

## FORUM ON WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

### BACKGROUND DOCUMENT – draft annotated outline

#### INTRODUCTION (1 PAGE)

- Rationale for CFS addressing women's empowerment and gender equality issues
- Nexus between SDG 5 and SDG 1 and 2
- Reference to Agenda 2030 and human rights frameworks
- Overview of background document's structure and Forum's objectives (as per agreed concept note)

#### CHAPTER 1: CONTEXT ANALYSIS (4-5 PAGES) – WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT IN THE AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD SECTOR

##### 1.1 Persisting barriers and emerging challenges to women's economic empowerment

- *Definition of women's economic empowerment*
- *Persisting barriers*

- e.g. prevailing discriminatory social norms, practices and attitudes affecting women's and men's roles and responsibilities within households and communities; unequal distribution of unpaid care work and excessive work burden/drudgery; lack of infrastructure (water, sanitation, roads); women's low self-confidence and leadership; limited mobility; women's scarce awareness of their own rights;
- limited understanding of how gender inequalities affect the achievement of development goals; lack of resources available for gender institutions and organizations; limited political commitment to advance gender equality and women's rights; limited protection of women against all forms of violence and frequent cases of criminalization of women leaders;
- as a result: invisibility of women's key contribution to agriculture; unequal access to productive assets (land, water, inputs, technology), services (extension and financial as well as child and health care), markets and income-generating opportunities (wage and self-employment), women's low level of participation in decision-making processes; unequal representation in rural and producer organizations; poor enforcement of women's rights in the agricultural sector and labour market; (child labour; food restrictions, taboos and distribution; women disproportionately affected by food insecurity and malnutrition.

##### *Global trends and emerging challenges for women in the agriculture and agri-food sector*

- Increased investment, including large-scale land acquisitions, by private actors in agriculture – at local as well as national and global levels - creates new employment and entrepreneurship opportunities, but women will not automatically benefit unless measures to address gender biases are prioritized. Where investment involves commercial farms employing rural people, women are likely to have less access to employment opportunities (due to traditional attitudes, as well as the drain of household workloads on their time) and be more exposed to exploitation when employed due to lack of effective labour regulations.

- Greater commercialization, value chain integration and connectivity with markets, but women often excluded from commercial crop production, focusing more on own-consumption crops and household activities.
- Increased migration provides opportunities for women left at home in terms of greater decision-making autonomy, access to resources and remittance income, but also potential increased workloads. Male migration is a key determinant of the “feminization of agriculture” in numerous countries. Issues related to forced migration and that women tend to be employed in lower paid jobs in the country of destination.
- Urbanization: Opportunities in urban areas in sectors such as tourism and domestic care leading to increased migration of young women from some rural communities. Issues related to the fact that women tend to suffer more from urban poverty.
- Deepening scarcity of natural resources and pressures on production due to climate change leading to conflicts to which women and girls are most vulnerable to effects.
- Conflicts and violence against women

## 1.2. Global level: relevant policy and legal frameworks

At international level, policy and legal frameworks are reasonably comprehensive:

- *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) (1976)*
- *Relevant ILO Conventions concerning women’s rights (to be selected among the following):*
  - o 1919 Maternity Protection Convention (#3) and 2000 Maternity Protection Convention (revised) (#183)
  - o 1951 Equal Remuneration Convention (#100)
  - o 1958 Plantations Convention (# 110)
  - o 1958 Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (#111)
  - o 1969 Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention (# 129)
  - o 1975 Rural Workers’ Organizations Convention (# 141)
  - o 1981 Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention (#156)
  - o 1989 Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (# 169)
  - o 1994 Part-Time Work Convention (#175)
  - o 1996 Home Work Convention (#177)
  - o 1998 Job Creation in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Recommendation (#189)
  - o 2000 Maternity Protection Convention (# 183)
  - o 2001 Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention (# 184)
  - o 2011 Domestic Workers (# 189)
- *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007 (particularly art. 22) – this is particularly important as indigenous women face multiple discriminations based on their gender and ethnicity*
- *UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security*
- *Sustainable Development Goals of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development*

This document will focus on the two most relevant frameworks for women in the agriculture and agri-food sector:

- a) *the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (art 14), and General Recommendation 34 on the rights of rural women. Adopted in March 2016, it clarifies State obligations to ensure the rights of rural women, with a focus on article 14 of the*

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (“the Convention”) which recognizes the unique situation of rural women and highlights specific obligations of States parties in recognizing, promoting and protecting their rights.

- b) *the Beijing Platform of Action* - in particular its recommendations for advancing women’s food security under the strategic objectives on macroeconomic and development policies (A1), vocational training and continuing education (B3), health (C1), access to resources, employment, markets and trade (F2) and sustainable development (K2).

### **1.3. National and local level: policy implementation gaps**

- Divergence between international and national policies, in part due to lack of effective interaction between international and national dialogues and effective tools for international-national policy coherence. Political will is also an issue.
- Despite, international frameworks in many countries, national and customary laws continue to be gender discriminatory in terms of:
  - ✓ the work women can do
  - ✓ inheritance rights of women
  - ✓ rights of women to own property/land
  - ✓ women's autonomy to access legal documents for themselves and their children (e.g. passports)
  - ✓ barriers to women obtaining requisite legal/official documents
  - ✓ freedom of association
- Lack of legal protection broadly for workers in agri-food sectors (including the possibility to organize into trade unions), who predominantly operate under informal arrangements, tends to impact where women and girls most as a result of their greater vulnerability to exploitation, discrimination and violence.
- Review national legislation with a view to promoting the extension of national labour law to all rural workers. National legislation should take into consideration the specificities of rural work and spell out the rights and responsibilities of all concerned, governments, employers and workers.
- At the same time, even where gender-equitable policies are in place implementation barriers persist as a result of entrenched norms and attitudes on women's roles, meaning that it is often very difficult in practice for women to realize rights that have been formally recognized.

### **1.4. Conditions for the implementation of policy and legal frameworks**

Factors that can contribute to an effective application of international instruments at country level to better integrate gender equality dimensions in national policy and law-making:

- incorporation of international obligations on women’s rights in national legislative and political frameworks;
- cross-sectoral and inter-ministerial collaboration to raise the profile of gender equality in food security and nutrition policies and strategies;
- support to women’s groups and associations to organize and more effectively negotiate in decision-making processes;
- engagement of women’s associations and grass-root organizations in national policy processes and dialogue;
- the establishment of a solid, high-level and adequately resourced gender machinery, gender budgeting, gender awareness and capacity building;
- strengthening of the legal and quasi-legal complaint and recourse mechanisms for the effective protection of women’s rights;

- institutional and accountability mechanisms for gender mainstreaming; transformative approach in development aiming to change social relations.

## CHAPTER 2: CASE STUDY EXPERIENCES (7-8 PAGES)

CEDAW General Recommendation 34 will be used as the overarching framework for the selection of the most relevant challenges under each of the four thematic areas. Case study experiences will be selected based on their ability to illustrate both the challenges and approaches to addressing them.

Additional criteria for the selection of case studies include: policy relevance, diversity of perspectives, geographical balance.

A maximum of 3 case studies will be presented under each thematic area (selection still ongoing).

### 2.1. Women's participation in decision-making, public policies, partnerships, leadership roles

#### Main challenges

- Cultural norms - note absence of farmers generally from decision-making processes, exacerbated in case of female farmers or indigenous women. For example:
  - ✓ Participation of Kuna Women, Right to Territory, and Economic Autonomy – International Indian Treaty Council, IITC (Panama)
- Violence against women
- Absence of strong women's rights civil society movements in some countries/regions marginalization and criminalization of those advocating for women's rights
- Increased commercialisation but tendency for women to be involved in non-market activities
- Lack of control of assets/resources means more likely to be absent from commercial partnerships

#### Approaches to addressing challenges

Changing cultural norms and attitudes at community and household level. For example:

✓ Household Methodologies –IFAD (multiple countries)  
[https://www.ifad.org/topic/household\\_methodologies/overview/tags/knowledge\\_notes](https://www.ifad.org/topic/household_methodologies/overview/tags/knowledge_notes)

✓ Dimitra Clubs – FAO (multiple countries)  
<http://www.fao.org/in-action/community-listeners-clubs-empower-rural-women-and-men/en/>

Working with women's groups, including women in cooperatives and enhancing gender equity therein. For example:

✓ Empowering Women Farmers in Agricultural Value Chains (Peru, Nicaragua, India and Ghana)  
<http://www.twin.org.uk/assets/Twin-reports/Empowering-Women-Farmers-in-Agricultural-Value-Chains-1.pdf>

Training women to advocate for women's rights and provide legal support to other women. For example:

- ✓ [UN Joint Programme on Rural Women's Economic Empowerment- FAO,IFAD,WFP, UN-Women \(Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Niger, Nepal, Rwanda\)](#)

Advocating to reduce unpaid care work in family policies. For example:

- ✓ [Thematic Report on Economic Activity for Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion – ActionAid Rwanda \(Rwanda\)](#)

Organizing women for collective action and cooperative solutions. For example:

- ✓ [Self-employed Women's Association \(SEWA\) - India](#)

[http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/---emp\\_policy/documents/publication/wcms\\_234890.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_policy/documents/publication/wcms_234890.pdf)

<http://www.fao.org/docrep/018/i3488e/i3488e.pdf>

- ✓ [Strengthening the role of women in clam fisheries – FAO, Tunisia](#)

<http://www.fao.org/gender/gender-home/gender-projects/gender-projectsdet/en/c/74613/>

## **2.2. Women's access to and control over land, natural resources, inputs, productive tools**

### **Main challenges**

- Infringement of tenure rights, including informal and customary rights, during large-scale transactions in tenure rights. For example:
  - ✓ [Community Council of Palenque Monte Oscuro – FIAN Colombia \(Colombia\)](#)
  - ✓ [Katosi Women Development Trust \(KWDT\) – World Forum of Fish Harvester and Fish Workers, WFF \(Uganda\)](#)
- Unequitable access to common property and management of land and natural resources
- Women's rights to decide how they want produce

### **Approaches to addressing challenges**

Using VGGT as an advocacy tool, for example:

- ✓ [Women Pastoralists in Chad – World Alliance of Mobile Indigenous People, WAMIP \(Chad\)](#)

Campaigning for the promotion of the enforcement of equal land rights, for example:

- ✓ [USAID/Chemonics: From Policy to Practice: Exercising Gender-Equal Land Rights \(Rwanda\)](#)  
<http://chemonics.com/OurImpact/SharingImpact/ImpactStories/Pages/From-Policy-to-Practice-Exercising-Gender-Equal-Land-Rights-in-Rwanda.aspx>

Developing participatory governance mechanisms for sustainable and inclusive use of natural resources, for example:

- ✓ [inclusive groundwater governance – Jordan, FAO](#)

Generating gender-disaggregated data from land administration systems, for example:

- ✓ [Greater Than Leadership Program for Inclusive and Informed Land Administration in the Western Balkans](#)

Enhancing women's access to labour saving technology, for example:

- ✓ [Tunisia mastic oil extraction](#)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1jw1202vaKE>

### 2.3. Women's access to decent working conditions and adequate wages

#### **Main challenges**

- access to fundamental labour rights in the agricultural and rural non-agriculture sector
- Women's participation in trade unions
- Significant pay gap between men's and women's earnings even with the low salaries that characterise agriculture, for example:
  - ✓ [Rural women's economic empowerment and social protection: The impacts of Rwanda's Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme \(VUP\)](#)  
<http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5430e.pdf>
- "Gender-blind" agri-business models, for example:
  - ✓ [Unifrutti - Mindanao, Philippines](#)  
<http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4444e.pdf>
- lack of permanent employment opportunity for women
- reproductive health concerns related to poor occupational safety and health and difficulty to access maternity rights
- sexual harassment at work
- Precarious work & the seasonality of agriculture

#### **Approaches to addressing challenges**

Promoting women's access to markets, for example:

- ✓ [Integrated Dairy Schemes, Afghanistan - FAO](#)

Promoting labour rights, for example:

- ✓ [Maternity rights are food rights – International Union of Food and Agricultural Workers, IUF \(West Bengal/Pakistan\)](#)

Generating data to inform policy making, for example:

- ✓ [Survey on the working conditions of women in the rural areas – World March of Women, WMW \(Tunisia\)](#)

Collective bargaining, for example:

- ✓ Food workers' access to right to food security and nutrition through permanent jobs – International Union of Food and Agricultural Workers, IUF (Indonesia/Pakistan)

Safeguarding women food producers' safety and health, for example:

- ✓ FTT-Thiaroye system - Côte d'Ivoire  
<http://www.fao.org/gender/gender-home/gender-insight/gender-insightdet/en/c/458484/> and  
<http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/278337/icode/>
- ✓ Pesticide regulation - Georgia  
<http://www.brsmeas.org/?tabid=5441>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sFw9H9wurnM>

## **2.4 Access and role of women with regards to markets, extension, advisory, financial services, social protection, education, training and other learning opportunities**

### **Main challenges:**

- Lack of both hard and soft infrastructure in rural areas
  - Lack of access to training and extension services (including horizontal extension) constraining women's ability to take advantage of new income-generating opportunities
  - Lack of access to financial services, particularly those tailored to the particular needs of sectors or activities in which women have traditionally participated
  - Inability to engage with the most contextually-appropriate production and distribution processes, whether regional and global supply chains, public markets, or new and socially embedded processes, as well lack of access to the most suitable production techniques and inputs, for example:
- ✓ Fisherwomen for Food Sovereignty – Asia-Pacific Network for Food Sovereignty, APNFS (Indonesia)
    - Lack of recognition of the socioeconomic value of reproductive work, and of production for donation, exchange, or self-consumption

### **Approaches to addressing challenges**

Strengthening gender informed data collection to inform new-market based and gender responsive approaches to value chain development. For example:

- ✓ WFP VAM initiative  
<http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/ena/wfp287871.pdf>

Strengthening women's access to entrepreneurial training, for example:

- ✓ Rural-urban development initiative in Gujarat (India) - Mastercard and SEWA.  
<http://newsroom.mastercard.com/press-releases/mastercard-and-sewa-enable-womens-empowerment-in-india/>

Strengthening women's access to buyers, technical support providers, banks and other partners, for example:

- ✓ [IFDC 2Scale –project learning plots](https://ifdc.org/2017/02/08/innovations-liberate-women-farmers/)  
<https://ifdc.org/2017/02/08/innovations-liberate-women-farmers/>

Strengthening women’s access to affordable finance, for example:

- ✓ [Village savings and loan associations established by Cargill in cocoa-growing communities in Ghana and Cote D’Ivoire.](https://www.cargill.com/story/village-savings-and-loan-associations)  
<https://www.cargill.com/story/village-savings-and-loan-associations>  
<https://www.cargill.com/doc/1432076280157/ccp-empowering-women.pdf>
- ✓ [Village savings and loans to empower women to introduce agro-ecological farming – ActionAid Malawi](#)

Strengthening women’s access to education, for example:

- ✓ [Factory literacy centres \(Pakistan\) – International Union of Food and Agricultural Workers \(IUF\)](#)

Making women’s labour contribution visible

- ✓ [Rice–rice and rice–shrimp production - A gender perspective on labour, time use and access to technologies and services in southern Viet Nam – FAO](http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4741e.pdf)  
<http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4741e.pdf>

Enhancing capacities of national extension staff to provide gender-equitable services and improving rural women’s knowledge in marketing, for example:

- ✓ [Capacity development support to rural women on the socio-economic and gender aspects of sustainable rural development - Turkey and Azerbaijan- FAO](http://www.fao.org/3/a-i6301e.pdf)  
<http://www.fao.org/3/a-i6301e.pdf>

### **CHAPTER 3 (1-2 PAGES) : SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS & NEXT STEPS FOR CFS TO ACCELERATE PROGRESS TOWARDS WOMEN’S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION**

- Synthesis of the findings to be developed based on the selection of case studies
- CFS role in advancing women’s empowerment, women’s rights and gender equality as a pre-requisite for food security and nutrition:
  - Advocating existing CFS policy products – Reference to “Evaluation of CFS”, specifically the gender equality and empowerment of women section; coverage of women’s empowerment and gender equality in global thematic events and other events to share experiences and good practices in applying CFS decisions and recommendations;
  - Anchoring SDG 1 (end poverty in all its forms everywhere) and SDG 2 (end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture) to SDG5 (achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls) in future policy convergence.