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G7 International Symposium on Food Security and Nutrition



Empowering women within agriculture and food systems

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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**



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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)**

A woman wearing a red headscarf and a green long-sleeved shirt is working in a field. She is holding a tool and appears to be engaged in agricultural labor. The background shows a dirt path and lush green vegetation.

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)



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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**



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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 shirt with white polka dots, is looking upwards and to the right with a slight smile. She is in an outdoor setting with green foliage and some yellow flowers in the background.

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



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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