

**Statement by  
David Cooper  
Acting Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity  
International Day of Rural Women  
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On this International Day of Rural Women, we acknowledge the crucial role that rural women and girls play in the ongoing fight against poverty, hunger, and biodiversity loss.

Women and girls in rural areas often face the disproportionate and multi-dimensional burden of poverty and inequality. This creates and exacerbates other challenges linked to their limited participation in decision-making processes, including those related to land ownership rights.

The [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#) and the [Gender Plan of Action](#) of the Convention on Biological Diversity recognize the distinct roles that women and girls play in the conservation of biological diversity and in the promotion of sustainable development. Successful implementation of the Framework will depend on ensuring gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls within the broader perspective of reducing inequalities. Specifically, [Target 22](#) of the Framework underscores the importance of ensuring the full, equitable, inclusive, effective and gender-responsive representation and participation of women and girls. Additionally, [Target 23](#) calls for gender equality in the implementation of the Framework. Both targets point to the importance of promoting a gender-responsive approach within a broader aim of addressing inequalities and, as we move the Framework from agreement to action, this will be critical.

Promoting the coherent and coordinated implementation of the Framework and the Gender Plan of Action holds potential for meeting the global commitment of achieving gender equality and for promoting the rights and empowerment of all women and girls, including those who live and work in rural areas.

There is a profound connection between gender equality and sustainable use of biodiversity. Reducing gender inequalities can contribute to a more efficient use of land and resources which can, in turn, lead to increased agricultural yields, heightened output and the overall well-being of all people living in urban areas, including women and girls.