



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

"GOVERNMENT, ADDRESS INEQUALITY IN ACCESS AND CONTROL OF PRODUCTIVE RESOURCES"

**INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2022
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Women in Uganda play a significant role in the agricultural sector and contribute a higher average share of agriculture labour. Women account for 51% of the total population, while males account for 49% (UBOS 2020). They also make up more than half of Uganda's agricultural workforce. Women are crucial actors in achieving the SDGs and agricultural cooperatives, the precondition to rural women's empowerment. Women play a fundamental role, being resilient by nature capable of taking care, creating and curating relationships and connections at the family and community levels. Women's contribution to the sector is affected by the tremendous change in weather patterns, increasing their vulnerability to droughts, floods, pests and diseases subjecting them to food and nutrition insecurities, haunting the world's SDG aspirations. UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimate that if women worldwide

had the same access to productive resources as men, they could increase yields on their farms by 20–30 percent and raise total agricultural output by 2.5–4 percent.

"Women small-scale farmers take care of the land, local traditions, biodiversity, their families and communities, with enormous responsibilities though, unfortunately, still struggle to be recognized and face enormous barriers. We must collectively change this." Angua Jennifer Adjumani district

This year, as we celebrate twenty (20) years of ESAFF, we join the world to celebrate International Women's Day under the theme "Gender equality for a sustainable tomorrow", aimed at recognizing the contribution of women and girls around the world, who are leading the change on climate change adaptation, mitigation, and response, building a more sustainable future for all. Globally, there is increasing recognition that despite the significant achievements in attaining gender equality and women's empowerment since the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, the changes have not yet resulted in equal outcomes for women and men across the different spheres of life.

"As we celebrate this important day, it is very important to mark the contributions of women in providing unpaid care. It is even worse in rural communities. Nearly all people require care at some point in their lifetime and this support is normally provided by women of which it's always unpaid." Akello Hellen Amuria district

"Women's status and participation in development remain low with fewer women than men of working age having access and control of productive resources and participating in the labour force market. Until we have more women having full and undisputed access and control of productive resources at all the levels, we may not achieve equality." Ikaali Zeridah Jinja District

The issues of climate change and sustainability have and continue to have severe and lasting impacts on the environment, economic and social development. This significantly affects women because women are amongst the most vulnerable and marginalized that experience the most profound impacts of climate change than men. The COVID-19 pandemic has had far-reaching impacts on rural people, especially women in Uganda, including losses in income, increased work and care burden, food insecurity and poorer diet quality.

However, it is also important to note that women are effective and powerful leaders and change-makers for climate adaptation and mitigation and economic empowerment amidst these impacts. Women are involved in sustainability initiatives in communities, and women's participation and leadership result in more effective climate action. ESAFF Uganda celebrates all women small-scale farmers. ESAFF Uganda creates an environment that helps women succeed in ensuring food and nutrition amidst climate change through advancing agroecology, preventing and responding to Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in the agricultural value chain using the Gender Action Learning System (GALS), building women's seed rights using the farmer field school in participatory plant breeding, promoting secure women land rights as well ensuring women's leadership and meaningful participation in all agricultural policy formulating

processes. With these interventions, many women under ESAFF Uganda have had a pivot point to reduce their vulnerability to climate change impacts.

"It's surprising that in this century, we are still challenging stakeholders to address gender inequalities. At ESAFF Uganda, we create platforms for women to inspire government and partners to take action on key issues affecting women, especially small-scale farmers in rural areas. We still emphasise that we can't achieve gender equality without climate justice." Nancy Mugimba, National Coordinator.

Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change calls for practice change and proper implementation of policies and programmes. Therefore ESAFF Uganda calls upon the government to take the following actions;

1. Institutionalize and domesticate the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP), which set platforms for voices from rural communities to empower women small-scale farmers in rural areas to access and control productive resources. The UNDROP will also ensure women small-scale farmers' participation in decision-making processes and support women's leadership in climate-sensitive policies.
2. To adopt and institutionalise the Participatory Plant Breeding approach through the extension system to upscale small-scale farmers' women engagement in utilising, protecting and promoting sustainable agriculture to ensure food and nutrition security in communities.
3. Recognize and invest in care work, and in women's leadership to tackle climate change since women are leading on climate change adaptation, mitigation, and response, to build a more sustainable future for all.
4. Promote agroecology in the Parish Development Model approach as a key and integral solution for the climate crisis in the country. This should be done by institutionalizing the agroecological farming concept in the extension system.
5. Urgently prioritise climate information access on sustainable and adaptive food systems rooted in agroecological systems.
6. COVID 19 proved that food produced using the agroecological farming practices was safe and also provided the first option in enabling the quick recovery of COVID patients, so we demand the government to invest more in agroecological research most importantly in impacted areas by climate change and promote women-centred resilient agricultural practices by improving on the allocation in agriculture budget.

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About Eastern and Southern Africa Small-scale Farmers' Forum (ESAFF) Uganda

ESAFF Uganda is the largest small-scale farmer-led advocacy movement in Uganda, with membership in over 54 districts. ESAFF Uganda brings together small-scale farmers, pastoralists, and fisherfolk to advance Social and Economic Equality, Agroecology and Food Sovereignty. ESAFF Uganda is a member of La Via Campesina (LVC).

Learn more: www.esaffuganda.org

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