fight against hunger and poverty

MESSAGE FROM ROME TO JOHANNESBURG

1. There is a broad consensus that rural women, the majority of whom are farmers and waged agricultural workers, are crucial partners in the fight against hunger and poverty. This is reflected in a large number of international commitments and agreements. In 1997, almost 70 per cent of economically-active women in low-income food-deficit countries (LIFDCs) were employed in the agricultural sector. Although data is limited, about one-fifth of farms are headed by women. However, rural women continue to be grossly under-represented in decision-making processes and are often "missed targets" in the design, implementation and monitoring of agricultural and rural development policies and programmes. This poses severe constraints to the effectiveness, equality and sustainability of development response strategies.

2. Political will and the necessary resources need to be mobilized to recognize rural women's rights, knowledge, contribution and role so that women will equitably participate in and share the benefits of development. To enhance the status of rural women and promote gender equality in agriculture and rural development actions are needed in two key areas: 1) the equal access to and control of natural and productive resources; and 2) the empowerment and full participation of rural women as agents for change in policy making at all levels and throughout development activities. Action in these two areas will also strengthen the link between gender, agriculture and food security, as well as the environment and sustainable development agenda.

3. It is widely recognized that hunger and poverty in rural areas, where 70 percent of the poor live, are related to the access to, control, and sharing of benefits from natural resources. Equitable access for women to such resources has therefore been a key demand from major stakeholder groups during the preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) to be held in Johannesburg from 26 August to 4 September 2002. The FAO Gender and Development Plan of Action (2002-2007), endorsed unanimously by the FAO Conference in November 2001, aims to promote gender equality in access to and control of resources, broadly defined as food (safe and nutritionally balanced), natural resources, agricultural support services, technologies, decision-making and employment opportunities. The devastating impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in many rural communities has added further urgency to meet these objectives. We commit ourselves to removing persisting gender inequalities and inequities and to forge key actions for effective and sustainable solutions to hunger and rural poverty. Such actions should include, but not be limited to, the provision of technologies, including information- and labour-saving technologies, to reduce rural women's drudgery and free up time for their increased representation and participation in relevant decision-making bodies and in entrepreneurial and income-earning activities. A better representation of women in national farmers’ unions should be ensured, in parallel with support for their right to organize themselves to secure fair wages and to speak up for their own interests.

4. Article 14 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly, provides for equal benefit-sharing of rural women and men and underlines that the equal participation of women and men is crucial to the sustainable development of rural areas. Most FAO Member Nations have signed this Convention and have thus made a legally binding commitment to take appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in agriculture and ensure that they have equal access to agricultural productive resources, including land and credit. Also, the empowerment of rural women is a necessary catalyst to ensure their broad-based participation in rural development programmes. To achieve the commitments made under CEDAW Article 14, we commit ourselves to develop legislative frameworks, policies and strategies that shape an enabling
5. Gender equality and the removal of gender-based discrimination are both valid development objectives in themselves, as well as necessary means to reach the UN Millennium Development Goals\(^1\) on reducing poverty and hunger by half by the year 2015. The Millennium Goals have also brought renewed attention to the importance of measuring progress made in reaching the development goals. Our contribution will be the reinforced commitment to assess progress made in gender equality with regards to access to and control of natural resources, and participation in rural development strategies and policy formulation. To monitor progress in these areas there is need to establish baselines and develop gender-sensitive indicators. For instance, only about half of agricultural censuses conducted worldwide from 1989 to 1999 specified head of agricultural holding by sex. We call on all stakeholders to work together to increase this number substantially by 2015. We further reiterate the commitments made at the 1999 High-Level Consultation on Rural Women and Information\(^7\), involving the setting up of databases for monitoring purposes on the status of rural women and men and on their respective contributions, paid and unpaid, to agricultural production and rural development; and the creation and reinforcement of information networks and communication channels amongst rural women and between rural women and government planning institutions. These networks can allow for the collection, documentation and dissemination of good examples and practices in gender-sensitive and sustainable agricultural and rural development, which can serve as models for other undertakings.

6. It is essential to integrate clear gender perspectives in all partnership dialogues. To apply a gender perspective and to strive for gender equality will imply change and transformation of processes and perceptions, included in decision-making, in political agenda setting and in the allocation of resources. This will require the broad-based participation of all stakeholders to be successfully implemented. For example, rural indigenous women as well as men, are the reservoirs of knowledge about their local ecosystems and their views should be included in any development interventions. Local institutions (formal and informal) that women have created to manage resources for livelihoods should be recognised and supported in development actions that enhance food production, biodiversity and quality. We commit ourselves to forge action-oriented and broad-based partnerships at national-level, as well as between North and South and South and South. We call on Governmental and Non-Governmental stakeholders and Civil Society, including rural youth, women and men themselves, media and other actors to mobilize the political will and resources needed to reach the common goal of sustainable rural development and food security to the benefit of all people.

Rome, 12 June 2002

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\(^2\)For example, women headed an estimated 42.9 percent of rural households in Namibia in 1991 and 24.6 percent in Cambodia in 1996.

\(^3\)Data from Namibia are based on the 1991 census and quoted in www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/cedaw.htm.


\(^5\)The most recent UN Resolution to this regard is 56/129 the resolution on Improvement of the situation of women in rural areas (A/RES/56/129).


\(^8\)UN, P/1380 (2001). Road Map Of Millennium Summit Goals Sets Out Blueprint, Timetable For Future Implementation. Secretary-General's Report Signposts Road Ahead, 19 September 2001.

Annex 3: Report to the WFS: fyl Plenary

WORLD FOOD SUMMIT: five years later

Panel Discussion, 12 June 2002 (morning session)

Rural women: crucial partners in the fight against hunger and poverty

Report to the Plenary

A side event on Rural women: crucial partners in the fight against hunger and poverty took place this morning in the Green Room. It was organized by FAO’s Gender and Population Division with the financial contribution of the Government of Sweden. The side event was attended by approximately 400 delegates from governments, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations. The side event served to enhance the visibility, recognition and support for the important role and contributions of rural women in achieving the targets of the World Food Summit of 1996.

The event was opened by H.E. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda followed by a statement by the Deputy Director General of FAO, Mr. David Harcharik. H.E. Margareta Winberg, Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Sweden and H.E. Narend Singh, Provincial Minister for Agriculture and Environmental Affairs, South Africa, co-chaired the panel discussion. Two specially invited speakers, Ms Rosalina Tuyuc, Guatemala and Dr Vandana Shiva, India each made a presentation to the forum to stimulate the rich open dialogue with the audience that followed. Twenty-eight speakers, including several ministers, contributed with short interventions from the floor.

The side event focussed on the need to mobilize political will and the necessary resources to recognize rural women’s rights, knowledge, contribution and role so that women will equitably participate in and share the benefits of development. Participants emphasized that rural women are the experts and the owners of their local ecosystems and the related biodiversity. Failing to listen to rural women, will therefore slow down and constrain the effectiveness, equality and sustainability of development response strategies.

There was agreement that rural women, the majority of whom are farmers and agricultural wage workers, are crucial partners in the fight against hunger and poverty. Hunger and poverty in rural areas, where 70 percent of the poor live, are related to the access to, control, and sharing of benefits from natural resources. The devastating impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in many rural communities is leading to increased poverty, less varied cultivation and further stress on natural resources as well as in nutritional value of the food. Women, youth and children headed households are hardest hit, due to their limited control of and access to resources. Therefore, equitable access for women to natural and productive resources, as well as the right of women and girls to inherit such property, have been key demands from major stakeholder groups during the preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) to be held in Johannesburg from 26 August to 4 September this year. Ms Sissel Ekaas, the Director of FAO’s Gender and Population Division and Secretary to the side event, noted in her presentation to the forum that this particular issue is also reflected as a priority area in the new FAO Gender and Development Plan of Action (2002-2007), endorsed unanimously by the FAO Conference in November 2001.

The ultimate objective of the side event was to come out with a strong message that will be sent from FAO and its constituency gathered in Rome, to the Johannesburg Summit. It was agreed that to enhance the status of rural women and promote gender equality in agriculture and rural development actions are needed in two key areas: 1) the equal access to and control of natural and
productive resources; and 2) the empowerment and full participation of rural women as agents for change in policy making at all levels and throughout development activities. Participants underlined that gender equality in the area of agriculture will be fundamental if food security for all is to be reached in an environmentally sound and sustainable manner.

Participants agreed that persisting gender inequalities and inequities need to be removed for effective and sustainable solutions to hunger and rural poverty to be found. Key actions should include the provision of appropriate technologies, including information- and labour-saving technologies, to reduce rural women’s drudgery and free up time for their increased representation and participation in relevant decision-making bodies and in entrepreneurial and income-earning activities.

In this regard, it was noted that rural women are often grossly under-represented in decision-making processes and are often “missed targets” in the design, implementation and monitoring of agricultural and rural development policies and programmes. Therefore, the empowerment of rural women, including through training and education, was viewed as a necessary catalyst to ensure their broad-based participation in decision-making processes and in rural development programmes. The importance of ensuring a better representation of women in national farmer unions, in parallel with support for their right to organize themselves to secure their interests, was underlined.

Participants called for concrete actions to realize the provisions under Article 14 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly, which provides for equal access to agricultural productive resources, including land and credit, as well as equal benefit-sharing for rural women and men. It was noted that most FAO member nations had signed this Convention.

Gender equality and the removal of gender-based discrimination were seen as necessary means to reach the UN Millennium Development Goals on reducing poverty and hunger by half by the year 2015. The need to assess progress made towards gender equality and ensure accountability was stressed, and also the need for baselines and gender-sensitive indicators pertaining to access, control and ownership of natural resources, empowerment and participation to facilitate such monitoring.

The key role that rural women should and are playing in conflict resolution, peace-building and the reconstruction of countries following internal strife, war, etc, was underlined, including in the opening remarks of H.E. Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda.

It was agreed that clear gender perspectives should be integrated in all partnership dialogues. This will also imply transformation of processes and perceptions, included in decision-making, in political agenda setting and in the allocation of resources. For this, training and sensitization of decision-makers, as well as capacity building and empowerment for rural women themselves, are required. Also, a number of successes and good practices in gender-sensitive and sustainable agricultural and rural development were mentioned, and the need to collect and disseminate these to serve as inspiration for new initiatives was emphasized.

The side event concluded that broad-based participation of all stakeholders --women and men, young and old— is required to reach the common goal of sustainable rural development and food security for all. Finally, there was a call to forge action-oriented multi-stakeholder partnerships at national-level, as well as between North and South and South and South, involving Governmental and Non-Governmental stakeholders and Civil Society.
Annex 4: List of participants

**FAO Members and Observers, including National NGOs**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Institutions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ANGOLA</strong></td>
<td>• Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MINADER)</td>
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<td><strong>ARGENTINA</strong></td>
<td>• Senadora, Comisión de Agricultura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BELGIUM</strong></td>
<td>• Ministère des Affaires Étrangères (DGCI)</td>
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| **BENIN**       | • Office National d’Appui a la Securite Alimentaire (ONASA)  
                  • Ministère de l’agriculture, de l’élevage et de la pêche  
                  • DANA (MAEP) Ministère de l’Agriculture  
                  • Presidency de la République Photographe |
| **BOTSWANA**    | • Ministry of Agriculture                        |
| **BRAZIL**      | • Ministry of Education                          |
|                 | • Ministério da Justica                          |
|                 | • Conselho Nacional dos Direitos da Mulher       |
|                 | • Brazilian Representation in FAO                |
| **BURKINA FASO**| • Ministère des resources animals                |
| **CANADA**      | • Ambassade du Burkina Faso, Rome                |
| **CAMEROON**    | • Comité de Gestion de l’Assistance FAO/PAM     |
| **CAPE VERDE**  | • Ministère de l’Agriculture et des Pêches      |
| **COLOMBIA**    | • Ministerio de Agricultura y Desarrollo Rural   |
| **CONGO**       | • Ministre des Affaires Sociales                 |
| **CÔTE D’IVOIRE**| • Relations Extérieures au Ministère de la Femme et de l’Enfant  
                          • Coopérative de Production des Vivriers COOPERMAC  
                          • Coopérative FENACOVICI  
                          • Coopérative ACUDD  
                          • Réseau des Opérateurs Economiques du Secteur Agro-alimentaire de l’Afrique de l’Ouest  
                          • Coopérative des Vendeuses de Poisson  
                          • Côte d’Ivoire Écologie  
                          • Coopérative COCOPROVI |
| **DENMARK**     | • Danish Embassy, Rome                           |
| **DOMINICAN REPUBLIC** | • Ministry Estado Agricultura                     |
| **ECUADOR**     | • Federación Indígena y Campesina del Imbabura   |
| **EGYPT**       | • Embassy of Egypt in Rome                       |
| **ERITREA**     | • Ministry of Agriculture                        |
| **FINLAND**     | • Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry           |
| **GAMBIA**      | • Office of the President                        |
| **GERMANY**     | • National Youth Association for Food Security   |
| **GUATEMALA**   | • Advisor for Ministry of Foreign Affairs        |
| **IRELAND**     | • Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry           |
| **ITALY**       | • Finland Permanent Representative to FAO        |
| **HUNGARY**     | • National Union of Eritrean Women               |
| **ICELAND**     | • Office of the President                        |
| **IRAQ**        | • National University of Ireland                 |
| **ITALY**       | • Ministry of agriculture                         |
|                 | • Ministry for Equal Opportunities                |
| **IRELAND**     | • Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries          |
| **FRANCE**      | • Féderation Internationale des Femmes des Carrières Juridiques (FIFCJ) |
| **ICELAND**     | • Iceland Deputy Permanent Representative to FAO |
| **IRAQ**        | • Iraq Alternate Permanent Representative in FAO |
| **IRELAND**     | • National University of Ireland                 |
| **ITALY**       | • Minister for Foreign Affairs                   |
| **FRANCE**      | • Defensoria Maya                                |
| **ICELAND**     | • Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development |
| **IRAQ**        | • Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries          |
Rural women: crucial partners in the fight against hunger and poverty

- Pres. Cons. Min. Dept. of Equal Opportunities
- Azione Aiuto (ActionAid Alliance)
- University of Rome, La Sapienza
- Confederazione Italiana Agricoltori (IFAP)
- Chairperson of the National Commission on the Status of Family and Women

KENYA
- Kenya Embassy, Rome
- Agri-Health Initiatives
- Kenya National Farmers Union

LEBANON
- Ministry of agriculture

LESOTHO
- Lesotho Alt. Permanent Representative to FAO

LUXEMBOURG
- SOS Faim

MACEDONIA
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs

MALAWI
- Ministry of Agriculture

MALAYSIA
- Ministry of Agriculture

MALI
- Assemblée Permanente des Chambres d’Agriculture

MAURITANIA
- Président du Conseil National de l’enfance

MEXICO
- Secreteria de Desarrollo Social (SEDESOL)

MOROCCO
- Ministère de l’Agriculture et du Développement Rural et des Eaux et Forêts (MADREF)

NAMIBIA
- Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development

NEW ZEALAND
- Te Rau Aroha

NIGER
- Ministère de la Promotion de la femme
- Ministre du développement social, de la population et de la protection de la femme et de l’enfant
- Ministère du Développement Agricole
- Union National des Coopératives

NIUE
- Secretary to government

NORWAY
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Stortinget (the Norwegian Parliament)
- The Development Fund
- Centre for International Environment and Development Studies (NORAGRIC)
- Akershus University College
- The Norwegian Farmers’ Union

OMAN
- Director of International Relations Min. of Agriculture and Fisheries

PANAMA
- Ministerio de la juventud, mujer, ninos y familia

PAPUA-NEW GUINEA
- Department of Agriculture

PARAGUAY
- Embajada del Paraguay in Italia

PERU
- Embasada del Perú en Italia
- Peru Permanent Representative to FAO
- Congreso del Peru

POLAND
- Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
- Office of the President
- Ministre de l’Agriculture, de l’élevage et des forêts
- Ambassadeur du Rwanda à Paris
- Université Nationale du Rwanda

SLOVAK REPUBLIC
- Ministry of Agriculture

SOMALIA
- State Minister of Public Works

SOUTH AFRICA
- Department of Agriculture and Land affairs
- National Department of Agriculture

SPAIN
- Ministry for Foreign Affairs
- Spain Repr. Perm. Adjunto ante la FAO
- Agencia Española de Cooperacion Internacional

SWEDEN
- Ministry of Agriculture
- Ministry for Foreign Affairs
- Swedish Parliament
- Ministry of Agriculture
- Dept. of Rural Development Studies
- Swedish Embassy, Rome
Rural women: crucial partners in the fight against hunger and poverty

- Foodfirst Information & Action Network (FIAN)
- Policy Group on Global Food Security
- Save the Children
- Swedish Women’s Lobby
- Swedish Food Federation
- Swedish International Development Agency (Sida)
- Federation of Swedish Farmers
- Swedish Association for Sexuality Education (RFSN)

SWITZERLAND
- Bio Suisse/Ministry of Agriculture

TOGO
- Ministère de l’Agriculture
- Department of Economy
- Direction Générale de la Promotion Féminine
- Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs
- Union Turkish Chamber Agriculture (TZOB)

TURKEY
- Director of Cooperation

TUNISIA
- Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries
- Uganda National Farmers Federation

UNITED KINGDOM
- Commonwealth Secretariat
- Bees for Development

USA
- US Dept. of Agriculture - Foreign Agricultural Service
- Dept. of Health and Human Resources
- Gwich’in Tribal Council, Arctic Council
- Alaska Community Action on Toxics
- CLP
- Penn State University
- Resources for the Future

VANUATU
- Minister of Agriculture and Forestry and Fisheries and Quarantine

VATICAN CITY
- Caritas Internationalis

YEMEN
- National Multimedia Center

ZIMBABWE
- Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement

United Nations Organizations and other International Organizations

Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW)
Association Press
Banque Arabe pour le développement économique en Afrique (BADEA)
Business and Professional Women International (BPW)
Centre de cooperation internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement (CIRAD)
Church World Service
East African Development Bank
European Commission
Global Mechanism of UNCCD
International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
International Alliance of Women in consultation with UN (INGO)
International Association of Agricultural Students
International Atomic Energy Agency
International Council of Women (ICW)
International Federation for Home economics (IFHE)
International Indian Treaty Council (CITI)
International Labor Organization (ILO)
International Plant Genetic Resource Institute (IPGRI)
International Service for National Agricultural Research (ISNAR)
M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation
Society for International Development
The Arab Centre for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands (ACSAD)
UN Permanent Representative for IAW to FAO
UN Standing Committee on Nutrition
United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)
World Food Programme (WFP)
World Union of Catholic Women’s Organizations

* Full information of participants’ names, addresses and e-mail is available from Ms Marie Randriamamonjy: marie.randriamamonjy@fao.org
The World Food Summit (WFS): Five years later took place in Rome 10 to 13 June 2002 to follow up, reaffirm and reinforce the commitments made at the WFS in November 1996, at which governments pledged their political will and their collective common and national commitment to achieving food security for all and to an ongoing effort to eradicate hunger in all countries, with an immediate view to reducing the number of undernourished people to half their level no later than 2015.

The half-day side event on Rural women: crucial partners in the fight against hunger and poverty took place 12 June 2002. The event served to enhance the visibility, recognition and support for the important role and contributions of rural women, and in particular women farmers, in achieving the targets of the World Food Summit of 1996.

The side event was organized by FAO’s Gender and Population Division with the financial contribution of the Government of Sweden.

Gender and Population Division
Sustainable Development Department
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

http://www.fao.org/gender
http://www.fao.org/sd/PE1_en.htm