

SOROPTIMIST AND INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY AT FAO

I am the representative of Soroptimist International, thank you for giving me the floor.

Soroptimist is a member of the AdHocGroup of the International NonGovernmental Organisations with representatives in Rome from many years.

I would like to announce that the Group, as experienced observer at plenary meetings, is preparing a Side Event during the FAO Conference in June.

Soroptimist Position on Rural Women is: " Investing in small scale farming, particularly through women, is a vital step towards meeting the challenges of food production in the future.

Governments are not living up their international commitments to protect women from discrimination, as the gap between de jure equality and de facto discrimination persists (2010 OHCHR)

Rural women find it more difficult to get access to a range of resources such as credit, land, agricultural inputs and extension services and employment, with obvious consequences for their food security. Land ownership is a particular issue for women. Furthermore, it is important to understand the influence of social factors such as local inheritance traditions/law and marital status which favour men over women.

The situation in many developing countries where a woman cannot inherit land separate from her father, brother or husband, or can be evicted with little or no legal protection, persists. Fundamental institutional changes is required if the position of rural women is to be permanently improved ".