



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**

G7 International Symposium on Food Security and Nutrition



Empowering women within agriculture and food systems

**Kostas Stamoulis,
Assistant Director-General a.i.,
Economic and Social
Development Department**



Rural women's contributions to agriculture and food security

- **Producers:**
 - ✓ unpaid or paid workers
 - ✓ employees or employers
 - ✓ on- or off-farm wage labourers

- **Beside food production, women play key roles in:**
 - ✓ agri-food processing and marketing
 - ✓ unpaid care and domestic work, incl. food preparation and reduction of food waste



However, rural women continue to face serious constraints in access to:

- **Education and extension services**
- **Productive resources (land, water)**
- **Decent employment opportunities**
- **Workers' and producers' organizations**
- **Decision-making processes**
(household, community, beyond)
- **Climate change adaptation practices (FAO SOFA 2016)**



Rural gender inequalities impact negatively on:

- Overall agricultural production
- Household food security and well-being
- Women's capacity to contribute to and benefit from development
- Rural sector's resilience
(e.g. to climate change – FAO SOFA 2016)



Feminization of agriculture

- **FAO's research shows that women's roles in agriculture have changed dramatically in last 2-3 decades**
- **Women tend to move out of agriculture more slowly than men and their roles in farming may actually expand**
- **In many parts of the Near East and North Africa, Central Asia, South Asia, and Latin America, the share of women in agriculture is growing significantly**



Feminization of agriculture:

Good or bad?

- **Depends mainly on the characteristics of women's jobs – whether they empower women, or exacerbate gender inequalities:**
 - ✓ **When women continue to be concentrated in low-skilled and less formal jobs, then feminization of agriculture hinders rural poverty reduction**
 - ✓ **When feminization of agriculture improves women's access to assets, jobs and services**



How can we close the gap in agriculture?

No blueprint exists, but some basic principles are universal:

- **Increase awareness that policies have different impacts on women and men**
- **Improve data collection on women's paid and unpaid work**
- **Guarantee gender equality both on paper and in practice**
- **Build women's human capital**
- **Recognize, redistribute, reduce rural women's work burden**

Source: FAO SOFA 2010-11



Nutrition-sensitive social protection

Social protection can address the underlying causes of malnutrition by:

- Increasing food consumption and dietary diversity.
- Minimizing negative coping mechanisms affecting nutrition and health.
- Enhancing households productive capacity: addressing economic and social barriers to accessing services (direct and indirect).

Special focus on:

- **Infants** and **young children** and **women** and **girls** of reproductive age
- Pre-schoolers, school-aged children and youths
- At-risk households



Guiding principles for nutrition-sensitive social protection

- **Target the nutritionally vulnerable** – particularly women, children, and vulnerable groups
- Incorporate explicit nutrition **objectives** and **indicators**.
- **Empower women** and make them the recipients of social protection benefits, which can **break the inter-generational cycle of malnutrition**.
- **Promote strategies that enable households to diversify their diets and livelihoods**.
- **Strengthen linkages** to health and sanitation services by incorporating health objectives.
- **Integrate nutrition education and promotion** into social protection Scale up safety nets in times of crises.



What could be done together to empower women?

Stakeholders join forces to:

- Provide robust evidence through sex-disaggregated data and analysis
- “Bundle” interventions to achieve better results on the ground
- Influence legislative and political progress towards gender equality in agriculture and food systems
- SDGs offer a unique opportunity
- Monitor progress through SDG indicators



Actions already taken by the G7 and further actions for consideration

- The G7 affirmed its support for the CFS-RAI and VGGT in the past.
- The G7 Ise Shima Vision for Action on Food Security and Nutrition provides for a number of activities that support women in agriculture and food security.



Actions already taken by the G7 and further actions for consideration

- The G7 could consider to:
 - Practical guidance on the operationalization of RAI and VGGT with a special focus on gender.
 - Design national mechanisms that facilitate the operationalization of VGGT and CFS-RAI and promote the participation of women.
 - Support social protection mechanisms and safety nets designed to focus and address gender issues.



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**Thank you
for your
attention**

A woman with dark hair, wearing a dark blue polka-dot shirt, is smiling and looking to the right. She is in an outdoor setting with green foliage and some yellow flowers in the background. The image is partially obscured by a white text box on the right side.

How does FAO empower rural women?

- Gender is a cross-cutting theme in FAO's renewed Strategic Framework
- FAO is in frontline implementing programmes and projects at country, regional and global levels to close the gender gap in agriculture
- Reducing gender inequalities is a crucial part of FAO's global mandate



How does FAO empower rural women?

Some examples

- **FAO-ECOWAS programme “*Gender Responsive National and Regional Agricultural Investment Plans*”**
 - ✓ assisting ECOWAS Member States to meet the Zero Hunger Challenge
- **Rural women’s access to agri-food value chains**
 - ✓ Africa programme “Enable women to benefit more equally from agri-food value chains”
 - ✓ Assessments of rural women’s work burden in specific farming systems
 - ✓ Identifying labour-saving technologies, promotion of related services



How does FAO empower rural women?

Some examples

- **Strengthening institutional capacities to collect, analyze and use sex-disaggregated data**
 - ✓ **World Programme for Census of Agriculture 2020:** guidelines/standards for data collection on women's ownership of land and livestock
 - ✓ **custodian on SDG indicators 5.a.1 and 5.a.2**
 - ✓ **supporting natl. stats. offices** to improve availability of gender statistics
- **FAO's work on land tenure**
 - ✓ supporting implementation of the **Voluntary Guidelines on Tenure of Land**
 - ✓ **FAO Gender and Land Rights Database** (over 80 countries!) and **Legal Assessment Tool**
 - ✓ **E-learning course** on “Governing land for women and men”



At the community level

- **FAO empowers rural women by building platforms to access information and voice their needs:**
 - ✓ **FAO Dimitra Project:** over 300,000 rural women and men directly involved in 1,300 existing Dimitra Clubs in 5 African countries
 - ✓ **Concrete results achieved in many areas:** access to land, employment, social protection, participatory decision-making