

**Summary report of the meetings of the Coalition/Network of Women in Agriculture (C/NWA) and events during the CSO Forum 13-17 November 2009 parallel to the World Food Summit on Food Security 16-18 November 2009**

A group of 40 women representing 26 organizations from 17 countries from five regions of the world organized themselves in a women's caucus at the margins of the Civil Society Forum, a parallel Forum of the World Summit on Food Security.

WOCAN, together with International Alliance of Women facilitated the participation of this group during the Civil Society Forum. WOCAN, together with the Filipino Women's Council, also facilitated the stay and accommodation of 30 women from developing countries at the Casa delle Donne Internazionale in Trastevere (Rome) which was the 'haven' space to speak with each other and to share experiences. The group organized caucus meetings after the end of each day of the Civil Society Forum, from early to late evening sessions, at the Casa Internazionale delle Donne.

**Day 1**

**Meeting of the Coalition/Network for Women in Agriculture (including Fisheries, Forestry and Livestock) CWA**

**November 12, 2009 (Thursday) 4:00PM**

**Casa Internazionale delle Donne**

Informal get together and welcoming party held at the Sala Caminetto.

Layout of preliminary objectives for the afternoon:

Objectives:

1. To provide a briefing of plans and preparations for the CSO Forum and Women's Assembly.
2. To provide an opportunity for all participants to share their preparations and objectives for their participation.

WOCAN Advocacy Coordinator (Rosalud Jing de la Rosa) and Associate (Sara Martini) provided a brief background of the CSO Forum preparations, focusing on the Women's Assembly: registration protocol, programme agenda and timetable.

Below are the four themes of the CSO Forum:

1. Who decides about food policies?
2. Who controls food producing resources?
3. How is food produced?
4. Who has/needs access to food?

Sara briefly gave the context of the Women's Assembly and problems encountered with IPC organizers, i.e., last minute change of agreements,

marginalization regarding decisions on the agenda of the Women's Assembly, how the number of funded delegates has been halved without prior consulting the CWA.

WOCAN Director, Jeannette Gurung, advised that the group has to be realistic and there would be a constant need to regroup and to have back up plans. Meanwhile, Sara had to go to meet the Methodology Group and to negotiate the WA agenda on behalf of the group and to secure a space for the upcoming forum for the women delegates, she has been accompanied by Carmen Griffiths from Huairou Commission.

The introduction among the women started introducing names and what each does from their group/communities. There were 21 women from different organizations like Huairou Commission, WOCAN, Filipino Women's Council (Rome – the local host), ActionAid India, and FAO. Eve Crowley a Senior Officer from FAO ESW facilitated the latter part of the discussion.

Jing explained the Committee on World Food Security reform process and why it is relevant to form a strong women's coalition – to strongly represent women (especially rural women food producers) in such global space in the international setting.

The meeting closed with some ideas how to work together effectively in the next few days once the group joins the big Civil Society Forum event with expected 600 CSO participants.

## **Day 2**

### **Meeting of the Coalition/Network for Women in Agriculture (including Fisheries, Forestry and Livestock) - CWA**

**November 13, 2009 (Friday) 9:00AM**

#### **Casa Internazionale delle Donne**

The morning was devoted to the presentation of Huairou Commission grassroots consultation findings from 23 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. A copy of the draft regional report can be made available upon request.

Everybody was given the chance to speak and share their insights from their own experience in their communities in lieu of the Huairou's presentation.

Jing highlighted the importance of today's meeting to be able to come up with a key messages that will be the group's cohesive message to be brought to the Civil Society Forum and at the Summit itself. Starting from the regional experience and findings from the grassroots women consultation of the Huairou Commission from 23 different countries, the key message of the group can more powerful instead of dispersed positions. As Bettina Corke of IAW reiterated, it is an opportunity to influence not only FAO but also key bodies in the national and international levels through these regional inputs.

The meeting was joined by several FAO EWSD representatives.

Klara Ibara from Huairou Commission provided us the scope of their study – providing understanding of food security and probing on various issues on and

about it. Huairou Commission conducted grassroots consultation in different countries (23) to assess the problem of food insecurity and how it affects women and what they think are the causes of this insecurity. Throughout the study, the group found some commonalities regarding the issue of food insecurity and women's involvement including:

1. Women are really the ones doing more initiatives in addressing food insecurity
2. There is an emerging concern on nutritional food
3. There is an immediate impact of food insecurity to women that directly affect children
4. There is resilience of grassroots women

The study showed an important focus and experience of the grassroots women.

Afterwards the Huairou presentation, there was also a presentation of experiences/insights/perspectives of each grassroots women representatives in key areas. Please see extended version of the report for details.

In conclusion, what is important and what works is what is organic to the community. Huairou study focuses on grassroots level and through their work they are able to echo to the government relevant concerns and arguments regarding food security.

After lunch the group gathered together and started a discussion facilitated by Patricia Colbert from EWSD FAO about the Civil Society Forum themes and brainstormed on the key messages under each theme.

The group identified important issues relevant to their own experiences and concerns. For a detailed list please see extended version of this report.

The group came up with the target (s) audience for the messages that would emerge from all the identified issues. The following are the targets:

- Agricultural ministers
- Permanent reps (agriculture to Rome based UN agencies and other agencies)
- Donors
- NGOs
- Mass media
- Civil society

Together with these targets, the group developed the following 4 criteria that better measure the strength and effect of the messages:

- Doable
- Implementable

- Concise
- Partnership/good practice

The group proceeded in dividing into 3 sub groups that worked on 5 emerging and strong issues coming from the list identified before that would be developed into key messages. The following are the strong issues:

1. Lack of women representation in policy and decision making
2. Climate change
3. Indigenous women's issues
4. Experiences of women's organization linking to policy and promotion of women's organization.
5. Access and control over 'local' seeds and land inputs and knowledge.

The first group worked on issues number 1 and 4, while the second group worked on issues 2 and 5 and the third group worked on issues 3 and 5 as well.

As a result of the smaller groups' discussion, there were 6 strong key messages that emerged which in turn would serve to be the group's message on the CSO forum. The following are the key messages:

1. Because of individual/collective knowledge and experience of women's organizations and networks, they should be equal partners in program development and implementation.
2. Keep alive the cultural identity and tradition of individual, community and local knowledge that is in harmony with nature and promotes gender equality and food security.
3. Women must have equal representation in policy and decision- making in addressing agriculture and food security, and they must be considered as a priority item in new policies on food security.
4. Use of GMO seeds creates dependency and has proven destructive to environment, and runs counter to women's indigenous and traditional knowledge of farming practices, thus we urge government and development agencies to promote the use of local and traditional varieties by setting up national seed-banking systems and other sustainable production mechanisms that support biodiversity and where women are able to participate in the management, development implementation and monitoring and evaluation of such mechanisms.
5. Ensure and enforce women's rights over seeds as well as to provide resources such as land and water, and to train on innovative and sustainable farming approaches based on both scientific and indigenous knowledge.
6. Recognize the impact of climate change on women food producers and their contribution to enhancing resilience and therefore ensure equitable allocation of resources and benefits from climate change mitigation and adaptation.

### **Day 3**

#### **CSO Forum 2009: Meeting of Women Caucus**

**November 14, 2009 (Saturday) 2:30PM Venue: Citta' dell'Altra Economia**

The women's caucus has been organized with panels and working groups. The day started with a panel of women from various organizations that speak of the issues, insights and experiences from their respective communities. Below are some of the highlights of the meeting:

- Presentation of the pastoralists women and their concerns about land (mobile land)
- Rural women playing very important role in food security, statistic showed that 65% of people live in rural areas and 52% of this comprised of women, who are described to be more susceptible to unemployment and less wage but who work harder and longer.
- Highlighted that women are easily adaptable to changes around her
- Issues on ownership of land. With land title, women are empower and have better position and creates lesser domestic disadvantage.
- Statement: WOMEN ARE NOT VULNERABLE.

On the latter part of the day, women's caucus was divided into three working groups that have to work and provide recommendations and proposals/messages that would be submitted to the drafting committee or the steering committee. The groups were divided according to three main languages – English, Spanish and French.

At the end, the group didn't arrive on a comprehensive list of recommendations, as most of the women delegates shared most of their experiences and issues rather than recommendations. It was agreed that tomorrow, there would be another grouping to come up with recommendations.

### **Day 4**

#### **CSO Forum 2009: Meeting of Women Caucus**

**November 15, 2009 (Sunday) 9:00AM Venue: CAE**

The morning women's caucus focused on a particular theme – *who controls food*. Given this issue, the panel presented various concerns and insights related to control/governance re food security.

The following are some highlights of the said caucus:

- Government should first and foremost support the rural women in accessing resources, tools, information and facilities

- Government should hold responsible and accountable
- World Bank must support government
- Women now are finding alternative ways to support themselves due to lack of government support
- Women should influence decision making and policies implementation of government re food security
- Because women have better capacity to nurture, they should be given equal access to resources and land to better provide sustainability for their families.
- Food insecurity particularly in some regions in Africa leads to bigger problems like prostitution, dropping out from schools, domestic violence and other related issues.
- There were some suggestions raised like women paralegals, education, women to be considered and recognized as food producers and should be given opportunities/access through loans.
- Issue on traditional ways that affect and burden women
- Food deficit problem highly related to health problem
- Quality and nutritional value of food is very low due to improper use of food processing materials
- Issue of access to land – in effect suggesting agrarian reform.
- Food security and food sovereignty highly related with the issue of violence.

Marta Benavides (WEDO) – from our group - had the possibility to speak in the above panel, below some of the points she raised:

- Important to connect the four themes of the forum
- Global Food Governance is connected to Neo-colonialism: 20% of population controls 80% of resources. People's movements are its enemy as they are on its way
- There is no such concept as impoverished people, there is people forced to live in poverty
- NAFTA: Latin American countries have been forced to sign it. It is an attempt to control market, energy and resources to encourage competition
- peasants forced to impoverishment, 1/6 of people from El Salvador have migrated in other Latin American countries
- Rich countries decide no more agriculture and then we have the "maquilas", then they say agriculture again and so arrive GMO seeds. Export agriculture as opposed to food sovereignty

- Climate change agreements have a lot to do with food security/food sovereignty

In the latter part of the day, there were the three working groups of women where there was a continuation of the yesterday discussion in order to come up with recommendations.

Within the English working group, here are the lists of recommendations:

- Women should inherit land/property
- Women with HIV/AIDS should be of priority
- Provide convenient processes/transportation for easier access
- Mainstreaming gender
- Seeds – gov't to protect traditional seeds (reflects one of the key messages of CWA)
- Land issue
- Documentation of the impact to women
- Genuine agrarian reform
- Rights/protection/support and access to be given to fisherfolks
- Educate women
- Invest on know-how/technological advances
- Make impact assessment and make pathway to this assessment, involving gov't on this impact assessment
- Socio-impact assessment
- Equal representation and involve women in any decision making

CWA recommendations:

Women must have equal representation in policy and decision making in addressing agriculture and food security, and they must be considered as a priority in new policies on food security.

The impact of climate change on women food producers should be recognized, and their contribution to enhancing resilience should be valued.

Because of individual/collective knowledge and experience of rural women's organizations and networks, they must be regarded as equal partners in program development and implementation.

Cultural identity and tradition of individuals, community and local knowledge that is in harmony with nature and promotes sustainable farming approaches based on both scientific and indigenous knowledge,

gender equality and food security, should be kept alive.

- Boycott parties inflicting hunger as a war tactics
- Organize/mobilize against WTO, IMF, WB
- Documentation of small food producers/documentation of women's experiences
- Women should be involve in the process of marketing/distributing their products
- Fair trade
- Gender analysis –budgeting –auditing
- Food should be seen as an integrated sector
- Urban women should be recognized esp. poor urban women who are also agri-based.

#### **Day 4**

##### **Meeting of the Coalition/Network for Women in Agriculture**

**November 15, 2009 (Sunday) 7:00PM Venue: Casa Internazionale delle Donne**

#### **Day 5**

##### **CSO Forum 2009: Meeting of Women Caucus - presentation of reports from women's working group**

**November 16, 2009 (Monday) 4:00PM Venue: CAE**

Today the presentation of the recommendations made by different women's group would be given.

Prior to the reporting, the group (CWA as it was temporarily named) gathered to reevaluate and discuss the key messages and the preamble to be delivered later today.

They reassessed and drafted a one page statement with valuable inputs coming from the existing key messages made by the group, and the key notes that emerged from the women's caucus from the previous days.

The discussion and drafting of the group's declaration covered the following relevant concerns:

- Where the message will go?
- Who will listen to it?

- Incorporating the existing and original message made by the group at the Casa together with the relevant issues/concerns/suggestions that came from the women's caucuses.

The three groups reported their recommendations and then a representative from the Coalition/Network read the statement prepared during the morning.

The English speaking group report was divided in: problems/issues, experiences.

On the process, the list of recommendations would be synthesized in 3 languages and would be circulated among the women delegates.

This would be given to the steering committee, in one page draft.

The following are the main points of the recommendation:

1. Equal representation
2. Land issues
3. Seeds
4. Fisheries and fisher folks
5. Pastoralists
6. Plantation workers
7. Strengthening of women coalition
8. Young women
9. Climate change
10. Lastly as Marta Benavides put it, there should be an input on peace and everything should be put into the context of the wider issue on food crisis.

Before heading home, an immediate meeting was called which involved a number of women from different international organizations like IAW, WOCAN, HUAIROU, ISIS and the women delegates. The agenda of the meeting was to equip/inform everyone on the upcoming event of Beijing +15 happening on the last week of Feb. 2010 in New York. Initially, it was explained that WOCAN worked in partnership with ISIS and Huairou and it was said that Yiping Cai (ISIS) and Rosy Weiss (IAW) both went to Beijing +15 regional preparatory meetings.

Yiping first gave the background on the regional meeting held in Manila last March. It was said that within this regional meeting agri/rural women were not present. Yiping explained that it was attended by around 600 participants.

It was said that there was no mentioning of the issues on food security due to the absence of FAO, just as sexuality wasn't included also. Jing said that there was no strong presence or alliances of people who defend for this kind of issue. Thus, it was said that it is highly important to have strong alliances during this kind of international meeting.

It was highlighted that global forum of Beijing +15 is now open for registration and open for NGOs with eco-standard or those who attended the prior forums.

Rosy Weiss, gave the European perspective by saying that UNECE is quite different from ESCAP (Asia and the Pacific region), as ESCAP has social scope and UNECE deals more on the economic and financial issues. Like the Asian regional meeting, the European meeting intends to prepare the delegates/organizations for the intergovernmental meeting. On this European meeting, the following are the issues:

- Economic issues
- Financial crisis
- Cooperative responsibility
- Networking
- Coalition building

There were also series of caucuses working on issues like:

- Migration
- Minority
- Education
- Climate change
- Human rights and responsibility

It was also mentioned the following important notes/concepts:

- NGO's committee on the Status of Women with three offices in New York, Geneva and Vienna
- New gender architecture – part and parcel of UN new reform ('delivering as one')
- Articles 14.15.16 of CEDAW – to serve as entry point
- NGOs moving beyond Beijing + 15 and should identify new issues

Reaffirmation of Beijing +:

- Not negotiable
- Through yearly themes only can input innovative issues
- Linking processes/discourses of CSO to the processes of Beijing.

Important dates:

- Nov. 19 – deadline to submit individual statement
- Nov. 23 – deadline to submit collective statement
- Copenhagen meeting

In conclusion, it was said that this gathering was very essential as this would prepare everyone for the upcoming forums and this coalition of women also serves as strategic and generational dialogue.

## **Day 6**

### **CSO Forum 2009: Closing Plenary Discussion and Adoption of Final Declaration**

**November 17, 2009 (Tuesday) 9:00am – 5pm Venue: CAE**

Today the final declaration from the caucuses would be delivered.

The first part of the day was the morning's session where it started with the adoption of the final declaration from each caucuses.

There were four declarations to be delivered:

- Youth
- Indigenous
- Pastoralists
- Women

The following were some highlights of the background shared from the women caucus:

- Systematic oppression and exploitation of women thru the process of globalization that affects women on the context of
  - o Land
  - o Education
  - o Health care
  - o Hunger
  - o Low wages
  - o Malnutrition

In line with this, the declaration finally read the recommendations of the women:

- Equal representation
- Implementation of all women's rights on the context of food security and food sovereignty
- Providing structure/mechanisms to have access/control to the resources
- Advancing genuine agrarian/fisheries/pastoral reforms
- Common property, seeds, water management
- Stop using food as a tool/war weapon
- Climate change

- Promote and support cultural identity (see our key message)
- Continue the strength in the network and coalition of women
- Gender justice and world peace.

The second part of the day was dedicated to the High Level Task Force Side Event with David Nabarro, UNSG's Special Representative on Food Security and Nutrition and coordinator of HLTF. The forum was facilitated by Pat Mooney and with other guests from different international agencies.

This forum was called to be the dialogue between the HLTF and the CSO.

The open forum started with delegates giving questions. The following were some of the highlighted questions/issues:

- The perspective of HLTF re the accountability of local/national government in terms of implementing policies re food security.
- What have been the positive results of global partnership?
- Format of expert group now seemingly the same set of expert before
- For HLTF – being a temporary UN body, why should have role in the money matters?
- The role of HLTF on national level.
- To what extent the HLTF has done re impact assessment esp. on the smaller groups?

It was mentioned also the three criteria of reform:

1. Contributes to the empowerment on domestic level
2. Allows discussion on the national level
3. Improves accountability at the international level

Finally, David Nabarro addressed the issues prior raised through the following inputs:

- Global government partnership should involve small groups/regional processes
- 70% of the fund was directed to the farmers
- The set of expert group actively identifies and involved women in its discussion
- HLTF has no role on the national level

He also mentioned the key motivations of HLTF which should be reflected also in every CSO:

1. What motivates us?

2. What do we have that will serve you?
3. What do we need in the future?

Finally he said that over the last years, there has been less investment on the agricultural sector from the donors. Important now to attract donors to donate/invest on agriculture/food security sector. This is not an easy task since most of the donors are afraid.

### **Final Meeting of the Coalition/Network for Women in Agriculture**

**November 15, 2009 (Tuesday) 7:00PM Venue: Casa Internazionale delle Donne**

There were three parts of the meeting. The first part was the presentation or sharing of positive feedbacks from the women delegates. The 2nd part was the sharing of frustrations or negative feedback from the concluded forum. And finally the third part was about the discussion on forming a stronger women coalition out the women present at this meeting.

The meeting was attended by 40 women from Huairou, Wocan, ISIS, IAW and other women's organizations. Women were seated in semi-circle manner. Jing facilitated the meeting.

Below are some of the highlights of the negative feedback given:

- The question of 'what happened to us?' – at the final day of the forum
- Needs to consider FUTURE
- 'who represented us?'
- Not properly represented
- No proper representation

Reaction/answers to the frustrations from the concluded forum. Below are some important notes given:

- On CFS – Committee on Food Security, now on reform – importance to create the Coalition/network to provide our inputs to the advisory group
- Wocan served as contact group
- Discussion on AD HOC group
- The issue between large and small holder producers
- WOCAN – has technical know-how
- IAW – has socio-legal know how

It was discussed that a coalition of women should be created from these participating women/orgs. And it was mentioned that the working name was

'COALITION FOR WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE (including Fisheries, Forestry, Livestock) (CWA). In line with this, there were some questions raised:

- Do we have the coalition?
- What kind of forum to deal with?
- How is this best represented in WFS/CFS?

With the reform on CFS, women should be presented in the advisory group or committee.

It was highlighted that having this coalition of women it would served as a link in helping women in the sectors of agriculture, fisheries, forestry and livestock, because it was said that a small unit cannot stand alone and has no big impact on forums like this, thus a coalition is needed. The group agreed to position the Coalition at the CFS Advisory Committee.