

Dear CFS,

I had gone through the Version 1 of Zero Draft of the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girl's Empowerment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition and found that it was a very comprehensive document that covered all aspects of the topic. There are some comments and suggestions that I would like to make which I think may be useful for the draft. These are for your consideration.

34.i. Application of quotas to ensure women's "meaningful" representation in "key/strategic" leadership positions in the public sector and community organizations.

It is recognized that the application of quotas of women in leadership positions in the public sector and community organizations is necessary, but not sufficient, to enhance women's and girl's empowerment in the context of food security and nutrition. The number of women who are included in the composition of leadership positions in an organization may meet the quota but may be delegated to roles that do not sufficiently influence decision-making. Thus, it is proposed to include the terms "meaningful" to emphasize that women are indeed represented in terms of their interest. The term "key or strategic" is also proposed to be included to emphasize the roles within the organization that are important to allow the representation of the interest of women and girls.

3.2 Women's economic empowerment across food systems

A discussion on the application of the concept of creating an enabling environment for women's economic empowerment across food systems may also be included. An enabling environment in this context may be defined as having the right elements that will allow women and girls to prosper in their economic endeavors. Previous work was done by Tanic (2008), Christy et al. (2009), (Konig, Da Silva and Mhlanga, 2013) in defining the concept of an enabling environment, which may be applied in the case of women's empowerment.

42. Policy areas for discussion

Related to the concept of an enabling environment, another potential policy area for discussion for women's economic empowerment is the "provision of business development services" or related services for women. Business development services can help link women, especially farmers, with markets or specific buyers. These services can support the transition from largely informal operations of women smallholder to formal business operations.

Another policy area for discussion is developing incentives for the private sector to support women's economic empowerment. These may be through the development of institutional procurement programs that favor suppliers composed of women smallholder farmers. The government may have limited resources to promote women's empowerment and by providing the private sector with incentives, this also harnesses private sector resources.

References

Christy, R., Mabaya, E., Wilson, N., Mutambatsere, E. & Mhlanga, N. 2009. Enabling Environments for Competitive Agro-industries. *Agro-industries for Development*, pp. 136–172. FAO and UNIDO.

Konig, G., Da Silva, C.A. & Mhlanga, N. 2013. *Enabling environments for agribusiness and agro-industries development: regional and country perspectives*. Agribusiness and Food Industries No. 1. Rome, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. 61 p

Tanic, S. 2008. Enabling Environments for Agribusiness and Agro-industry Development in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. [Cited 19 April 2018]. http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ags/publications/EEE_light.pdf

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on the draft of the document. It is a very good platform for us to learn and at the same time an opportunity for us to share and contribute in our little way. Please let me know if you have any questions or require clarifications to my comments.

Kind regards,

Luis