

Session 5

# AgTalks

## Celebrating rural women

15 October 2015  
IFAD headquarters  
Rome, Italy



Investing in rural people

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is both an international financial institution and a specialized United Nations agency. It is a unique organization dedicated exclusively to investing in rural people. IFAD finances innovative agricultural and rural development projects and also brings the point of view of smallholder farmers to bear on international policy processes. In line with IFAD's mission, AgTalks was launched in order to raise awareness of the importance of smallholder and family farming for global food security, poverty reduction, rural development and sustainable use of natural resources. It is hoped that these discussions will influence national policy frameworks in favour of family farmers, and build global and national support. AgTalks provide a platform for diverse opinions, innovative ideas on agriculture and smallholder family farming, and the voices of smallholder farmers themselves.

Every year on 15 October, the world celebrates women and girls in rural areas and the hugely important role that they play in feeding the planet. Session 5 of AgTalks pays tribute to these women. It is a terrible irony that, despite their crucial contribution to agricultural production and food security, rural women are often extremely poor and vulnerable. Indeed, they fare worse than rural men and urban women on nearly all development indicators.

Today, women carry out a substantial and growing part of the work on family farms and represent 43 per cent of the global agricultural workforce. In many parts of the world, women are more likely to work in agriculture than in any other sector. Much of this work is unrecorded, undervalued and unpaid.

Women in family farms also have greater overall burdens of labour, working an average 12 hours a week more than men. Women of all ages manage household responsibilities, take care of children and the elderly, and combine these duties with farming and non-farm work. Customary norms restrict their activities inside and outside the home, limiting their freedom to make decisions and to take advantage of opportunities. In some countries, surveys show that women have no say in household decisions and how their earnings are spent.

Evidence shows that greater gender equality leads to higher economic growth and a better quality of life for all

Gender equality and the empowerment of women are key themes in the newly launched Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Goal 5 is the stand-alone gender goal aimed at achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls by 2030. AgTalks 5 also opens a discussion about what happens when rural women are empowered – economically and socially – and the difference they can make to their families, their communities and their countries.



**Clare  
Bishop-  
Sambrook**

**Clare Bishop-Sambrook** is the Lead Technical Specialist in Gender and Social Inclusion at IFAD. She leads the Fund's gender team, which works to ensure that gender equality and social inclusion are mainstreamed in the design and implementation of IFAD-supported projects and programmes, and within the organization itself. Before she joined IFAD in 2011, Bishop-Sambrook worked as an independent consultant with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) and IFAD on targeting, gender, HIV/AIDS and rural livelihoods, with a particular focus on east and southern Africa. She lectured in agricultural economics, gender and social development in universities in Uganda and the United Kingdom for ten years. One of her special areas of interest is promoting household methodologies for gender equality and social inclusion.



## Dr Myrna Cunningham Kain

**Dr Myrna Cunningham Kain** is an Indigenous Miskita woman from the community of Waspam, Nicaragua. She has extensive experience on the rights of indigenous peoples. She has been Secretary-General of the Indigenous Inter-American Institute and has worked as a consultant to various multilateral, bilateral, governmental and non-governmental organizations on health, education, land, environment and natural resources, racial discrimination, evaluation mechanisms, and international human rights instruments on indigenous peoples, among others.

She coordinated the Continental Campaign of 500 Years of Indigenous, Black and Popular Resistance in 1992, and in recent decades has been an activist for individual and collective rights of women and men in the indigenous communities in her country, the Organization of American States and the United Nations.

Cunningham Kain is President of the Center for Autonomy and Development of Indigenous Peoples (CADPI), which is an organization working in areas of intercultural communication, cultural revitalization, indigenous women's rights, and climate change and its impact on indigenous communities. She also served as Chair of the United Nations Permanent Forum of Indigenous Issues (2011-2013).



**Dr Flower Ezekiel Msuya** is a Senior Researcher and Consultant at the Institute of Marine Sciences of the University of Dar es Salaam in Zanzibar, Tanzania. Her work focuses on applied research in marine science, specializing in innovative seaweed farming, value addition, health issues of women seaweed farmers and climate change.

In the last ten years her research has focused on modifying seaweed farming methods to address the impacts of climate change on rural women seaweed farmers. In all her research she has been working consistently with rural women who use the research results to improve their seaweed farming and their income. Msuya's work has especially helped marginalized rural women in Tanzania increase their income through production of seaweed value-added products.

**Dr Flower  
Ezekiel  
Msuya**



**Philip  
Erick  
Otieno**

**Philip Erick Otieno** is a gender activist, trainer, and an instructor in techniques of assertiveness and boundary setting. He is well-known as an activist in global gender and development related issues. He currently serves as the Executive Director of Men for Gender Equality Now (MEGEN). Over the last 12 years, Otieno has been engaged in raising awareness, lobbying, and advocating for human rights and gender issues in Kenya. In addition, as a trainer, he has been engaged in capacity-building activities in Botswana, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

## Social media and webcasting

Participants are encouraged to share their ideas, views and insights via social media channels using **#agtalks** hashtag.

The virtual audience may follow the proceedings and interact with the prominent guests on the social media channels listed below and via webcasting at <http://webcasting.ifad.org/agtalks>.



<http://www.twitter.com/ifadnews>



<http://ifad-un.blogspot.com>



[instagram.com/ifadnews](https://www.instagram.com/ifadnews)



<http://www.youtube.com/user/IFADTV>



<https://www.facebook.com/IFAD>



<https://plus.google.com/u/0/104946654582685330240/posts>

## Coffee

Coffee, light beverages and pastries will be available outside the meeting room.

## Wi-Fi

Wi-Fi facilities are available in all meeting rooms. You may connect to the **ifad\_guest** network using **ifadguest** as password.



International Fund for Agricultural Development

Via Paolo di Dono, 44 - 00142 Rome, Italy

Tel: +39 06 54591 - Fax: +39 06 5043463

E-mail: [ifad@ifad.org](mailto:ifad@ifad.org)

[www.ifad.org](http://www.ifad.org)

[www.ruralpovertyportal.org](http://www.ruralpovertyportal.org)



[ifad-un.blogspot.com](http://ifad-un.blogspot.com)



[www.facebook.com/ifad](http://www.facebook.com/ifad)



[instagram.com/ifadnews](https://www.instagram.com/ifadnews)



[www.twitter.com/ifadnews](http://www.twitter.com/ifadnews)



[www.youtube.com/user/ifadTV](http://www.youtube.com/user/ifadTV)

Tag  
your tweets,  
updates, photos  
and videos  
with  
**#agtalks**