

**Civil Society and Indigenous People Mechanism (CSIPM)  
Interventions to the  
CFS Open Ended Working Group on Gender Equality and Women's  
and Girls' Empowerment**

**21 April 2022**

**On Part 1 - Nettie Wiebe**

Good morning and good afternoon. Like others before us, we would like to express our support for this document, particularly the strong language present within it, with the mention of the patriarchal systems and also the inclusion and systematization of the language around both sexual and gender based violence, which goes hand in hand with the improved section on cross-cutting issues and a more harmonized coherence between the analysis and the policy strategies proposed. We also appreciate the improvements concerning unpaid care and domestic work, the redistribution of care work and the discriminatory norms and all levels of the food systems invoked in this draft, which brings us closer to the reality faced by women and LGBTIQ people today. This draft also has strong recommendations regarding women's organizations and movements essential towards advancing human rights and policy making and legal frameworks. We'd also like to share our positive feedback on some paragraphs, in particular the paragraph on the access to land and control over natural resources and land we welcome, the improvements and the strong language, particularly regarding the right to water. The paragraph on social protection and nutrition assistance is also positive, with the very comprehensive framing of social protection being universal. We, in the CSIPM Women and Gender Diversities, working group strongly encourage the CFS to keep the ambition of these elements mentioned above throughout the negotiations process. This will lead towards strong and inclusive voluntary guidelines on gender equality and women's and girls empowerment. We do not want to just run on the spot here. We want to make progress forwards for women and the LGBTIQ people. Thank you.

**On Part 1 - Hala Barakat**

Thank you Chair, first, we would like to to express our appreciation on the point raised by the EU focal point on gender equality as a human right and its linkages to the right to food. Our second point here would be about self-determination. We have looked through the draft and we regret that in the last version of the draft, the concept of self-determination has been eliminated. Self-determination is one of the core principles and it is also within the United Nations Convention on Human Rights. We regret that it has been taken out of the draft.

Placing the powers of the individual under the aegis of a principle of self-determination makes it possible to revalorize individual will choices. Moreover, enshrining a right to self-determination gives women the power to demand that others respect the choices they make in the context of their private lives. Thus, in the absence of a disproportionate infringement of the rights of others, and have the power to make autonomous choices.

It confers the power of self-determination, that is, the power to choose, among several options, the one that corresponds to one's personal aspirations. The principle of self-determination allows individuals to make choices and these choices lead to the realization of an act that will always find its source in the subject's will and will be carried out on himself. The principle of self-determination is therefore in line with the practice that tends to give more importance to the individual will.

### **On Part 2: Core principles that underpin the Guidelines - Paula Gioia**

Diversity of gender identity and sexual orientation:

We welcome the inclusion of “women and girls in all their diversities”. It is indeed very important to consider the intersectional dimensions of violence and discriminations faced by women and girls in all their diversities. Race, social classes, religion, language all these aspects have impacts in the lives and in the right to food and nutrition of women and girls globally.

Yet, when developing explicit guidelines on “Gender Equality” the CFS must be able to address at least two further intersectional dimensions, which also have enormous impacts in the lives of people on the ground: gender identities and sexual orientation beyond cis-heteronormativity. When the CFS decides to negotiate guidelines on Gender Equality, it needs to also be able to well reflect on the concept of gender itself, understanding that this is not a concept restricted only to female and male genders. It comprises all existing gender identities. It is important to understand that the invisibilization of non-cis-genders in the normative narrative and – so far – also in the current Draft for Negotiations represent the reproduction of a social construct, which has direct impacts in decision-making on social, economic and political inclusion, and therefore reproduces privileges, while increasing marginalization, discrimination and violence of all those, who do not fit into this norm. Gender binary norms are rooted in social inequalities.

Recognizing the ongoing stereotypes, the power asymmetries between cis and non-cis-genders, the inequalities and fundamental violence faced by “women and girls in all their diversities”, including lesbian, bisexual and transwomen, but also by gays, bisexual and transmen, as well as by other gender diverse and intersex persons.

For all these, as CSIPM we are still of the opinion that the current draft does not reflect fully and is not inclusive enough in terms of diversities of gender identities and sexual orientations and needs to make this point much more explicit, in order to make justice to its aims of seeking a truly gender equality in food systems and to not fall into a cis-heteronormative approach that leaves so many marginalized people behind. Strengthening the perspective of non-binary and non-hegemonic gender identities and roles is a matter of Human Rights. We express once again our demand to advance gender and sexual orientation inclusive approach and language within the CFS, including all its policy convergence processes occurring now and in the future.

### **On Part 3 - Hala Barakat**

Situation of occupation:

While talking about gender equality and crisis, the Negotiation Draft does a good job addressing the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on women and girls, but another crucial element missing is the mention of occupation.

While conflict situations and their consequences are addressed in the document, situations of occupation, which jeopardize access to food, resources and women's rights just as severely as conflicts, should not be overlooked. We see references to conflicts (3.10 paragraph 100) but never to the situation of women in occupied areas. We need clear references to state/extra-territorial occupations, which undermine women's rights, access to land, resources, social protection, food, healthcare, etc in particular for women in the Middle East and North African region. We suggest including the word occupation in these paragraphs following already agreed language in the Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crisis: "in all situations of conflict, occupation, terrorism, or man-made and natural disasters;" (FFA).

Thus, we recommend mentioning the occupied areas and their consequences on women, girls and LGBTQI people.

### **On Part 3 - Patti Naylor**

In section 3, paragraph 77 with regards to agroecology is of concern to the CSIPM. Agroecology, which is based on a set of defined principles, is at the heart of our daily work and our lives. Agroecology is the path to our vision of a fair and sustainable food system centered on achieving human rights.

Agroecology is a science, a practice, and a movement, building in strength and dimension, and is important in its accessibility and affordability to grassroots solutions that challenge the power dynamics of the current food systems, a vital aspect to the advancement of these policy guidelines. Integrating social, biological, and agricultural science with traditional, indigenous, and farmers' knowledge and culture, agroecology is a context specific and locally adaptive set of practices developed through these knowledge spaces and through participatory on-farm experimentation. Importantly, gender and women's equality is at the core of agroecology.

In this sense, paragraph 77 could be much improved by in fact affirming agroecology and other approaches that improve sustainability and the need to shift towards those for gender equality while also addressing the environmental dimensions of food systems.

Moreover, this paragraph should make reference to the internationally agreed FAO 10 elements of agroecology when referring to agroecology.

### **On Part 3 - Leonida Odongo**

Section 3.3. on Intersectionality:

This document, by not mentioning discrimination against race or caste would remain silent on structural and systemic barriers. These are central issues that need to be added.

Racism was and still is responsible for dehumanising women of colour, placing them as inferior compared to white people, for example the case of women of colour and Dalits. Racialised women are more susceptible to physical violence, poverty, lack of access to rights such as: food, potable water and land, education, quality health care, and a fair system of justice. Girls who are racialized and victims of the racist system are denied their childhood,

which prevents many countries from achieving the goals recommended by the SDGs. Racism is structural, but also expresses itself institutionally and environmentally.

Intersectionality is an analytical tool that does not hierarchize oppressions, but shows how cruel racism is in the marginalisation, dehumanisation and death of women (and men) around the world. However, we cannot talk about intersectionality if there is no specific mention of discrimination against race, caste, class and nationalities.