



Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation
Secretariat for EU and international affairs

Swedish preliminary comments: Voluntary Guidelines on Gender

General comments

Sweden welcomes the initiative on the Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment. Sweden is very positive to the first preliminary draft and its layout and looks forward to the continued work with the VG's.

Furthermore, Sweden would like to highlight the following:

Specific comments

Para 3.6, ICT

Women play an important role in the agri-food sector and their access to ICT should increase. However, it is not fully sufficient to work for equal access as men to the ICT, but an analysis should be made regarding which tools women prefer. The work with ICT should for instance be complemented with better access to extension workers – advisors that can give access directly to the knowledge that women need as farmers, such as climate changes or better crops.

On item 96, “Problem statement”, we suggest to adding a sentence at the end: *“Gaining new knowledge through use of ICT can however not fully replace service provided by agriculture extension workers”*

Also, we suggest the same addition on item 100, “Policy areas for discussion” – iii. Analyse how female farmers prefer to gain new knowledge.

For further information:

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/332875680> Political economics of gender relations in information and communication technologies in agricultural development The case of knowledge-based platforms for farmers in Kenya

Gender-responsive or gender-transformative instead of gender-sensitive

In this first draft, the term “gender sensitive” appears in some places. Normally, both Sweden and EU promote and operate “gender-responsive”, and most preferably “gender-transformative”.

Informal sector

The document would benefit from including thoughts on how to move from informal to formal sector. Often women and girls tend to remain in the informal sector and therefore lacking access to social services, pension and financial instruments.