



October 15th, 2023

International Day of Rural Women

KEY MESSAGES FROM SMALL-SCALE FARMER LEADERS FROM DIFFERENT DISTRICTS

“Today, we commemorate the International Day of Rural Women 2023 under the theme 'DigitALL: Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality'. As we all know, most of the women in Uganda reside in rural areas, hence the need for the government to prioritise investment in rural areas.”

NANCY MUGIMBA, NATIONAL COORDINATOR

“As ESAFF Uganda, we are determined to build a society that protects and promotes gender equality. In fact, we are building a unique movement for our members, who are women, called the Women Forums, in all 54 districts to position their voices.”

HAKIM BALIRAIN, MAYUGE DISTRICT

“We women provide the bulk of labour input in the agriculture sector in Uganda, regularly quoted to be 70–80%, yet we need full access to and control over productive resources. Something needs to be done about this. Our rights to productive resources need to be respected and protected.”

CHRISTINE OKOT, GULU DISTRICT

“We, the rural women, bear more of the burden of unpaid care work than men, which limits our participation in other productive and social activities, hence keeping us in poverty. To empower rural women, the government and other stakeholders need to address the issue of unpaid care work.”

IRENE NAKIJOBA, MUKONO DISTRICT

“Uganda is still a patriarchal society with varied social and cultural norms, beliefs, practises, and attitudes that continue to undermine the situation and position of women

and girls. As rural women, we are reminded of this every day; the men always tell us how we are nothing, and they quote some norms or beliefs.”

BEATRICE KATSIGAZI, MUBENDE DISTRICT

“In the agriculture sector, most of us women are employed. This sector is an essential engine of growth and poverty reduction. But its underperformance is partly because women face constraints that reduce our productivity.”

BEATRICE PANGANI, KASESE DISTRICT

“Women make essential contributions to agricultural and rural economic development. As small-scale farmers, we constantly challenge the government to invest in women's empowerment. This means investing in sectors that directly impact women.”

MARGARET MASUDIO, ADJUMANI DISTRICT

“The 2018 UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP) explicitly recognises the human rights to land, seeds and food sovereignty. We call on our government to implement the UNDROP because it's a key instrument to advance rural women's rights by promoting gender equality, especially in rural areas.”

BEATRICE KATSIGAZI, MUBENDE DISTRICT

“We, the rural women, have the right to be free from discrimination and violence, freely determine our political status, and freely pursue, participate in, and benefit from their economic, social, and cultural development. As we commemorate the International Day for Rural Women, my question to policymakers and implementers is how far with our rights.”

IRENE NAKIJOBA, MUKONO DISTRICT

“The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979, provides the basis for realising equality between women and men by ensuring women's equal access to and equal opportunities in political and public life. There is still a lot to be desired here in Uganda.”

NANCY MUGIMBA, NATIONAL COORDINATOR

“Poor funding is limiting the achievement of the rights of rural women. Financing institutions like the Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development (MGLSD),

which plays a leading political and technical role in mainstreaming gender into government policy and programming, would contribute to addressing gender inequality.”

BEATRICE PANGANI, KASESE DISTRICT

“Women's movements in Uganda should be given more space for policy and practice change engagement. As a rural woman, I believe nothing is for us without us.”

MARGARET MASUDIO, ADJUMANI DISTRICT

“A key driver of rural development is ensuring that small-scale women farmers have access to cheap and favourable financial resources.”

RONALD REAGAN NYEKO, AMURU DISTRICT

“Accelerating rural women’s access to agricultural markets and trade, particularly through ICT, can increase household income and stability. This is why, for the case of ESAFF Uganda, we have the KilimoMart App.”

ABRAHAM OJANGO, AMURIA DISTRICT

These messages were posted on Twitter. Follow the conversation here:

<https://x.com/ESAFFUG/status/1713427723962441950?s=20>.

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