

COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (CSD)

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WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

KEY POINTS

- STRENGTHEN WOMEN'S POSITION IN AGRICULTURE, INCLUDING PROMOTING WOMEN'S RIGHTS TO INHERIT AND OWN LAND.
- STRENGTHEN FEMALE INFLUENCE AND POWER IN THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT CANNOT BE SUSTAINABLE UNLESS WOMEN ARE INVOLVED AS EQUAL PARTNERS IN THE PROCESS AT ALL LEVELS. THEIR ROLE IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT IN POVERTY REDUCTION AS SO MANY SMALL-SCALE FARMERS IN POOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ARE WOMEN. IN MANY AREAS, WOMEN'S AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION IS THE KEY TO CHILDREN'S FOOD SECURITY.

PROTECTION AND OPPORTUNITY THROUGH PROPERTY RIGHTS FOR WOMEN SHOULD BE EMPHASIZED IN DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES SO THAT WOMEN CAN OBTAIN TENURE SECURITY AND THUS MAKE THEM STRONGER IN DEVELOPING BOTH MARKET AND SOCIETAL RELATIONS. IN MANY COUNTRIES WOMEN ARE OFTEN EXCLUDED FROM THEIR RIGHTS BOTH AT BIRTH, AS WIVES, WIDOWS, AND SISTERS. GENDER EQUALITY IS A MATTER OF BOTH JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS. IT IS ALSO SMART ECONOMICS. THAT'S WHY WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND GENDER EQUALITY IS ONE OF FIVE PRIORITIES OF NORWEGIAN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION POLICY. IT IS ALSO ONE OF THREE AREAS FOR INTERVENTION IN OUR AID FOR TRADE POLICY.

IN NORWAY, AS IN MANY OTHER COUNTRIES, WOMEN ARE LEAVING RURAL AREAS. THEY LEAVE TO GET MORE EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT

AND INDEPENDENCE. TO MEET THIS CHALLENGE, NORWEGIAN AUTHORITIES AND FARMERS' ORGANISATIONS ARE IN DIALOGUE TO INCREASE FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR. WITH AN AIM TO REACH A FEMALE PARTICIPATION OF 40 PER CENT IN ALL AGRICULTURAL BUSINESSES. A GOVERNMENT STRATEGY CALLED *EQUALITY IN THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR* HAS BEEN DEVELOPED TO MAKE RURAL AREAS MORE INTERESTING FOR WOMEN IN GENERAL. THE AIM IS THAT WOMEN AND MEN SHALL HAVE THE SAME OPPORTUNITY TO OWN A FARM AND TO RUN A FARM. PROMOTING DIVERSIFIED ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES IN RURAL AREAS, THUS CREATING NEW JOB OPPORTUNITIES IS A PILLAR OF THIS STRATEGY. TRADITIONAL AGRICULTURE SHALL BE UPHOLD WHILE AT THE SAME TIME WE PROMOTE NICHE MARKETING WITHIN A BROAD RANGE OF FIELDS. THE STRATEGY INVOLVES SEVERAL STAKE HOLDERS, RANGING FROM OFFICIAL BODIES TO THE INDIVIDUAL FARMER AND FARMERS' UNIONS. SOME OF THE MOST IMPORTANT INSTRUMENTS ARE FINANCIAL SUPPORT DIRECTED ESPECIALLY AT YOUNG FEMALE FARMERS, AND STRENGTHENING FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN FARM COOPERATIVES.