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Swedish comments on ToR for CFS VG on Gender

General comments

Sweden is positive regarding the first draft ToR and we look forward to working with the secretariat in the continued work on the VG's.

Sweden would like to highlight the following

Importance of water and sanitation

It is good to recognize the right to water and sanitation is interconnected with the right to food security and nutrition - women are responsible for fetching water / securing water for household, hygiene and also for the food production. In the CFS report on Water and FSN it emphasized that the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: General Comment 15 (on right to water) and General Comment 12 (on right of food), both of which recognize the interdependence of the right to water and right to adequate food. Most peri-urban and rural communities in developing countries employ multiple water use practices. Yet, the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation concerns itself only with access to water for drinking water, food preparation and sanitation, and does not concern itself with other home-based activities (kitchen gardening/irrigation techniques, animal care, etc.) that help communities become food and water secure. This report suggests further exploration of the inter-linkages and consequences of these two rights by relevant Special Rapporteurs, so as to enable a human

rights approach to water governance that ensures water for FSN for all.

Furthermore the interconnection between stunting and the lack of sanitation is now proven in many research reports . The evidence reviewed suggests that poor WASH conditions have a significant detrimental effect on child growth and development resulting from sustained exposure to enteric pathogens but also due to wider social and economic mechanisms.

The importance of training and education in food security and nutrition

Ideally women are not more responsible for infant or young children's nutritional needs than men are. Still, the reality is that women take primary responsibility for children's food provision in practically all countries, including Western countries. Research also demonstrates that ante-natal and post-natal nutritional training and/or advice play a crucial role for instance on the rate of infant exclusive breast feeding and nutritional and healthy diets of pre-school children. Nutrition and healthy diets as part of school curricula, can be explored in order to close the gender gap between men and women with regard to the future balance of food and nutrition responsibilities.

The importance of secure land rights women small scale farmers

Secure land rights may be a problem for both men and women farmers. However, customary land rights often stipulate women's user rights to land rather than formal land ownership. To realise gender equality and women's empowerment in the context of food security and nutrition, requires that land cultivated and used by women also fall under their ownership and control. Without legal deeds to land property, women continue to be at disadvantage for financial services and investments in and expansion of farm activities, rural SMEs and agricultural value chains. Without secure land rights, also women's subsistence farming for domestic food security may be jeopardised.

Women, gender and food security in the global food system

The global community is well underway in preparing a global summit to address the inability of the current global food system to deliver and distribute food to the population of the planet. There are many reasons for a malfunctioning global food system, of which most are not related to small scale farmers, let alone food producing women farmers. The voluntary guidelines under development must carefully balance that improved gender equality and women's empowerment in the context of food security and nutrition on the one hand, do not in any way cast any misdirected blame on women for a food system that does not fully deliver.