

## WOCAN



It is a privilege to participate in this side event of NGOs that are concerned and that work to improve the status, not only socially but economically and politically, of women farmers and producers. These women have not to be seen as vulnerable group. Yes they are disadvantaged. But people have to start to see them as visible actors in the macro level as leaders in society and development. The multiple roles of women have to be recognized as having multiplier effects in food security and even the economy as a whole.

I would like to inform this distinguished body about how we carried out the task of bringing to fore the key role of rural women in achieving food security during the European Forum on Rural Development held last April in Spain. We collected case studies representative of regions, such as Asia, Latin America and Africa, that highlighted the different models for women participation that had the potential of being scaled up and serve as models in other regions. From the case studies were drawn key points and most importantly were lessons learned out of which the recommendations were presented. The case studies were on the micro level but wide scale on agro-ecology, participatory research, and comprehensive business strategies. What was common in their successes was self-help, leadership, and education, to put it broadly. However, what was glaring was the need to invest in women and the investment to be tailored to women's needs that enhance their knowledge, training and innovations especially capacity building for decision-making! This is the quick and sure formula for achieving the goals so nicely set for women in agriculture and rural development.