

**Draft CSM Contribution to the CFS Advisory Group and Bureau meeting  
3 May 2017**

**Agenda item 3: Forum on women's empowerment**

We would like to thank the Technical Task Team for the work done so far.

Concerning the agenda and format of the Forum we welcome and appreciate the fact that the Technical Task Team agreed to have as a keynote speaker a woman leader from the grassroots women's organization, as their role in ensuring women's equality, rights and economic empowerment is crucial.

The CSM working group on women is composed by 90 international, regional and national women's organizations and platforms worldwide which are engaging with this CFS process with a high degree of commitment, expertise and knowledge on the ground.

I will voice some of their key comments and proposals to improve the outline of this background document, mainly concerning chapter 1. The comments received were numerous, and we will submit them in a detailed way as a written contribution to the Technical Task Team and CFS Secretariat. Would be good to know by when written comments need to be submitted.

Many important elements are already included in the draft outline. As time is short, I would like to flag here only key aspects that still need to be strengthened or incorporated:

We believe that Section 1.1., on *"Global trend and emerging challenges for women in the agriculture and agri-food sector"* needs to be improved on several aspects:

- There is a wide spectrum of scientific and academic evidence shows how large-scale land acquisitions and land grabbing adversely affect women's livelihoods, their employment opportunities, their access and control over natural resources and food systems, often resulting in forced migration and worsening of their life conditions. One important focus should therefore be to look at the needed support for women small-scale food producers that are practicing sustainable models of production.
- Greater emphasis on their integration into commercialization and value chains is not necessarily beneficial to them. The recent CFS policy recommendations on Connecting smallholders to markets adopted in 2016 recognize the importance of the local, national and regional markets and the fundamental role of women small-scale food producers within these territorial spaces that are providing the 70% of the food production worldwide.
- The dramatic impact of migration on women's rights, equality and empowerment is an obvious reality we face every day. The outline should be able to mirror the complexity of this phenomenon. Women are the first persons affected during conflicts, wars, and humanitarian crises. The fleeing

and migrations routes expose women to many forms of discrimination and abuse.

- Climate change, scarcity of resources and the impact of mining have often resulted in a loss of farmland and in environmental degradation, and have particularly affected women.
- Finally, conflict and violence against women are both a persisting barrier and a global trend. It is therefore very important to recognize that without effectively addressing the cultural patterns and norms that generate violence against women none of our strategies and solutions will deliver their full promises.
- The role of indigenous women's organizations, their struggles against multiple forms of discrimination and their extraordinary contributions to food security and nutrition should be highlighted in the outline for the Forum.

As said before, we also have some other additions to the rest of the document that we will submit in written form.