General comments

FAO welcomes the zero draft of the Voluntary Guidelines and appreciates the work of the CFS Secretariat. FAO is particularly pleased with Part 2 on the core principles.

We consider this draft as a very good starting point. At the same time, FAO strongly recommends to make the following changes in order to ensure an improved document is brought to the regional consultations:

- Ensure that the Guidelines focus on the mandate of CFS in all the different thematic areas, and that the policy areas are linked to issues related to food security and nutrition and the agri-food system.
- Ensure that the narratives and policy areas are backed by latest evidence and are based on the most recent and ground-breaking literature and experience from the development cooperation.

Comments on Part 3

During the subsequent development of the draft, consider reorganizing the structure of Part 3. In particular:

- Regarding the policy areas in general: ensure that all the issues mentioned in the narrative are reflected in the respective policy areas.
- Consider including the rational (why) of the importance of each area.
- Regarding the narratives: ensure that the narratives address the complexities and interrelations of the issues and avoid focusing on generalizations and symptoms that do not reflect the complexities and interrelations of key aspects of the inequalities and the systemic causes underpinning gender inequalities.
- Section 3.1: Consider separating women’s and men’s ability to make strategic choices over their households, children’s and their own nutrition from women’s participation, voice and leadership as they are different in nature and need to be tackled in a diverse manner. FAO suggests creating two different sections.
- Section 3.2: Consider changing the title from Women’s economic empowerment in food security and nutrition value chains to ‘Women’s profitable engagement in agri-food value chains and food systems’. This section should also address the role of women as business partners, market actors and entrepreneurs.
- Section 3.3 should not focus only on unpaid care and domestic work but on women’s work burden in general including burden related to agricultural and productive work. This should also include enhancing women’s access to and adoption of efficient, women friendly labour saving technologies, practices and access to adequate infrastructure and by promoting an equitable distribution of responsibilities.
- In section 3.5: we recommend to give adequate attention to land, water, fisheries, and forestry by reorganizing them into sub-sections.
Proposal for a new structure

3.1 Strengthening women and men’s ability to make strategic choices over their own and their family’s nutrition – **New area**

Adequate nutrition knowledge for both women and men, and addressing the gender norms that perpetuate women’s malnutrition and prevent having equal voice in equitable household decision-making.

Women’s own food security and nutrition needs – and often those of girls and adolescents– can often be neglected at the household level, where discriminatory gender and social norms prevail. In households that are vulnerable to food insecurity, women are at greater risk of malnutrition than men, because they often eat last and least. Malnutrition in mothers, especially those who are pregnant or breastfeeding can set up a cycle of deprivation that increases the likelihood of low birth weight, child mortality, serious disease, poor classroom performance and low work productivity. Social and economic inequalities between men and women often stand in the way of good nutrition. Gender matters in ensuring access to nutritious foods because initiatives to improve nutrition cannot achieve lasting success without taking into consideration the social, economic and biological differences between men and women.

Initiatives that promote gender equality and the empowerment of women significantly improve nutrition and well-being for the entire household. There is evidence that women’s empowerment is a pathway to improved nutrition due to positive links between women’s empowerment and child and maternal health. Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index data from various countries shows a correlation between different indicators of women’s empowerment and nutrition. For example, in Ghana women’s empowerment was strongly associated with diet quality and women’s aggregate empowerment and participation in credit decisions was positively and significantly correlated with women’s dietary diversity score.

Women need to be empowered to make decisions over their own nutrition and be able to contribute to the improvement of their families’ nutrition – this requires access to resources, adequate nutrition knowledge, and addressing the gender norms that prevent their voice in equitable household decision-making. While some parts of food production, procurement, and preparation decisions may be part of their traditional role as mothers and caregivers, the areas where they can exercise agency over these domains vary and norms and structural inequalities prevent them from having choice and agency. Conventional approaches to nutrition education tend to reinforce existing gender roles, focusing on women’s roles as mothers and caregivers of young children. To address this, nutrition education programs must recognize that men must also play a role in ensuring adequate nutrition for all.

3.2 Women’s participation, voice and leadership in policy- and decision-making at all levels

For this area we:
- propose a new title
- propose an example of what our suggestion of including a new subsection in each thematic area regarding the rationale (why)
- propose a new text for the problem statement
- Made several changes to the original narrative


### 3.3 Gender equality in agricultural investments, agri-food value chains and markets

For this area we:
- propose a new title
- propose an example of what our suggestion of including a new subsection in each thematic area regarding the rationale (why)
- propose a new text for the problem statement
- Made substantial inputs in track change mode

### 3.4. Recognition, reduction and redistribution of women’s work burden

Suggested literature: FAO Gender Equality Policy, objective 4.

This section needs to focus on women’s overall work burden including burden linked to agricultural and productive activities as women are often confined to perform manually labor-intensive tasks.

Reference to unpaid care and domestic work should stay, but should shortened and should not be the sole focus of the section. See FAO Gender Equality Policy, objective 4.

Enhancing their access to and adoption of efficient, women friendly and socially acceptable technologies, practices and access to adequate infrastructure and by promoting an equitable distribution of responsibilities, including at household level is an important part of the solution to reduce women’s work burden.

### 3.5 Access to agri-food labour markets and decent work

### 3.6 Access to and control over natural resources

We suggest that each of the sub-sections is given adequate attention.

- Land
- Water
- Fisheries
- Forestry

### 3.7 Access to and control over productive resources

Focus on:
Inputs
Improved technology (improved crop varieties, livestock breeding)
Mechanized tools
Livestock

3.8. Access to and equal benefit from education, financial and advisory services and ICTs

3.8.1 Education
3.8.2 Financial services
3.8.3 Advisory services (access to training, information and knowledge)
3.8.4 ICTs

3.9 Social protection schemes and food and nutrition assistance

3.10 Safety, security and elimination of violence and discrimination against women and girls in the context of rural and urban agri-food systems
PART 3 – THE VOLUNTARY GUIDELINES ON GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN’S AND GIRLS’ EMPOWERMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

3.1. Women’s participation in decision-making, leadership, and policy-making

-3.1 Strengthening women and men’s ability to make strategic choices over their own and their family’s nutrition

Women’s own food security and nutrition needs – and often those of girls and adolescents – can often be neglected at the household level, where discriminatory gender and social norms prevail. In households that are vulnerable to food insecurity, women are at greater risk of malnutrition than men, because they often eat last and least. Malnutrition in mothers, especially those who are pregnant or breastfeeding can set up a cycle of deprivation that increases the likelihood of low birth weight, child mortality, serious disease, poor classroom performance and low work productivity. Social and economic inequalities between men and women often stand in the way of good nutrition. Gender matters in ensuring access to nutritious foods because initiatives to improve nutrition cannot achieve lasting success without taking into consideration the social, economic and biological differences between men and women.

Initiatives that promote gender equality and the empowerment of women significantly improve nutrition and well-being for the entire household. There is evidence that women’s empowerment is a pathway to improved nutrition due to positive links between women’s empowerment and child and maternal health. Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index data from various countries shows a correlation between different indicators of women’s empowerment and nutrition. For example, in Ghana women’s empowerment was strongly associated with diet quality and women’s aggregate empowerment and participation in credit decisions was positively and significantly correlated with women’s dietary diversity score.

Women need to be empowered to make decisions over their own nutrition and be able to contribute to the improvement of their families’ nutrition – this requires access to resources, adequate nutrition knowledge, and addressing the gender norms that prevent their voice in equitable household decision-making. While some parts of food production, procurement, and preparation decisions may be part of their traditional role as mothers and caregivers, the areas where they can exercise agency over these domains vary and norms and structural inequalities prevent them from having choice and agency. Conventional approaches to nutrition education tend to reinforce existing gender roles, focusing on women’s roles as mothers and caregivers of young children. To address this, nutrition education programs must recognize that men must also play a role in ensuring adequate nutrition for all.

in food security and nutrition
3.2 Women’s participation, voice and leadership in policy- and decision-making at all levels

We suggest adding a rationale before the problem statement.

1. **Problem statement:** Globally, women are insufficiently represented in the decision-making processes for food security and nutrition, which is an obstacle to the design and implementation of effective related policies to support the realization of their rights, promotion of women’s interests and recognition of their key role. Promoting women’s meaningful participation and leadership is vital in advancing agricultural development and food and nutrition security.

2. Promoting the empowerment of women in the agricultural sector and food security and nutrition more generally and agricultural sectors is often hampered by their limited number participation in decision-making processes. Therefore, women’s enhanced leadership in public and private sectors is central to addressing gender specific challenges and embedding women’s concerns in key strategies and policies related to food security and nutrition.

3. Globally, the number proportion of women in public and private political-level decision-making bodies has increased, although it is still low in many countries. Despite this, women continue to be under-represented in all areas of decision-making and face significant barriers to their full and equal participation in structures and institutions that govern the agriculture and FSN and directly or indirectly affect their lives. Under-representation of women at decision-making level, and women’s limited voice and participation, in the food security and nutrition policy processes - at all levels - can lead to the absence of gender considerations, invisibility, and underfunding of their concerns in the national policies and strategies, as well as limit their effective implementation. This applies to development of national development plans and sectoral policies as well as to financial and macro-economic policies and budgets, and decisions over public spending. It applies to both adult and young women, with the latter facing even lower levels of representation due to the intersection of gender and age related factors. The unique knowledge and expertise of women are not incorporated into solutions to the various challenges of advancing sustainable and equitable development and FNS goals.

4. Rural women face particular obstacles despite their significant contribution to community development. This is partly due to their multiple roles and heavy workload, but also to the persistence of gender norms and traditional views about women’s and men’s roles in society and unequal power relations at households and community levels.

5. In many societies, several key decisions at household level - e.g. distribution of household work, access to and control over productive resources, recognition of their engagement in income-generating activities or involvement, and participation in workers’ and producers’ association - are predominantly male dominated. Young women and adolescent girls face additional hurdles related to family expectations and deep-rooted social norms that limit...
their options and shape their life. The lack of sufficient inclusion of rural women’s voices in planning and decision-making processes in households, communities, and institutions is a major impediment to addressing their priorities, aspirations and the challenges they face. In particular, women’s engagement in food producer organizations and farmer cooperatives should be strengthened, both in informal and formal types of these organizations.

Possible policy area:

1. Coordinated action across multiple fronts and levels Galvanizing women’s voices and leadership requires coordinated action across multiple fronts and levels including transforming cultural/constraining gender norms and attitudes; changing the narrative on women in leadership, providing relevant training to women and their organizations, target boards of directors and members of producer organizations of the importance of women’s participation in producer organizations, engaging women in producer organizations, creating safe spaces in policy processes for women of all ages to advocate for the realization of their rights, and introducing quotas.

3.3 Economic empowerment

Problem statement: Gender norms and cultural practices, together with unequal discriminatory or gender neutral blind legal and institutional inequalities, often result in women earning lower returns on natural resources and productive assets and their work throughout the value chains. The latter not only undermines women’s productive and entrepreneurial potential, but also the overall performance of the chain by generating distortions in the labour market, losses and inefficiencies. Lack of investments in appropriate technologies and access to advisory services and information that support women’s activities and productivity in the rural and agriculture sector impacts negatively on household food security and nutrition.

Throughout the value chain, gender norms and gendered patterns of labour and behavior condition men’s and women’s roles and responsibilities, decision-making patterns, the distribution of resources and decision making, and the benefits they derive from agriculture and food production. Developing gender-equitable agricultural investment and value chains, as well as access to markets requires an accurate understanding of existing gender relations and the specific barriers that women face in a specific context and the design of interventions that address gender imbalances across the different nodes of the value chains.
Interventions to enhance women’s economic empowerment interventions need to consider the whole value chain, and the gender division of labour within it within a specific legal, social, environmental and cultural context, from production, processing, storage, transportation, distribution processes and retail, to household redistribution and use, in order to identify the constraints that limit women’s entry and full participation at each node of the different value chain. These interventions should consider the needs and priorities of women from different socio-economic backgrounds (e.g. age, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, economic status, etc.).

For example, production from the crops managed by women is often retained for household consumption, offering marginal income opportunities. Moreover, as agricultural produce moves from farm to market, evidence indicates that women often lose control and opportunities for relation income generation along the value chain. Men usually sell crops at the market, including those grown by women, reducing their return on labour. Furthermore, even if women often grow high-value horticultural crops, such as vegetables for urban centers, lack of packing materials, cold chains and transportation result in high losses and limit earnings.

Women’s engagement in value-added food processing activities is constrained by a lack of credit and financial services, advisory services, technology and agri-food microenterprise training, as well as socio-cultural norms which restrict women’s mobility, reducing their ability to access lucrative markets. Lack of investment in technologies, rural infrastructure and processes that focus on women’s specific activities along the value chain, such as crop drying, and-storage and transportation technology, and cold chains, not only results in loss of food, but increases potential food safety hazards for them and their families/households, undermining food and nutrition security. It is also a missed opportunity for investments to positively shift gender norms.

There are many legal constrains that restrict women’s ability to access and benefit from productive resources and legal rights and accumulate resources and opportunities. Globally in 2019, women enjoyed only about 75% of the legal rights of men, across a range of indicators including mobility, workplace, pay, marriage, parenthood, entrepreneurship, assets and pensions. Legal gender equality is usually associated with better outcomes and incomes in the labour market for women and consequently with higher spending on food and children’s goods.

Possible policy areas:

i. Legal rights to women’s ownership, access to and control over natural and productive resources, as well as their access to services and knowledge to capitalize on them.

   Investments in appropriate rural agricultural technologies that support women’s activities, informed by a context analysis that applies a gender lens throughout the value chain.

   ii.
Promote capacity development for women to strengthen their leadership skills and improve their participation in decision-making processes at different levels.

3.4 Recognition, reduction and redistribution of unpaid care and domestic work

Women's work burden

Problem statement: Unequally distributed unpaid care and domestic work places a significant burden on women, hampering their ability to participate into productive activities.

Unpaid care and domestic work are critical to food and nutrition security. It includes preparation of food and processing, fetching fuelwood and water, cleaning, caring for children, the elderly and sick members of household, and many other activities necessary for human well-being and the society as whole.

However, this work is not equally shared. On average, women do nearly three times as much unpaid work as men. These unpaid productive activities are significant, and can contribute the equivalent of 60% of Gross Domestic Product. Despite their importance, these activities are not reflected in the national statistics. They place heavy burden on women by taking a significant portion of their time, hampering women’s participation in paid and (recognized) productive activities.

Redistribution of unpaid work between women and men and reducing the ‘drudgery’ of women’s unpaid work is vital for the empowerment of women and girls. Investment are needed in technologies and in rural infrastructure, including improved water supplies, sanitation and hygiene facilities, access to electricity and mechanization of processing tasks.

Changing gender norms that place women within a disproportionate burden of unpaid care and domestic work is necessary for a more equitable distribution of household tasks. Changing gender norms requires active engagement of men and boys. It is important to involve men and boys in domestic work and in child-care and move towards equal sharing of maternity and paternity leave. Investments into child care facilities are also required. Bringing men into the caring economy will not only redistribute the care work but foster greater gender equality and support maternal and child health and nutrition, as well as the closer relationship with father and children, and provide a positive role-modelling for boys and improved household dialogue.

Investments into child-care facilities are also required, including ensuring standards for paid care provision, childcare services. Social protection programmes can also support provision of child care services.

Measures are also required to calculate and recognize the socio-economic and financial value of unpaid work. Because, despite their importance, these activities are not reflected in the national statistics. Without recognition that the value of care work in low-income economies can amount to more than 50% of GDP, the assumption will continue that men are productive and women, who stay home to raise families, are consumers.

Possible policy areas:

1. Changing constraining gender norms, engagement of men and boys and prompting positive masculinities that lead to a redistribution of unpaid care and domestic work at the household level.

2. Changing gender norms that lead to a redistribution of unpaid work. Recognition, reduction redistribution of unpaid care and domestic work and establish legal measures to recognize the financial value redistribution Redistribution of unpaid work.

3. Investments in rural labour-saving technologies, that render unpaid care and agricultural work more effective and efficient, including improved water supplies, sanitation and hygiene facilities, access to electricity, mechanization of processing tasks.

4. Transforming social norm and increase engagement of men and boys in relation with children, the elderly and household care.

Access to agricultural-agri-food labour markets and decent work

Problem statement: Significant gender gaps persist in rural labour markets because of gender-based discrimination. In the agri-food systems, rural women are generally over-represented in vulnerable, informal and insecurity occupations, often as subsistence farmers or unpaid contributing family workers, or as part-time, unpaid, seasonal and part-time work casual workers and often receive lower wages than men for the same work. In terms of food security and nutrition related employment, women are often concentrated in service sectors and vulnerable, insecure, and part-time work casual workers and often receive lower wages than men for the same work. Consequently, women are less likely to have access to social protection benefits, including maternity benefits and pensions.

3. Access to secure employment in conditions of dignity and safety is vital to human welfare and well being. Around half of the world’s women and three quarters of the world’s men are in the labour force. However, women are more likely to be unemployed and to struggle to find paid work. Women are often concentrated in service sectors, vulnerable employment and insecure jobs that are lowest paid, such as seasonal labour, family labour or...
part-time work. Furthermore, many rural women are highly vulnerable to discrimination and exploitation in the workplace, including gender-based violence.

49. Access to productive employment and decent work in conditions of dignity and safety is vital to human welfare and well-being. However, wide gender labour force participation gaps characterize labour markets, especially in rural areas. Women are also more likely to be unemployed and to struggle to find paid work. Young rural women are, in particular, are more frequently unemployed or NEET (neither in employment nor in education or training) than their male counterparts, also due to their higher participation in unpaid household and care work. When they access paid jobs, women are often concentrated in service sectors, vulnerable employment and insecure jobs, often in informal economy, that are lowest paid and without social security, such as seasonal labour, family labour or part-time work, often having to combine more than one activity to make a living. Furthermore, many rural women are highly vulnerable to discrimination and exploitation in the workplace, including gender-based violence.

4 Generally, agricultural workers - including women - suffer from lack of adequate occupational safety and health measures, which may lead to high rates of disability, fatal accidents, injuries and exposure to pesticides. However, the nature of women's work means they are even less likely to have access to social protection benefits, including health insurance, maternity benefits and pensions. This results in lower incomes and less protection in the event of shocks, compromising women's ability to safely deliver food security and nutrition for themselves and their households.

5 Generally, agricultural workers - including women - suffer from lack of adequate occupational safety and health (OSH) measures, which may lead to high rates of work-related fatalities, injuries and diseases. Agriculture is one of the most hazardous occupations due to exposure to agrochemicals, machines and equipment, working with animals etc., yet the informal nature of work, especially for women, and remote nature of rural areas, often limits their access to the necessary health, information and training services to adequately respond to these health hazards. Also, the nature of women's work means they are even less likely to have access to social protection benefits, including maternity benefits and pensions. This results in lower incomes and less protection in the event of shocks including the COVID-19 pandemic, compromising women’s resilience and ability to deliver food security and nutrition for themselves and their households.

19. Women are on average a lower remuneration for work than men (i.e., gender wage gap), frequently affected by gender wage gap, due to sectoral and occupational segregation, and to women's overrepresentation in low-wage and part-time jobs. In rural areas, women are more likely to be employed in labour-intensive tasks, earning lower wages than men, and more likely to be paid a piece rate than a daily wage. In casual labour markets, women's wages can be as low as half of that of men. Women have less access to off-farm rural employment, critical to supplementing low farm incomes.

6 Women receive on average a lower remuneration for work than men (i.e., gender wage gap), frequently affected by gender wage gap, due to sectoral and occupational segregation, and to women's overrepresentation in low-wage and part-time jobs. In rural areas, women are more likely to be employed in labour-intensive tasks, earning lower wages than men, and more likely to be paid a piece rate than a daily wage. In casual labour markets, women's wages can be as low as half of that of men. Women have less access to off-farm rural employment, critical to supplementing low farm incomes.

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Women are frequently affected by gender wage gaps, due to sectoral and occupational segregation, and to women’s overrepresentation in low-wage and part-time jobs. In rural areas, women are more likely to be employed in labour intensive tasks, earning lower wages than men, and more likely to be paid a piece rate than a daily wage. In casual labour markets, women’s wages can be as low as half of that of men. Women have less than men access to off-farm rural employment, critical to supplementing low farm incomes.

The time burden of unpaid household activities can significantly limit women’s involvement in the labour market. The gendered division of labour within the family and the burden of unpaid care and domestic work prevent women from having enough time for education, productive farming, off-farm paid work, leadership participation, and leisure time.

Gender discrimination in rural areas also limits women’s entrepreneurship and business opportunities. Women-led small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) often lack easy access to financing for business expansion as a result of factors ranging from discriminatory social norms and women’s lack of assets to poor infrastructure and restrictive laws and regulations. Local investors, banks and private companies are often reluctant to provide finance for women’s SMEs because of their small scale and perceived low economic returns.

Migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, in particular, can be vulnerable to severe labour exploitation and other forms of abuse. In the case of women, this situation is further compounded by gendered dynamics and power relations.

A major gender issue within the agricultural sector is child labour. Although gender differences in agricultural child labour vary greatly across farming systems, rural girls are generally more likely than boys to work both in agriculture and in household chores, which negatively affects their well-being and ability to attend and benefit from school education.

Worldwide, the majority of child labour is found in the agriculture sector (71%), with 108 million boys and girls affected. Child labour violates the rights of children, and by endangering the health and education of the younger generations, it also forms an obstacle to sustainable agriculture development and food security. Gender roles and birth order often dictate occupations and tasks undertaken by boys and girls, the conditions and hours of work, and educational opportunities. Many girls face the double burden of performing household chores within their own households, combined with agricultural activities, frequently working more hours than boys in total. In addition, community attitudes, such as not valuing girls’ education and not considering household chores as work, pose additional challenges to improving the situation of girls in rural areas.

Gender-biased social norms, laws and practices also limit women’s participation in workers’ and producers’ organizations, especially in organized labour institutions such as trade unions.

Possible policy areas:
i. **Specific interventions and strategies to increase the access of young women of working age and adult women to decent employment opportunities.** By focusing on the untapped potential for farm and non-farm employment and agripreneurship in the agriculture sector and within food systems. The drivers for change should be identified on both the labour demand and supply side, including enhanced training and skills development, adapted labour intermediation services, as well as increased public and private gender-sensitive investments in rural areas and business development.

ii. **Cross-sectoral policy coherence and policy dialogue towards productive employment and decent work promotion in the agriculture and food sectors,** in particular among agriculture, employment, social protection, and youth and gender-related policies. Greater policy dialogue and coordination between key stakeholders, such as governments, civil society (including producers’, workers’ and women specific organizations) and the private sector to identify feasible policy options that address gender inequalities in rural labour markets and promote women’s empowerment.

iii. **Promotion of decent work and improvement of working conditions in agriculture and food value chains,** with a gender-sensitive approach and specific attention to women and girls, including in terms of safer and labour-saving technologies and practices across agricultural sub-sectors, adoption of OSH measures, access to social protection, adequate living wages, and child labour elimination.

**3.6 Access to and control over natural resources**

**Problem statement:** Women in rural areas and in agriculture have less access to an array of resources than men. This includes natural resources as well as productive inputs and services. **Addressing these gender imbalances** could deliver a 12–17 percent reduction in the world’s hungry. Women are also often more vulnerable or disproportionately affected by climate-related shocks, as the resources they control are often the most marginal and fragile from the onset, they have less financial capability to recover from climate shocks, and may not have sufficient and timely information to climate information and climate services.

**3.6.1 Land**
3.6.2 Water
3.6.3 Forests
3.6.4 Fisheries

If women and men had the same access to all resources and services, women’s agricultural production yields would increase 20 – 30 percent, raising overall agricultural output in developing countries by 2.5 – 4 percent. This could deliver a 12 – 17 percent reduction in the world’s hungry.

Around the world, land serves as a foundation for security, shelter, income and livelihoods. However, rights to land are not equitably distributed and women encounter persistent barriers to land rights in over half the countries in the world, sometimes despite laws and policies that enshrine those rights.

In agriculture, women own, access to and control less land than men, as well as complementary natural resources including water and trees. Women’s land tenure and access is often uncertain, limiting options to sustainably manage it. Where women do have access to agricultural land, their plots are usually smaller, and of poorer quality than men’s, and with less secure use rights than men’s.

Access to water is important for both agriculture, livestock, fisheries and aquaculture production and for household and domestic purposes (drinking, sanitation, cooking and hygiene).

Fisheries and aquaculture account for 10-12 percent of global livelihoods and are key contributors to food and nutrition security. Women represent up to half of the labour force in aquaculture, with processing and trading, but women have fewer opportunities and receive lower returns and income than men.

In low-income countries women and girls are usually responsible for the management of the household water supplies for domestic purposes and in 8 out of 10 households, with offsite water sources, for collecting water. Such time-consuming chores not only keep girls away from school but, particularly in fragile contexts, can put women and girls at risk of abuse or attack.

Forests, and their resources, provide different services for women linked to the well-being of the household, including fuelwood for domestic use, food and medicine for the family, and fodder for livestock compared to men often linked to commercial objectives, including timber extraction.

The differential uses of land, water, trees and forestry resources by men and women lead to different specialized knowledge of resource management needs of those resources. Failure to include women’s specialized knowledge in land, water, and forestry policy

WHO and UNICEF 2017 Progress on Drinking Water, Sanitation and Hygiene.
and planning can lead to poor outcomes, including loss of biodiversity, water pollution, soil degradation, loss of forest cover, and a failure to mitigate and adapt to climate change. A failure to ensure fair gender representation in community management and user groups results in women being excluded from resource use, undermining the imposed community rules, and consequent suboptimal management of the resources.

Climate-induced weather-related events will have more severe impacts on the availability of natural resources, which will directly affect and consequently on women, increasing the time they need to use for fetching water and fuelwood. When climate-related disasters result in male outmigration, women are obliged to assume additional on-farm responsibilities without commensurate resources and with limited decision-making power over land that is often not legally in their name, limiting their ability to request formal government programs, subsidies or financial services.

Possible policy areas:

i. Land rights for women, associated with opportunities for investment in agriculture and other business enterprises, closing the gap between law and practice to improve women’s economic empowerment, including facilitating access to legal advice and services to secure women’s rights.

ii. Equal tenure rights and access to land, fisheries and forests for women and men, independent of women’s civil and marital status. (4th principle of implementation of VGGT).

Inclusion of women and girls in the development of EPRP and DRR strategies. When climate change preparedness, adaptation and mitigation strategies fail to include women in their preparation, implementation is less effective and will foster ongoing reinforce existing gender inequities.

3.5.2 Agricultural inputs and productive (?) and advisory services

3.7 Access to, control over and equal benefit from productive resources

Problem statement: Women have less access to inputs and services other productive resources, and they are often not well-adapted to their needs and realities.

Focus in this section on:

- Inputs
- Innovation/improved technology (improved crop variates, breeding...), mechanized tools
- Livestock
Agricultural researchers are critical to improving farm productivity for all farmers, and gender balance among them is key to ensuring that both women and men’s farming challenges are recognized. Yet, in many countries female agricultural researchers are scarce, often representing less than a quarter of the total. Even where there are more female agricultural researchers, they are far less likely to hold PhDs or be in senior and management positions.

Both men and women grow crops but they often grow different crops and/or varieties and have different uses for the crops they grow. Most breeding programs have focused on improving traits of commercial crops. Women often managed by men, lack access to critical agricultural extension services. Female farmers receive little direct agricultural extension provision with women’s priorities in breeding programs often being sidelined or disregarded, most assumed to access information through their husbands.

Most farm implements, including mechanized tools, have also been designed based on the height, strength and body type of men, inappropriate for use by, or even harmful to, women. Moreover, mechanization for women’s activities in drying, storage and processing may be unavailable.

Livestock is a key asset for rural households, often representing a wealth accumulation instrument, as well as a key nutrient source for households. Most animal care is usually done by women and children, with women often taking more prominent role in the care of small livestock and poultry.

Agricultural researchers are critical to improving farm productivity for all farmers, and gender balance among them is key to ensuring that both women and men’s farming challenges are recognized. Yet, in many countries female agricultural researchers are scarce, often less than a quarter. Even where there are more female agricultural researchers, they are far less likely to hold PhDs or be in senior and management positions.

Women often lack access to critical agricultural extension services. Female farmers receive little direct agricultural extension provision with most assumed to access information through their husbands.

Possible policy areas:

Incorporation of both women and men’s desired crop traits into plant breeding programmes - Agricultural researchers engaged in crop breeding, especially those in the public sector, should always engage both men and women in the process, including the evaluation of different varieties under trial. This includes ensuring that there are female-managed demonstration plots as well as ensuring they have equitable access to research stations.

i. Adapted and appropriate tools and technologies – appropriate ergonomic tools, mechanization technologies and processing equipment are developed for female farmers.
ii. Promoting gender sensitive and transformative extension advisory services through strategies that target women and consider their heavy workloads and specific needs and constraints.

iii. 

3.5.3 Credit and other financial services

3.8 Access to and equal benefit from education, financial and advisory services and ICTs

3.8.1 Education

3.8.2 Financial services

3.8.3 Advisory services (access to training, knowledge and information); refer to agricultural research

3.8.4 ICTs

See separate word document for section 3.8.

Problem statement: Women’s limited access to resources and services such as finance, knowledge, social networks and transportation exacerbates their limited ownership of, access to or control of natural and productive resources. This results in lower returns on their productive resource activities and limits their ability to invest in their farms and add value to their postproduction activities.

Financial capital is a significant constraint to women’s entrepreneurial activities and rewardable engagement all along the food system and value chains. Women often face more restrictive collateral requirements, shorter maturity of loans, and higher interest rates than men. For women to not only improve productivity but translate it into improved incomes and livelihoods, they need improved access to markets and more favorable conditions in accessing, or financial services such as credits.

Even though women are often more exposed and vulnerable to climate-related agricultural risks, the lack of financial inclusion for women also limits their ability to access disaster risk financing instruments (e.g. crop insurances) to address, with women often resorting to selling their climate-related agricultural risks, although they are often more exposed to those risks, and their assets first likely to be sold first to be able to cope with risks.
A key aspect of women's access to physical and the necessary complementary resources are determined by their access to networks, or social capital. Producer groups, agricultural extension provision and transportation are often more available to men because they are better connected to those (usually men) who control many of those domains. For example, men may obtain lifts to local towns on trucks picking up commercial agricultural production, which is unavailable to women. Agricultural extension agents, who often facilitate access to market and services, are usually male and less likely to make these connections for women farmers.

The cooperative model offers low income rural women important opportunities for employment, enhanced livelihoods and access to productive resources and services, as they often begin informally. Cooperatives can grow into organized structures that enable effective bargaining with suppliers and retailers to get better services, generating profits for their farm and rural enterprises.

In many countries, weak sectoral capacities limit engagement, particularly with women in productive sectors. Yet women have more engagement with social sectors, including health. Leveraging women's existing sectoral community groups to deliver agricultural, financial and digital services is an opportunity to break sectoral silos. Women are often part of community nutrition and health groups, which offer an opportunity to engage with them on broader topics. In some countries, community nutrition promoters engage with agricultural producer groups that include female members to link agricultural production, the food system and diet composition.

Possible policy areas:

i. Women's underrepresentation at all levels of the global financial system, from savers and borrowers to bank board members and regulators. Women account for less than 2 percent of financial institutions’ chief executive officers and less than 20 percent of executive board members. Yet the presence of women appears associated with greater financial resilience and a higher share of women on boards of banking-supervision agencies is associated with greater bank stability.

ii. Specific financial programs for rural female entrepreneurs, such as specialized funds to access seeds, or newer technologies and mechanization; more flexible collateral requirements, alternative data to assess credit risk, and customized disbursement schedules that fit women’s crop and cash flow needs; establishment of gender quotas within their financial service programs; from a focus on women to a focus on specific segments of women, by age, or value chain, or economic activity to ensure more tailored financial services.

iii. Women's participation to and organization through cooperatives or producer organizations (both formal and informal); these may be specific to women or to mixed groups (men and women), in which case attention should be paid to

effective participation of women (including quotas for women in leadership, and incentives for women’s participation in terms of trade-off to unpaid work and care responsibilities) and their capacities in terms of business development and leadership skills."

iii. Challenging and changing rigid gender norms and gender biases (of service providers) in relation to women’s financial inclusion

3.6 Access to education, capacity building, training, knowledge and information

**Problem statement:** Women’s education has been recognized to contribute more to reducing child malnutrition than improvements in food availability. Despite progress, and largely influenced by gender norms, girls remain more likely to be out of school sooner than boys and are also less likely to complete primary school. Women account for two thirds of the 750 million illiterate adults. Capacity building, training, knowledge and improved access to information are crucial tools for women producers, entrepreneurs, workers, traders, female farmers, so that they can make informed choices and realize their potential in food production.

Persistent inequalities in education continue to affect the lives of millions of women and girls worldwide. Women’s education is a key factor to reducing child malnutrition. A child born to a literate mother is 50 percent more likely to survive until the age of 5 years. Girls’ education is associated with reduced injury and mortality, and increased family and community resilience from natural disasters and extreme weather that results from climate change. Obstacles include poverty, early marriage and pregnancy, gender-based violence (GBV) and traditional attitudes about women’s status and roles.

Women account for two-thirds of the 750 million illiterate adults. Women farmers are hampered in taking advantage of and using extension services and information partly because of low literacy rates and lack of access to basic education. Literacy correlates with greater understanding of nutrition, breastfeeding, better farming practices and improved crop production methods, including a 30 percent increased likelihood of using fertilizers. Literate farmers also have greater negotiating capacity to deal with actors in the agriculture value chains.

Lower schooling levels restrict their women’s ability to access information and knowledge, and fully participate in agriculture and food policy and programme formulation. This reduces agricultural productivity, food security and nutrition improvements for them and their families. Women can greatly benefit from women focused training and capacity building programmes. These range from literacy programmes, to farmer field schools, to appropriate and safe crop protection application, to agri-food small enterprise management training.

Attention should be paid to the low percentage of women in higher agricultural education as it translates into a limited pool of available women extensionists, agricultural technicians, researchers, planners and policy makers. Gender-responsive extension services are
important to channel information and technologies to female farmers and to ensure that extension services target and respond to the needs of rural women.

It is also important to ensure that school curricula do not reinforce current gender norms and stereotypes by directing girls toward lower paid sectors of the economy and excluding boys from care work.

**Policy areas:**

1. **Female literacy programmes by governments, development partners and civil society.** The most successful programmes are locally owned, designed around empowering the beneficiaries, and challenging gender norms that are fostering gender inequality. Integrating women's literacy classes into agriculture and nutrition programmes enables women to participate in those programmes more effectively.

2. **Promotion of school curricula that challenge and expand gender social norms:** School curricula should encourage girls to pursue science, technology, engineering and mathematics careers and research (STEM) non-typical careers such as in science and research, and by also educating boys in the care responsibilities.

3.7 **Access to appropriate technologies, including ICT-based, digital and agri-innovations**

**Problem statement:** Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and digital revolution are transforming people's lives, offering new opportunities to foster wider communication, knowledge sharing, and collective action. However, technologies are not gender neutral, but mirror the societies that they are transforming. Applying a Gender lens is crucial to reap the transformational potential that technologies can offer women and girls.

ICT and digital technologies have a lot to offer to women, by enabling them to have access to online information resources and opportunities. ICT can provide access to new economic and employment opportunities for women, and can help connect female farmers with new markets to sell their produce.

Mobile phones for instance can contribute to increasing women's safety and sense of security. Digital messages can be sent to women with respect to agriculture, but also regarding child nutrition and health care. Smart phones enable women to see their children's growth charts on their phone and graphics of healthy diets. Women can also receive early warning messages with respect to disasters to enable them to protect their families.

However, digital technologies can also exacerbate existing gender inequities in the food system, if gender aspects are not paid sufficient attention to. Women and girls are less likely to have access to mobile phones than men and boys and consequently they can be excluded from the information it can provide. Currently, over 250 million fewer women are
online than man. Limited literacy of rural women can pose an additional barrier to access ICT technologies man. The gender gap in access to ICT needs to be urgently addressed if the benefits of ICT to gender equality and gender empowerment are to be achieved.

Policy areas:

i. **Design of agtech platforms to also address women’s needs and constraints to ensure that their agriculture, processing and marketing activities are not further marginalized.**

ii. **Messages targeted to both men and women as farmers and with respect to child nutrition and health care.**

3. **Safety, security and elimination of violence and discrimination against women and girls in the context of rural and urban agri-food systems**

**Problem statement:** Discrimination and violence against women and the lack of safety and security for women form a significant barrier to their social, economic and political development, profoundly shaping women’s lives and opportunities, at great cost to the food security and nutrition of individuals, families, communities and the development of economies. Women living in contexts of conflict or disaster are at heightened risk of violence.

Gender-based violence (GBV) or violence against women and girls is a universal problem that globally affects one in three women in their lifetime. GBV undermines the health, resilience and productive capacity of survivors and their families. Women living in households with domestic violence are likely to have poorer nutritional status together with their children. GBV comes with a significant human rights, health and financial cost to the whole society. School-related gender-based violence is a major obstacle to universal schooling and the right to education for girls.

Crises often exacerbate underlying gender inequalities and gender specific vulnerabilities. In times of emergency, risks of violence to women and girls increase. Conflicts and disasters are major contributing factors to insecurity and malnutrition. Children born in a fragile or conflict-affected state are twice as likely to be malnourished. Gender-inequitable access to land, property or credit mean that women and female-headed households have few buffers against shocks due e.g. to the loss of production, food

A number of UN Security Council Resolutions have been passed to address these issues. The first, Resolution 1325, passed in 2000, calls for both participation and gender mainstreaming in all UN peace and security efforts, including peace negotiations, training of peace keepers, and reporting systems. CEDAW General Recommendation 30 (GR30) provides authoritative guidance to member states that have ratified CEDAW to protect women’s human rights before, during and after conflict. GR30 affirms CEDAW’s link with the UN Security Council work on women, peace and security as outlined in its Resolutions.
shortages and prices fluctuations. As a result, women’s ability to meet their own and their families’ nutritional needs may be compromised.

Food, water and fuelwood shortages often force women to travel longer distances, exposing them to a higher risk of rape and sexual assault, particularly in conflict zones. Food scarcity itself may exacerbate tensions in the household, leading to domestic violence. In order to feed their husband and children, women may reduce their number of meals per day and their food uptake.

Sexual exploitation and trafficking of women often increase during crises, due to the fracturing of governance, social and family structures. Refugee and internally displaced women and girls are particularly vulnerable to violence. Sexual and gender-based violence can also be used as a tactic of war.

In some contexts, women may adopt negative coping strategies for survival, engaging in transactional sex for money to buy food, exposing them to further violence and increased susceptibility to HIV and AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases as well as unwanted pregnancies. Raising poverty and food and income scarcity also increases the risk of forced and early marriage of girls, with devastating impacts on their education, health, and development.

Possible policy areas:

i. **Legal prohibitions measures to combat GBV.** In combatting GBV, legal prohibitions are essential, but insufficient. Proper attention needs to be paid to measures strengthening protection of women and girls from all forms of gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and abuse. Specific measure should be put in place to allow safe spaces for women to report.

ii. **Application of the “do no harm” principle.** The provision of food and nutrition assistance in humanitarian situations should not put women and girls at greater risks, ensuring the protection, safety, dignity and integrity of the women and girls in crisis situations.

iii. **Equal benefits for women, men, girls and boys.** All should benefit equally from food assistance and have the opportunity to participate equally in the decision-making and the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and policies.

iv. **Challenging and changing rigid gender norms that generate and perpetuate GBV and promoting positive masculinities and elimination of harmful practices**

Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls should be ensured in support of food security and nutrition in protracted crisis situations, as recognized by relevant international legal instruments, in particular the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).
3.9 Social protection schemes and food and nutrition assistance

**Problem statement:** The majority of the world’s population, in particular in rural areas, are unprotected by any form of social protection, women being over-represented in this group. Social protection can enhance food security and address poor health and malnutrition, as well as improve resilience to shocks and increase agricultural production and productivity. Access to and control of resources available by gender-responsive social protection as well as enhanced input into nutrition-related decision-making has a significant impact on women’s and girls’ empowerment and opportunities. Social protection schemes need to recognize the underlying socio-economic and cultural drivers of ill health and malnutrition, and address women’s and girls’ specific constraints and vulnerabilities, life-cycle transitions and risks, and tackle the intergenerational transmission of poverty.

Social protection can support communities, households and individuals to prevent, manage and overcome risks and vulnerabilities related to food security and nutrition. Household incomes and livelihoods are often impacted by economic, health, and climatic shocks and conflicts whose impact is exacerbated by systematic constraints related to liquidity, savings and credit. Agricultural activities are inherently risky, yet small-scale producers and family farmers typically lack adequate insurance and risk management instruments. Shocks often affect women differently and disproportionately due to their constraints, such as lower access to resources, services, markets, assets, information and opportunities. The shock absorbers in most households are women, who may reduce their own food consumption and resort to negative coping strategies including sale of assets to protect children and other family members. Social protection programmes, including cash and in-kind food and nutrition assistance, which can be scaled up quickly and are critical to reduce the likelihood of women’s asset sales, while protecting negative impacts on household food and nutrition security, and protect and promote livelihoods for all household members, are critical. To play this role, programmes need to be designed such that they can be scaled up quickly in the face of a shock.

Social protection programmes can play an important protective role during girls’ adolescence and transition to adulthood. They have been shown to reduce the risk of transactional sex and the exposure to intimate partner violence. Social protection systems can, in fact, systems can also address risks faced by women and girls over their lifecycle and support them with measures such as non-contributory in-kind or monetary social assistance (unconditional or conditional cash transfers, food vouchers, child and family benefits, pregnant and lactating women/caregiver benefits, old age pensions), contributory social insurance (child and family benefits, maternity protection, employment injury benefits, sickness and health protection, unemployment insurance), and labor market and livelihood enhancement interventions (public works programmes, asset transfer schemes, microfinance) and old-age benefits as well as unemployment insurance.

Commented [PH(111)]: We propose to change order and put this before the section on GBV.

Commented [KM(112)]: Suggest to use a different word. It is not only about incentivizing, but enabling productive investments and/or labour allocation.

Commented [NR(113)]: It is not only about incentivizing, but enabling productive investments and/or labour allocation.

Commented [NR(114)]: We would suggest to say something about constraints to income generating opportunities, as it is not just about risks (which of course are there).

Commented [NR(115)]: It may be useful to differentiate between covariate and idiosyncratic shocks that affect women differently and disproportionately.

Commented [NR(116)]: The programmes mentioned here are mostly cash-based interventions targeted at the vulnerable groups in question. There should be a mention of intersectoral “package” / “cash-plus” interventions that link monetary-based programmes with the provision of basic health and nutrition services. These include family/community/stakeholder nutritional counselling, social and behavioral change communication (SBCC), psychosocial support networks, nutrition-sensitive agriculture programmes, additional in-kind transfers etc. Best practice case studies include Ghana: Livelihoods Empowerment Against Poverty (Leap) Programme, Chile Solidario, Ethiopia: Integrated Nutrition Social Cash Transfer (In-SCT).

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However, cash-only interventions have been shown to have limited impact on non-financial and structural barriers to improving intermediate and final outcomes of malnutrition. Impacts of social protection are enhanced when provided as an integrated package of interventions. Complementary interventions such as nutritional counselling, social and behavioral change communication, psychosocial support and nutrition-sensitive agriculture programmes can help boost the effects of social protection on food security and nutrition. A comprehensive set of social policies and programs can significantly contribute towards advancement of gender equality in a society and address the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination faced by women and girls if designed and implemented in a gender responsive manner.

Social protection schemes in the form of food and nutrition assistance can have a direct positive impact on food security and nutrition of giving access to more and better food for women and their families, by giving access to more and better food for women and their families. Emphasis must be placed in ensuring that increased food consumption translates into better nutritional outcomes, which requires that investments also be made in improving healthcare services, safe water provision and sanitation, women’s and men’s nutritional knowledge and child caring practices, in particular in relation to infant and young child feeding, as well as measures to address gender-based violence and promote women’s empowerment.

The first 1,000 days are critical for children’s nutrition and interventions that support a healthy pregnancy, safe child birth, exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months and diversified nutritious complementary feeding should be prioritized. In addition, school feeding can support children and especially girls to enrol in schools and benefit from learning, and safe, diverse, and nutritious food. Emphasis must be placed in ensuring that increased food consumption translates into better nutritional outcomes, which requires that investments also be made in improving healthcare services, safe water provision and sanitation, women’s and men’s nutritional knowledge and child caring practices, in particular in relation to infant and young child feeding, as well as measures to address gender-based violence and promote women’s empowerment.

Nutrition assistance and interventions are vital for poverty reduction, food and nutrition security. Women and girls are twice as likely to suffer from malnutrition as men and boys, due to a combination of biological, social and cultural factors. Nutrition interventions and social protection need to address these factors by empowering women to make better, informed decisions about their diets, in addition to improving their access to food. Establishing policies and interventions to support women’s and girls’ specific nutritional needs are also of critical importance. Biological needs vary with women’s life cycle, with for instance special needs for iron, folic acid, and micronutrients like iron and iodine for pregnant women and adolescent girls. Malnutrition in mothers, especially those who are pregnant or breastfeeding, can set up an intergenerational cycle of malnutrition, including emotional and physical consequences and environmental disadvantage. Therefore, establishing policies and interventions to support women’s and girls’ specific nutritional needs are of critical importance for infant and young child development, preventable morbidity, lifelong poverty and even premature death.

Nutrition interventions and social protection also need to address these factors: the underlying drivers of malnutrition, by empowering women to make better, informed decisions about their nutritional consumption.
diets, in addition to improving their access to food. Establishing policies and intersectoral interventions to support women’s and girls’ specific nutritional needs are also of critical importance.

Therefore, establishing policies and interventions to support women’s and girls’ specific nutritional needs are of critical importance.

539 Possible policy areas:

i. **Collection of sex- and age disaggregated data** on the coverage, adequacy and comprehensiveness of social protection schemes, and tracking their impact on improving women’s and girls’ food security and nutrition.

   **Establish Social protection systems** that reduce women and girl’s vulnerability, support their engagement in productive activities, increased their resilience and promote gender equality.

ii. **Addressing women’s and girls’ specific life cycle transitions and risks** and the diversity of women’s experiences through social protection.

i.

iii. **Provide integrated nutrition sensitive complementary interventions and services** that address non-financial barriers to good nutritional and health status.

ii.

iv. **Promotion of social security systems that promote gender equality** in increased their re and promote gender mainstreaming. Integration of gender equality principles and women’s participation in social protection programme operations and institutional governance structures and in order to address harmful socio-cultural attitudes and practices, restrictive gender norms and other informal institutions to better empower that lead to and perpetuate the disempowerment of women and girls and have negative impact on their own and their children’s health, nutrition and development.

v. **Promotion of social security systems that promote gender equality.**
PART 4 - IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THE USE AND APPLICATION OF THE VOLUNTARY GUIDELINES

4.1 POLICY FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GUIDELINES

Governments are encouraged to stand behind their commitments to ensure the equal rights of men and women, boys and girls in the context of food security and nutrition and translate them into national policies, programmes, and investments with sufficient human and financial resources.

All CFS Members and stakeholders are encouraged to support and promote at all levels within their constituencies, and in collaboration with other relevant initiatives and platforms, the dissemination, use and application of the Guidelines to support the development and implementation of coordinated and multisectoral national policies, laws, programmes and investment plans to achieve gender equality and women’s and girls’ empowerment in the context of food security and nutrition.

Governments are invited to use the Guidelines as a tool to undertake initiatives toward achieving gender equality and women’s and girls’ empowerment in the context of food security and nutrition. These include implementing national strategies and programmes, identifying policy opportunities, fostering a transparent and open dialogue, promoting coordination mechanisms, enhancing policy coherence, supporting innovative technologies, and establishing or strengthening multistakeholder platforms, partnerships, processes and frameworks, promoting and supporting the involvement and engagement of all relevant stakeholders, including representatives of most vulnerable groups.

4.2 BUILDING AND STRENGTHENING CAPACITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Governments are strongly encouraged to mobilize adequate financial, technical and human resources, and encourage international cooperation, to increase the human and institutional capacity of countries to implement the Guidelines and to identify priorities toward their operationalization and monitoring at the international, regional, national and local levels. Technical agencies of the UN, bilateral cooperation agencies and other development partners can assist in this regard.

4.3 MONITORING THE USE AND APPLICATION OF THE GUIDELINES

Governments, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, are encouraged to define national policy priorities and related indicators, mobilize regional and local structures to report on these indicators, and establish or strengthen, where appropriate, existing monitoring and reporting systems in order to assess the efficiency of policies and regulations, and implement appropriate remedial actions in case of negative impacts or gaps.

Commented [SI(122)]: We could also highlight here the importance of sex-disaggregated data collection

9 These frameworks include the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement and Nutrition for Growth (N4G)
CFS is encouraged to include the Guidelines in its ongoing work and its existing funding resources on monitoring, as defined in the CFS Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition (GSF).
3.8. Access to and equal benefit from education, financial and advisory services and ICTs

3.8.1 Education

Problem statement: Women’s education has been recognized to contribute more to reducing child malnutrition than improvements in food availability. Despite progress, and largely influenced by gender norms, girls remain more likely to be out of school sooner than boys and are also less likely to complete primary school. Women account for two thirds of the 750 million illiterate adults. Obstacles include poverty, early marriage and pregnancy, gender-based violence (GBV) and traditional attitudes about women’s status and roles.

Persistent inequalities in education continue to affect the lives of millions of women and girls worldwide. Women’s education is a key factor to reducing child malnutrition. A child born to a literate mother is 50 percent more likely to survive until the age of 5 years. Girls’ education is associated with reduced injury and mortality, and increased family and community resilience from natural disasters and extreme weather that results from climate change. Women account for two-thirds of the 750 million illiterate adults. Women farmers are hampered in taking advantage of and using extension services and information partly because of low literacy rates and lack of access to basic education. Literacy correlates with greater understanding of nutrition, breastfeeding, better farming practices and improved crop production methods, including a 30 percent increased likelihood of using fertilizers. Literate farmers also have greater negotiating capacity to deal with actors in the agriculture value chains.

Lower schooling levels restricts women’s ability to access information and knowledge, and fully participate in agriculture and food policy and programme formulation. This reduces agricultural productivity, food security and nutrition improvements for them and their families. Women can greatly benefit from training and capacity building programmes, from literacy programmes, to farmer field schools, to appropriate and safe crop protection application, to agri-food small enterprise management training.

Attention should be paid to the low percentage of women in higher agricultural education as it translates into a limited pool of available women extensionists, agricultural technicians, researchers, planners and policy makers. Gender-responsive advisory/extension services are important to effectively channel adequate information and technologies to female farmers and to ensure that extension services target and respond to the needs of rural women.

Agricultural researchers are critical to improving farm productivity for all farmers, and gender balance among them is key to ensuring that both women and men’s farming
challenges are recognized. Yet, in many countries female agricultural researchers are scarce, often less than a quarter. Even where there are more female agricultural researchers, they are far less likely to hold PhDs or be in senior and management positions. It is important to ensure that school curricula do not reinforce current gender norms and stereotypes by directing girls toward lower paid sectors of the economy and excluding boys from care work.

3 Policy areas:

i. Female literacy programmes by governments, development partners and civil society. The most successful programmes are locally owned, designed around empowering the beneficiaries, and challenging gender norms that are perpetuating gender inequality. Integrating women’s literacy classes into agriculture and nutrition programmes enables women to participate in those programmes more effectively.

ii. Promotion of school curricula that challenge rigid gender social norms: School curricula should encourage girls to pursue science, technology, engineering and mathematics careers and research (STEM), and by also educating boys in the care responsibilities.

3.8.2 Financial services

Problem statement:

Financial capital is a significant constraint to women’s entrepreneurial activities and rewardable engagement all along the food system and value chains. Women often face more restrictive collateral requirements, shorter maturity of loans, and higher interest rates than men. For women to not only improve productivity but translate it into improved incomes and livelihoods, they need improved access to markets and more favorable conditions in accessing or financial services such as credits.

Even though women are often more exposed and vulnerable to climate-related agricultural risks, the lack of financial inclusion for women limits their ability to access disaster risk financing instruments (e.g. crop insurances), with women often resorting to selling their assets first to be able to cope with risks.

1 ASTI CGIAR
Possible policy areas:

i. **Women’s underrepresentation at all levels of the global financial system, from savers and borrowers to bank board members and regulators.** Women account for less than 2 percent of financial institutions’ chief executive officers and less than 20 percent of executive board members. Yet the presence of women appears associated with greater financial resilience and a higher share of women on boards of banking-supervision agencies is associated with greater bank stability.

ii. **Specific financial programs for rural female entrepreneurs**, such as specialized funds to access seeds, or newer technologies and mechanization; more flexible collateral requirements, alternative data to assess credit risk, and customized disbursement schedules that fit women’s crop and cash flow needs; establishment of gender quotas within their financial service programs; from a focus on women to a focus on specific segments of women, by age, or value chain, or economic activity to ensure more tailored financial services.

iii. **Women’s participation to and organization through cooperatives or producer organizations (both formal and informal)**: these may be specific to women or to mixed groups (men and women), in which case attention should be paid to effective participation of women (including quotas for women in leadership, and incentives for women’s participation in terms of trade-off to unpaid work and care responsibilities) and their capacities in terms of business development and leadership skills.

iv. **Challenging and changing rigid gender norms and gender biases of both service providers and clients in relation to women’s financial inclusion**

3.8.3 Advisory services (access to training, information and knowledge)

**Problem statement:**

Although women are major actors in agriculture and are key to ensuring food security, they generally have less access than men to (rural) advisory services. Even when they have access, these services are often not well adapted to their needs and realities. The failure of these services to effectively address the needs of women in most countries contributes significantly to the “gender gap” in agriculture, resulting in lower returns on their productive activities and limiting their ability to invest in their farms and add value to their postproduction activities.

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1 Sahay R. and M. Cihak, 2018 Women in Finance: A Case for Closing Gaps IMF
Common constraints women face include the unequal access to and control over productive resources, unbalanced power relations, and women’s limited mobility and heavy work burden arising from their multiple roles within households and communities.

Even when women can access advisory services, these may not necessarily respond to women’s needs because these services, as well as the information technologies and practices tend to be tailored to the needs of men.

The rates of return of advisory services are thus often lower for women than for men due to this gender bias in both the supply and the delivery of information.

Rigid gender norms that discriminate against women often result in women not being recognized as legitimate clients of advisory services and encourage the erroneous perception that service provision is gender neutral.

RAS organizations themselves may be gender biased, resulting in biased decision-making, targeting, employment of staff, service delivery models and content of the services.

Due to the structural challenges women face in the workforce and the society, organizations often find it difficult to recruit and retain women RAS advisors even in contexts where it is preferable to have women RAS personnel work with women producers.

The focus and content of RAS services, including information, services and technologies, are often biased toward male producers and may not necessarily meet women’s specific needs.

RAS services are often not tailored to women’s needs because women are not seen as legitimate farmers. The work done by women can be obscured by the view that they are ‘helpers’ on a family farm rather than farmers, which minimizes the diverse and critical roles that women play in agriculture.

Women’s time and mobility constraints caused by their productive and heavier domestic workload, constraining gender norms, and at times limited literacy reduce women’s access to advisory services.

Women and men often grow different crops, have different production priorities and face different constraints in production and marketing. The content of RAS should be appropriately tailored to address women farmer’s specific needs.

Women’s under-representation in membership-based rural institutions (e.g., producer organizations, cooperatives) limits their ability to advocate for their needs and interests, engage in collective action, and reduces their access to a range of services provided through these organizations.

**Policy areas:**

- Systematic data collection is the first important step toward analysing RAS usage and performance. Sex-disaggregated and gender-specific indicators related to access to and participation in RAS should be included in national agriculture surveys.

- To provide truly gender-equitable rural advisory services, holistic approaches are needed, and that the larger societal context must be considered along with the specifics of a given program. For this to happen, systemic change is needed: the entire RAS system, including national and
institutional policies, institutions (formal and informal), and RAS staff attitudes and capacities must be challenged and changed. The perspectives of gender equality and the empowerment of women need to become integral guiding principles within the enabling policy and organizational environment and the culture of organizations providing RAS.

- Recognize women as legitimate clients of advisory services.
- Design and deliver services in a way that they address women’s time, mobility and educational constraints.
- Adopt methods of delivery and content that address women’s specific needs.
- Foster women’s ability to represent their interests and voice their demands for advisory services.
- Develop a gender-equitable organizational culture in organizations that provide advisory services and introduce institutional mechanisms, which ensure the implementation of gender-responsive services. Including making specific efforts to recruit and retain female advisory service providers. Put in place mechanisms/practices to address the specific barriers women advisors face in adequately carrying out their work.
- Promote the adoption of gender transformative approaches in the design and delivery of advisory services, that are able to identify and challenge constraining gender norms, roles and relations that create and maintain women’s unequal access to and benefit from advisory services.

3.8.4 ICTs

Problem statement: Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and digital revolution are transforming people’s lives, offering new opportunities to foster wider communication, knowledge sharing, and collective action. However, technologies are not gender neutral, but mirror the societies that they are transforming. Applying a Gender lens is crucial to reap the transformational potential that technologies can offer women and girls.

ICT and digital technologies have a lot to offer to women, by enabling them to have access to online information resources and opportunities. ICT can provide access to new economic and employment opportunities for women, and can help connect female farmers with new markets to sell their produce.

Mobile phones for instance can contribute to increasing women’s safety and sense of security. Digital messages can be sent to women with respect to agriculture, but also regarding child nutrition and health care. Smart phones enable women to see their children’s growth charts on their phone and graphics of healthy diets. Women can also receive early warning messages with respect to disasters to enable them to protect their families.


Commented [PH(18]: A study carried by the GSMA Connected Women program (2015) identified a range of issues relating to gender gaps in mobile usage by women worldwide. Some of these issues are listed below:

- Over 1.7 billion females do not own mobile phones in low- and middle-income countries
- Women are on average 14% less likely to own a mobile phone than men, which translates into 200 million fewer women than men owning mobile phones
- Cost remains the greatest barrier to owning and using a mobile phone for women, who typically have less financial independence than men
- Women use phones (and especially mobile internet) less frequently and intensively than men
- Technical literacy and confidence are also key barriers for women

Source:
Bridging the gender gap: Mobile access and usage in low- and middle-income countries

Digital technologies can deliver a wide range of economic, institutional, environmental and social benefits by increasing access to rural services (information, advisory, market, business development, and financial).

At the frontline of the COVID-19 response in rural areas, RAS and, in particular, digital services have a great role in supporting producers and their organizations, by developing their technical, organizational, business and management skills, and by sharing practices that can improve rural livelihoods and well-being.

Digital tools and technologies enable information flow in spite of physical distancing and mobility constraints. FAQ suggests to explore simple, available and accessible, and easy-to-implement Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) solutions, such as short-message service (SMS), Interactive Voice Response (IVR), radio and TV, drones, online marketing, e-extension platforms, social media, etc.

Digital advisory services carry the potential to remedy the information asymmetry or knowledge inequality that female farmers currently experience by facilitating their access to a variety of resources, and allowing access to crucial technical and market information.

For ICT-enabled gender-responsive advisory services to reach women effectively, it is important to take into account women’s limited ability to pay for ICTs, technological illiteracy, and social norms that can potentially discourage women from adopting new technologies.

Commented [AH(19]: The benefits extend to connecting rural and remote communities, providing capacity building opportunities and access to credit
However, digital technologies can also exacerbate existing gender inequities in the food system, if gender aspects are not paid sufficient attention to. Women and girls are less likely to have access to mobile phones than men and boys and consequently they can be excluded from the information it can provide. Currently, over 250 million fewer women are online than men. Limited literacy of rural women can pose an additional barrier to access ICT technologies. The gender gap in access to ICT needs to be urgently addressed if the benefits of ICT to gender equality and gender empowerment are to be achieved.

**Policy areas:**

1. **Design of agtech platforms to also address women’s needs and constraints to ensure that their agriculture, processing and marketing activities are not further marginalized.**
2. **Messages targeted to both men and women as farmers and with respect to child nutrition and health care.**

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4. A key aspect of women’s access to physical and the necessary complementary resources are determined by their access to networks, or social capital. Producer groups, agricultural extension provision and transportation are often more available to men because they are better connected to those who control many of those domains (usually men). For example, men may obtain lifts to local towns on trucks picking up commercial agricultural production, which is unavailable to women. Agricultural extension agents, who often facilitate access to market and services, are usually male and less likely to make these connections for women farmers.

5. The cooperative model offers low-income rural women important opportunities for employment, enhanced livelihoods and access to productive resources and services, as they often begin informally. Cooperatives can grow into organized structures that enable effective arguing with suppliers and retailers to get better services, generating profits for their farm and rural enterprises.

6. In many countries, weak sectoral capacities limit engagement, particularly with women in productive sectors. Yet women have more engagement with social sectors, including health. Leveraging women’s existing sectoral community groups to deliver agricultural, financial and digital services is an opportunity to break sectoral silos. Women are often part of community nutrition and health groups, which offer an opportunity to engage with them on broader topics. In some countries, community nutrition promoters engage with agricultural producer groups that include female members to link agricultural production, the food system and diet composition.
Gender blindness in the planning and delivery of the available agricultural and extension services is also thought to contribute to women’s lower uptake of RAS.