



Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería



## **CFS50 Side Event – The power of gender transformative approaches: addressing discriminatory social norms to improve food security and nutrition for all (11 October 2022, 8.30-9.45am CEST)**

### **EVENT SUMMARY**

By focusing on discriminatory social norms, gender transformative approaches have the power to consciously and intentionally address the underlying causes of gender inequalities and improve food security and nutrition for all, in line with Sustainable Development Goals 2 and 5.


This was the key message of a virtual side event held during the 50<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS50) on 11 October 2022, moderated by WFP's Senior Gender Advisor Elizabeth Burges-Sims. The webinar was co-organized by the EU-RBA Joint Programme on Gender Transformative Approaches for Food Security and Nutrition (JP GTA) – implemented by FAO, IFAD and WFP in collaboration with and through financial support from the European Union – together with the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of Ecuador, Global Affairs Canada, CARE International and UN Women.

According to [data](#) collected by UN Women on the prevalence of discriminatory attitudes and gender-based stereotypes across 20 countries, in 2022 a surprising 25% of respondents agree that 'in times of food shortages, priority should be given to men', while 31% of respondents agree that 'when jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women'. Jemimah Njuki, Chief of Women's Economic Empowerment at UN Women, highlighted that to change such attitudes and ensure transformative change, it is imperative to understand and address unequal gender norms.

[Gender-related social norms](#) prescribe women's and men's roles and responsibilities - for instance, 'people in my community think that women should not own land' or 'people in my community think that women should not make the final decisions about household purchases'. They shape women's ability to learn, to work, access markets and have bank accounts, to control finances and expenditures or influence decisions about what to grow, eat, how to feed their children, what to sell and purchase.

### **Tools and strategies to address discriminatory norms**

Speakers during the event showcased concrete examples of tools and strategies implemented by the United Nations Rome-based Agencies under the JP GTA in Ecuador and Malawi, as well as by other development actors, to support the implementation of national policies, strategies and global policy guidelines to identify and transform discriminatory gender norms.



In Ecuador, where family farming plays an essential role in reducing food insecurity and malnutrition, the JP GTA is working with the Government of Ecuador to support the implementation of the National Agricultural Strategy for Rural Women (ENAMR) and reduce gender barriers and gaps in family farming. Carlos Chango, Undersecretary for Family Farming at the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of Ecuador, explained that in order to achieve results, it is key to implement activities and consider gendered social norms at multiple levels: policy, producer organizations, communities and households. Gender transformative methodologies in the context of the JP GTA are [currently being implemented](#) in four provinces of Ecuador reaching approximately 1,000 families and more than 300 public officials from national and local institutions.

Meanwhile, the JP GTA has collaborated with CARE International in Malawi to conduct a social norms diagnostic study involving more than 700 participants in five districts. CARE Malawi's Gender Justice and Advocacy Lead Billy Molosoni explained that the study sought to understand the most prevailing gender-related social norms negatively affecting the financial inclusion of women and youth. Analyzing these gender norms can support the development of financial services that better meet women's needs. The study was carried out as part of the [CGAP/FinEquity Social Norms Collaborative Lab](#) and involved two local universities, the University of Malawi and the Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources. It is currently being finalized for publication.

### **Committing to institutional change**

A recurring theme was the importance of creating sustainable change that makes a lasting difference. Marta Berggren, Deputy Director of Global Affairs Canada's Gender Equality Division, noted that while Canada continues to build on decades of efforts to advance human rights and gender equality as a key component of its feminist foreign policy, it now focuses not only on equality of outcomes but also on achieving transformational change by addressing discriminatory practices that prevent equality of action.

EU Deputy Permanent Representative Renate Hahlen reiterated the EU's commitment to gender equality, demonstrated through its support of the Joint Programme and its goal of tackling gendered social norms and promoting gender transformative approaches. She recalled [guidance](#) published by the JP GTA in July 2022 on formulating indicators to measure gendered social norms, and underscored that the JP GTA is contributing to a "cultural shift within our own respective institutions and in our ability to work together".

"FAO is deeply committed to identifying, understanding and addressing the underlying causes of gender inequalities by integrating a gender transformative approach and related methodologies in its work," said FAO's Chief Economist Máximo Torero, providing opening remarks at the event. "This Joint Programme is an innovative initiative that is helping the Rome-based Agencies to explore new ways to make agrifood systems more inclusive, just, efficient and resilient."

"This work is complex and takes time, which is why learning opportunities such as this event are so crucial," concluded Emily Wylde, IFAD Senior Technical Specialist (Social Inclusion - Poverty Targeting). "Learning from other development actors can help us advance along this path to identify other successful methodologies and ways to embrace and accelerate the change needed within our own organizations."

*More information about the event as well as the event recording can be found [here](#).*