

CFS50

III. Empowering women and girls and promoting gender equality.

Endorsement and Uptake of the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition

DATE: 11 October 2022

TIME: 10:00-13:00

LOCATION: FAO Headquarters, Rome

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

As a member of the Private Sector Mechanism who attended this summer's negotiations on gender equality, it was truly a profound experience. I have spent my career working with women on farms and with farmers cooperatives, to produce nutritious foods and access markets, and it was eye opening to see the course of this negotiation.

As someone who identifies as a woman and who cares deeply about lifting up and supporting other women, I am dedicated to achieving gender quality and empowering women's and girls. I have worked at many different entry points throughout the agri-food system, and I recognize the challenges millions of women face in food systems globally. Food systems transformation and achieving agenda 2030 will not happen if women are left behind, and the unique challenges they face go unaddressed.

Mr. Chairman,

PSM is pleased to see our contributions reflected in the agreed text. Financial inclusion, entrepreneurship, agribusiness development, access to education and capacity building including business skills, parental leave provision and enhancing nutrition for mother and child in the first 1,000 days are crucial for gender equality.

While the collapse of the process came as a surprise to many of us, it was not entirely unexpected. It was a stark reminder of the reason we are here. Many of these clauses represent important gains in gender equality.

We must find the courage to work together to address these issues so that we do not lose the gains we already made in the last two years.

The current situation is not the outcome the world needs. We urge all Parties and stakeholders to find common ground and come back to the table. Let us think of those millions of women who are looking up to us to give them an outcome that will make a difference in their lives. As we celebrate the International Day of Rural Women this coming Saturday, let us commit to deliver to our rural women who will greatly benefit from this process.

It is true that change takes time. But it is also true that time waits for no man. Women have been waiting for so long for change to come. How much longer do we expect them to wait? If we cannot take advantage of this opportune time, when else shall we do it for women and girls?

Mr. Chair,

Business remains committed to this process in the coming year.

Most importantly, we remain resolved to advance gender equality in our own operations, from our supply chains, to our management, to our boardrooms.

Thank you!