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The majority worldwide of workers in agriculture are women.

Women feel that certification of biomass production is a must. We have to make sure that:

- Biomass production is sustainable not causing major environmental problems, social and economic problems
- Labor conditions, health and safety have to be looked at and improved on
- appropriate vocational training is given – also to women
- the interest of small holders (mainly women) is protected
- increase of use of pesticides and chemicals in general is stopped resp. prevented so no new health hazards, soil degradation and water pollution occurs

It seems that because biomass production is not for food, it is felt that the strict norms for use of chemicals (food safety) do not have to be upheld! – causing new problems

We refer back to discussions and side events during CSD14 and 15, addressing this issue as well.

Secure land tenure, inheritance of land and farms for women still has to be put into legislation and/ or implemented in many countries, including in the UNECE region!.

Agenda 21, CEDAW, Beijing Platform for Action, Jo'burg PoI all have stressed and agreed that equal opportunity for land ownership for women and men is crucial. States agreed. Let's see to it that this time good intentions are translated into legislation and policies.

Interesting research has been done about agrodiversity, solutions and ideas from mainly smallholders, by PLEC (and UN University).

Methods of thinking and producing like “cradle-to-cradle” should be looked into and applied also in agriculture – think about the chain of production.

Rural development should include safe and affordable drinking water and (gender-sensitive) sanitation in order for rural communities to prosper. Also eco- sanitation and composting might contribute not only to improved health but also to improved affordable fertilizer.

In many areas in Europe and North America there is a trend to un-develop rural areas: schools, health facilities, public transport, shops disappear because of economic (profit) reasons, so making life in those areas even less sustainable and causing more mobility (pollution) and urbanization. Governments should take their responsibility there. Land planning and management should therefore also include infrastructure to improve the quality of life of women, children and men in the rural areas.

Communication tools are essential for agriculture upgrading, economic / market initiatives and education. We suggest to have a look at the material of the UN WSIS, which contains excellent material about communication networks and strategies for farmers, set up by NGO's in Africa, south America etc.