

# First draft of the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment in the context of Food Security and Nutrition

## FAO's written inputs

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### Introduction

**Paragraph 6:** You may want to refer also to the latest SOFI (2021), see below.

"At the global level, the gender gap in the prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity has grown even larger in the year of the COVID-19 pandemic, with the prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity being 10 percent higher among women than men in 2020, compared to 6 percent in 2019." Source: FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. 2021. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021. Transforming food systems for food security, improved nutrition and affordable healthy diets for all. Rome, FAO. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb4474en>

**Paragraph 9:** sentence "However, discriminatory barriers and limiting societal gender norms and expectations prevent everyone from fulfilling their full potential." **instead of everyone, can we say: prevent also men and boys...**

### 1.2. Objectives

**Paragraph 12:** **include the word discriminatory;** transform **discriminatory** societal norms (or social norms) although would be better referring to gender norms or gendered social norms

### Principles

*Note: Based on learning from the EU-RBA Joint Programme on Gender Transformative Approaches for Food Security and Nutrition (JP GTA), FAO recommends to refrain from the use of the term 'gender transformation' and to refer to promoting gender transformative change instead. In addition, FAO suggest using language that is more precise and refer to discriminatory gender norms, imbalanced power relations and inequitable social systems, institutions and structures.*

**Paragraph 22.** Gender transformative approaches. The Guidelines promote the application of gender transformative approaches that challenge and tackle both the symptoms of gender inequality – including women's restricted access to land, financial services and other productive resources - and the structural causes of gender inequality entrenched in patriarchal systems and structures. **Gender transformation** Promoting gender transformative change also means identifying and creating unique opportunities for change in **discriminatory** gender norms and **imbalanced** power relations for

sustainable food security and nutrition for all. This requires the collective engagement of all, including men and boys, recognizing and respecting leadership of women and girls, to strengthen joint responsibility and commitment for successful transformation of unequal power relations and discriminatory inequitable social systems, institutions and structures.

**27. Reinforcing the collection and use of gender sex-disaggregated data.** The Guidelines promote regular collection and use of disaggregated data according to sex, age, disability and other intersectional variables and gender-sensitive statistics and indicators, including in areas such as access to land and financial resources, and inheritance rights. Quantitative data will be complemented by qualitative data derived from women's and men's valuable current, traditional, indigenous and local knowledge. Where possible, data should be disaggregated by age, ensuring that the perspectives of the elderly and children and young people are represented. Sound evidence enables informed decision-making and the development of evidence-based M&E systems and effective responses and policies.

*We suggest using sex-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive indicators*

### 3.1 Cross-cutting recommendations

Paragraph 31 (iii) Collect and use ~~gender quantitative and qualitative data disaggregated sex-~~ disaggregated quantitative and qualitative data broken-down by age, disability and other variables, which takes into account the national, regional and local context and its impact on gender relations, roles and norms and that reflects intersectional forms of discrimination where possible.

*Note: Write gender-transformative without hyphen.*

Paragraph 31 (v) Ensure adequate financial, technical and human resources, supported by political commitment and public policies that promote an enabling environment to generate social, economic and cultural changes with specific gender transformative policies, programmes and institutions. Measures to support gender-responsive budgeting should be put in place and implemented where possible.

### 3.2. Women's and girls' food security and nutrition

*Note: Gender norms are one of the principle root causes of gender inequalities.*

*To be more precise, add the word 'discriminatory' before gender norms.*

**Paragraph 40.** While some aspects of the decisions on food production, procurement, and preparation of food may be part of women's domain and part of their traditional roles as mothers and caregivers, in many societies some of the key decisions are predominantly male-dominated due to social norms and structural inequality. Women should be in a position to make decisions over their own nutrition and be able to contribute to the improvement of their families' nutrition. This means improving women's access to resources, ensuring they have access to knowledge on nutrition and healthy diets, and addressing the

root causes of discriminatory gender norms that can undermine their participation in household decision-making.

### **3.2.2. Policies and strategic approaches**

Consider including the following recommendations (policies and strategic approaches)

Governments, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, development partners and other relevant stakeholders should recognize and contribute to improve the nutritional status of women and girls from various categories throughout the lifecycle. Targeted measures for the most nutritionally vulnerable groups, which typically include adolescent girls, women of reproductive age, pregnant and lactating women, children, disabled people and the elderly should be a priority.

Governments and other key stakeholder should acknowledge and value women's crucial contributions to agriculture, food production and preparation, and food security recognizing women's time burden and workload, in productive, care and domestic activities. Gender-responsive and transformative policies, social protection programmes, and the promotion of equitable sharing of domestic chores are key initiatives that should be promoted.

Governments and other relevant stakeholders should promote a coordinated and integrated policy approach to effectively reducing gender inequalities, empowering women and improving the nutritional status of urban and rural populations. Multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder collaboration and coordination is essential for achieving desired results. Sectoral programmes, such as health, education, environment, water and sanitation, climate change, and social protection programmes, need to incorporate and respond to gender and nutrition issues.

### **3.4. Recognition, reduction and redistribution of unpaid care and domestic work**

FAO recommends changing the title of this thematic area to reflect the dimension also of agricultural workload.

The revised title would read: Recognition, reduction and redistribution of women's work burden

#### **3.4.2. Policies and strategic approaches**

Consider including the following recommendations (policies and strategic approaches)

Governments and partners, including the private sector, should ensure that technology is adapted to women's needs and priorities by considering the nature of their work, their time use, their physique, and the social and cultural context they live in. Therefore, research needs to (i) identify technologies adapted for women and for women's specific priorities; (ii) understand when women's labour peaks occur, what type of labour-saving technologies they need, and how these can contribute to reducing work burden; and (iii) determine how these technologies can be introduced and what measures and support are needed for their adoption.

Governments should strive for increasing the knowledge and awareness of women's work burden in the agricultural sector. Policy-makers, project implementers, government counterparts, extension delivery

services, and beneficiaries need to be aware of the benefit of implementing *gender-responsive and transformative* approaches and appropriately addressing women's needs in regards to technology. This can be achieved through advocacy and targeted capacity development on gender equality.

Government should ensure that gender differences in adoption rates of technologies, labour, time use, income, and productivity are measured, along with outcomes and impacts to see the results of women's participation on farming improvements, efficiency, livelihoods and well-being.

Governments should support better linkages among researchers, extension agents, farmers and other innovation actors. Poor women and men farmers and their organizations need to be supported for their participation and active and engagement in key priority-setting and innovation platforms. Other innovative ways to link research, service providers and farmers should be promoted, such as hosting women's organizations at research institutes or community information and resource centers with regular interactions with researchers and women and men farmers.

Governments and other key stakeholder should place specific attention to also address women's time burden associated with the domestic activities such as fetching water, cooking and collecting firewood.

#### **Paragraph 53**

**Note: Add discriminatory before 'norms'**

(i) Address **discriminatory** gender norms with respect to the distribution of unpaid care and domestic work, and promoting sharing of unpaid care and domestic work more equally between women and men within the family.

#### **Paragraph 58**

**Note: Add biases after norms**

(iii) **Address discriminatory gender norms, biases and attitudes**, including among male leaders through awareness raising, training and introduction of gender policies and action plans.

### **3.6. Women's economic and social empowerment in the context of sustainable food systems**

#### **3.6.1. Women's access to the labor market and decent work**

**Consider including the following recommendations (policies and strategic approaches)**

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.

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.

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.

Reconciliation of paid work and unpaid care responsibilities. National employment policies do not generally explicitly address the main challenges related to female employment, nor are they complemented by interventions and policy measures to enable women to reconcile paid work and unpaid care responsibilities.

Specific policy interventions to eliminate gender-specific barriers that limit the access of women to agri-food labour markets and decent work. The elimination of gender barriers requires dedicated policy interventions beyond those aimed at promoting economic growth and the efficiency of labour markets.

### **3.6.2. Women's involvement in food systems as producers and entrepreneurs**

**Consider including the following recommendations (policies and strategic approaches)**

Governments and other stakeholders should promote gender equality and create the conditions for women to fully realize their economic and social potential, in line with national legislation and universally agreed human rights instruments.

Governments should play an important role in creating an enabling environment for inclusive and gender-equitable agricultural investments to flourish and contribute to poverty reduction and food security. States should develop relevant policies, laws and procedures, including responsible sourcing and due diligence legal frameworks, through participatory processes, ensuring that both men and women are included from the outset.

Governments should integrate explicit objectives and targets that address women's needs and constraints, including specific strategies and measures for implementation, as well as gender-sensitive accountability and monitoring systems into the policies relevant for agricultural investment and value chains.

Governments should ensure that gender-responsive policies and laws are implemented. They should incorporate gender-responsive approaches, be clearly expressed in applicable languages, and widely publicized. Government institutions and agencies should have the capacities to address gender inequalities and the adequate budget allocations that reflect policy intent. Moreover, the capacity and influence of national machineries responsible for promoting gender equality objectives need to be strengthened.

Business should address gender issues through due diligence in agricultural supply chains to encourage better development outcomes for women in the agricultural sector. Companies and governments should be equipped with the capacity and tools to incorporate, upgrade and/or upscale effective and innovative gender approaches and strategies along specific commodity supply chains, in accordance with due diligence and development needs.

Governments, private sector, intergovernmental organizations and other relevant stakeholders should enhance women's roles in agriculture by promoting their participation and decision making over what and how they choose to produce crops/food. Women should be offered equal access to extension and advisory services for crops and animal products that they produce or process, capacity-building to engage with traders, financial services (e.g. credit and savings mechanisms), and entrepreneurial opportunities across food systems.

Governments, private sector, civil society and other relevant stakeholders should facilitate women's equal access to entrepreneurship, business and employment opportunities across food system by supporting them to overcome the constraints they face to access productive resources and services, enhancing their business capacities, supporting their effective participation and leadership roles in markets oriented producers' organizations, enhancing their management and business skills.

Governments should make efforts so that the transport sector, increased mobility through accessible, safe and affordable transport to improve women's market access, support safe cross-border trade, and enable them to access services. ICT has a lot of potential for women farmers as both a service and a technology. Policy-makers should incorporate ICT within their agricultural sector policies and explore all options of development and dissemination for the benefit of farmers in general, and women in particular.

### **3.7. Women's access to and control over natural and productive resources, including land, water, fisheries and forests**

**Consider including the following recommendations (policies and strategic approaches)**

Governments, in accordance with national legislations, should ensure women's equal tenure rights and promote their equal access to and control over productive land and natural resources in line with the CFS VGGT.

States should develop relevant policies, laws and procedures through participatory processes involving all relevant stakeholders, ensuring that both men and women are included from the outset. Policies, laws and procedures should take into account the capacity to implement. They should incorporate gender-sensitive approaches, be clearly expressed in applicable languages, and widely publicized.

Government officials must be sensitized and their capacities strengthened on gender issues, including gender equitable participation in land and natural resources policy-making, as part of the induction training for all new staff in relevant ministries and departments. Where politicians take part directly in government administration, they too should be sensitized and trained.

Governments can encourage other stakeholders' participation in the land and other natural resources policy-making process, and set the overall agenda and mandate for an inclusive, participatory and

gender-equitable process. They should use affirmative action such as quotas to ensure that women are equitably represented in the political and governance institutions and structures involved in policy-making.

Civil society actors can help make marginalized people and groups more visible through: advocating for their issues and supporting their direct participation in the policy debate; monitoring and reporting on the policy-making process to make it more accountable on gender equity, such as by using radio to inform the public on how women and men are being engaged; monitoring and ensuring the accountability of government and private sector stakeholders; and developing and leading broad public consensus for gender-equitable participation in land policy-making.

Private sector stakeholders can sign up to international guidelines promoting social responsibility and gender equality, against which their engagement in the policy-making process can be measured and assessed in any country. The Guidelines provide a vital set of principles that all private sector stakeholders engaging in land and natural resources policymaking should embrace and commit to.

States and other relevant parties should promote research into the conditions of work, including those of migrant fishers and fish workers, and inter alia health, education, decision-making, in the context of gender relations, in order to inform strategies for ensuring equitable benefits for men and women in fisheries. Efforts to mainstream gender should include the use of gender analysis in the design phase of policies, programmes and projects for small-scale fisheries in order to design gender-sensitive interventions. Gender-sensitive indicators should be used to monitor and address gender inequalities and to capture how interventions have contributed towards social change.

### **3.8. Access to education, capacity building, training, knowledge and information services**

#### **Consider expanding the Issues section**

Although women are major actors in agriculture and are key to ensuring food security, they generally have less access than men to extension and advisory services (EAS). Rigid gender norms that discriminate against women and the fact that women are often considered as ‘helpers’ on a family farm rather than farmers, results in women not being recognized as legitimate clients of advisory services.

Even when women have access, the focus and content of services, are often biased toward male producers and may not necessarily meet women’s specific needs. Due to the structural challenges women face in the workforce and the society, EAS organizations often find it difficult to recruit and retain women RAS advisors even in contexts where it is preferable to have women EAS personnel. Women’s time and mobility constraints, discriminatory gender norms, and at times limited literacy can also reduce women’s access to EAS. Women’s under-representation in membership-based institutions (e.g., producer organizations) 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.

#### **Consider including the following recommendations (policies and strategic approaches)**

To advance gender equality and women’s empowerment in the context of food security and nutrition, a systemic change is needed in how EAS is designed and provided: the entire EAS system, including

national and institutional policies, formal and informal social institutions and service providers' attitudes and capacities need to be challenged and changed.

EAS policies should include concrete gender equality objectives and gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation frameworks formulated with the active participation of women producers and EAS workers and sustained by adequate budget.

EAS strategies and providers should adopt a gender transformative approach and promote the use of gender-responsive and gender transformative methodologies in the design and delivery of advisory services, that are able to identify and challenge also discriminatory gender norms, roles and relations that create and maintain gender inequality in access to and benefit from extension and advisory services.

EAS providers must recognize women as legitimate clients of EAS. Service providers should enhance their capacities in participatory and experiential methodologies to assess women's and men's differentiated needs and design and deliver services and technology 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 and foster women's ability to represent their interests and voice their demands for EAS.

EAS organizations, either governmental, private or producer organizations, should develop a gender-equitable organizational culture, including putting into place mechanisms (campaigns, scholarships, quotas, etc.) to recruit and retain female advisors and address specific barriers women advisors face in adequately carrying out their work (security measures in the field, maternity and paternity leave, anti-harassment measures, etc.).

### **3.9. Social protection and food and nutrition assistance**

**Consider including the following recommendations (policies and strategic approaches)**

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.

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

Address women's and girls' specific life-course transitions and risks and the diversity of women's experiences through social protection.

Integrated nutrition sensitive complementary interventions and services that address non-financial barriers to good nutritional and health status.

Integration of gender equality principles and women's participation in social protection programme operations and governance structures



Address harmful socio-cultural attitudes and practices, restrictive gender norms and other informal institutions 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.

#### **Part 4 - Promotion, implementation and monitoring**

##### **Paragraph 132**

Governments are strongly encouraged to mobilize adequate financial, technical and human resources, and to put in place gender-responsive budgeting systems and mechanisms ~~approaches where possible~~, with support of international cooperation and local actors to increase the human and institutional capacity of countries at the international, regional, national and local levels to implement the Guidelines and to identify priorities toward their contextualization, operationalization and monitoring.

##### **Paragraph 133**

Consider adding the highlighted sentence:

Technical agencies of the UN, including the RBAs (in collaboration with UN agencies such as UN Women, UN High Commissioner of Human Rights UNFPA), bilateral cooperation agencies, intergovernmental and regional organizations and other development partners), are encouraged to support - with their resources and within their mandates - efforts by governments to implement the Guidelines. This support could include technical cooperation, financial support, capacity development, knowledge sharing and exchange of experiences, good practices and promising approaches.

Consider including a new paragraph:

Donors, financing institutions, intergovernmental organizations and other relevant stakeholders are encouraged to apply the VG-GEWE when designing their policies for loans, grants, investments and programmes to support relevant partners' initiatives and operations in line with SDG principles and goals.