

**CSW62 - High-level side event**

***“The voice of rural women for a sustainable  
and healthy future”***

**12 March 2018, from 1:15 to 2:30pm, CR 7**

Sponsored by Italy, the World Health Organization and Zambia



**Moderator:** UNWOMEN

**Welcoming remarks:**

- ◆ Head of the Italian Delegation to the CSW
- ◆ Dr Nata Menabde, Executive Director, WHO office at the UN

**Key-note speaker:**

- ◆ H.E. Esther Lungu, First Lady of the Republic of Zambia *tbc*

**Panellists:**

- ◆ Ms. Laura Bargione, Woman farmer winning the De@Terra Award
- ◆ Ms. Giorgia Pontetti, Woman farmer winning the De@Terra Award
- ◆ Ms. Emilia Nardi, Woman farmer winning the De@Terra Award
- ◆ Ms. Mariangela Costantino, Woman farmer winning the De@Terra Award

**Q&A session**

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To register, please click [HERE](#). For inquiries tel +1 646 840 5316

## Concept paper

Rural women and girls are recognized as drivers of development as individuals and influencers of the health and well-being of their families and communities. As leaders, decision makers, producers, workers, entrepreneurs and caregivers, their health and nutrition needs and their contributions to local and national economies, agriculture, including farming, pastoralism, fishing, forestry, and household livelihoods must be fully acknowledged and appropriately valued since they are prerequisites for their empowerment as well as for inclusive and sustainable economic growth and development.

Research indicates that women who have greater control over household resources are healthier and better nourished — as are their families — because women tend to spend more on the nutrition, health, and well-being of their households. In addition, women often make significant contributions to their families' production of essential crops. In sub-Saharan Africa, for example, women provide 60-80% of the labour involved in producing food for household consumption and sale.

Investing in rural women and girls' nutrition accelerates progress toward eradicating poverty and hunger, improving health outcomes, and achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

The role of women in agriculture throughout the world is instrumental, as well as their contribution to the world's food supply. Therefore, women's adequate nutrition and equal participation in rural development policies is not only a demand for simple well-being, justice or democracy, but rather a necessary condition for women's interest to be taken into account.

As the global economy, development and nutrition landscape shifts, it is now more important than ever that we invest in rural women and girls, as well as their nutrition.

Italy was one of the 32 countries that cosponsored the resolution on the declaration of the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition 2016-2025. The Decade of Action on Nutrition promotes a multi-sectoral approach to fight malnutrition in all its forms, and addresses all people everywhere, particularly women and youth as key stakeholders for success. It also aims to foster national policy change and large-scale improvement of nutrition interventions to end all forms of malnutrition and achieve a healthier, more sustainable future through specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART) commitments and accountability mechanisms. To achieve real change, the Nutrition Decade has set six clear cross-cutting “Action Areas” to promote nutrition for all; including sustainable, resilient food systems for healthy diets and Safe and supportive environments for nutrition at all ages.

In Italy, about one third of agricultural holdings are managed by women and therefore female entrepreneurship in agriculture represents a fundamental factor whose essential role must be recognized.

In 2001, among the national initiatives launched to give prominence and visibility to women working in the agricultural sector, the Italian Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policies established the De@Terra Award.

In the last 16 editions of the Award, 83 women farmers have been awarded as they distinguished themselves for their remarkable commitment in activities related to the development of agriculture and rural areas. The main characteristics and factors that these winning and successful women have in common are mainly the willingness and ability to produce high-quality food while respecting traditions and environment, which makes them protagonists of a multi-functional and diversified agriculture able to influence the social and cultural system and especially capable of contributing to the country's economic growth. The achievement of gender equality requires a global approach in order to enable women to fully contribute to the development of their communities and rural areas.

### **Objectives**

1. Promote a constructive dialogue to enhance the exchange of good practices among rural women, national Governments, international Institutions, NGOs and other stakeholders.
2. Value the existing instruments and explore innovative initiatives to improve the conditions of women in agriculture.
3. Consider the opportunity to create an international rural women network to establish a constructive dialogue on gender-sensitive challenges and solutions.
4. Advocate for political leadership and seek opportunities to mobilize new resources for rural women and girls' nutrition under the Decade of Action on Nutrition.