

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF RURAL WOMEN

Women produce half the world's food, but own only 1% of it's farmland.

Two-thirds of the illiterate adults in the developing world are women

The United Nations (UN) International Day of Rural Women is annually celebrated on 15 October to recognise rural women's roles in supporting their communities. The idea of honouring rural women with a special day was put forward at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China in 1995.

On this day – **15 October** - we recognise the critical role and contribution of rural and indigenous women in enhancing agriculture and rural development, improving food security and eradicating rural poverty.

CHALLENGES RURAL WOMEN FACE:

- Long hours of work – women often combine multiple forms of employment to increase income to provide for their families.
- Lack of access to public and social infrastructure.
- Lack of access to education, skills development and technical training and lack of opportunity to use education and learned skills.
- Lack of access to health care resulting in high maternal mortality, high infant mortality and death at an early age.
- Lack of access to support for mental health issues, abuse issues and single parent issues.
- Limited access to credit – this restricts women in land ownership, planting of crops for food production, and other entrepreneurial exercises.
- Lack of respect for achievement - whilst women produce half the world's food production, women own only 1% of the agricultural land, and are the first to suffer during food crises caused by climate change, deforestation and desertification or natural disasters such as floods, fires, volcanoes and tornadoes.

ACWW, being the largest international organisation for rural women and having special consultative status with the UN since 1947 encourages its members and member societies to promote:

International Day of Rural Women on the 15th October 2011