



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

# COMMIT TO GROW EQUALITY

GLOBAL COMMITMENT TO ENHANCE GENDER EQUALITY IN  
AGRIFOOD SYSTEMS THROUGH FINANCING AND PARTNERSHIPS

## Background and overview

2030 is just five years away, bringing us closer than ever to the deadline to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Yet, the gender equality objectives embedded in the SDGs, which are critically relevant to women and girls' lives, are not any closer. Progress has been made, but it is not enough. A more ambitious and accelerated effort is needed to use the remaining five years to promote gender equality and women's empowerment and realize the multiple benefits that this brings to families and communities.

Globally, agrifood systems are a major employer of women and constitute a more important source of livelihoods for women than for men in many countries. Indeed, food systems – a subset of agrifood systems – alone produce some 11 billion tonnes of food each year and almost four billion people depend on agrifood systems for their livelihoods.

Despite the importance of agrifood systems for women's livelihoods and family welfare, women's roles tend to be marginalized and their working conditions are likely to be worse than men's – irregular, informal, part-time, low-skilled, labour-intensive and thus vulnerable.

*The status of women in agrifood systems* report, published by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in 2023, offers a comprehensive view of women's roles in agrifood systems worldwide.



It presents new data and evidence about the relationship between gender equality and agrifood systems transformation.

Seeking to translate these findings into action, Commit to Grow Equality (CGE) is a global process launched by FAO and a diverse group of partners to accelerate gender equality and women's empowerment in agrifood systems through financing, investments and partnerships. The objective is to unite key stakeholders to commit to make agrifood systems work better for women, their communities, and the planet by 2030. In particular, CGE aims to contribute to the achievement of SDGs 1, 2 and 5.

CGE will enable a diverse range of actors, both governmental and non-governmental, to report against a strategic set of commitments specifically linked to agrifood systems. Through their new and newly aligned commitment(s) to various dimensions of the *CGE Commitments Matrix*, these actors are agreeing to take specific action(s) to advance gender equality and women's empowerment within their own domains. The matrix offers the opportunity to identify areas for enhanced impact, align and complement action, increase transparency and learning, and remind all actors of their commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment.

## The CGE Objective

CGE calls on all actors - governments, philanthropy, the private sector, the United Nations and other multilateral agencies, civil society organizations and more - to take action to close the significant and remaining gaps between men and women in agrifood systems, and to invest and partner in demonstrated approaches at scale which can enhance women's agency and empowerment to transform agrifood systems to be more inclusive, resilient and sustainable by 2030.

In this way, CGE seeks to drive ambitious action at scale within different contexts and across a broad range of sectors.

Through light-touch, annual reporting on the delivery of commitments, CGE reflects back to all stakeholders on the growing momentum and can inspire action from others. The CGE annual report provides a platform for stakeholders to showcase their progress, share experiences and lessons learned, and demonstrate their commitment to gender equality in agrifood systems.

## The CGE Commitments Matrix

CGE is built around a *Commitments Matrix* which offers the opportunity for all stakeholders to make commitments across a spectrum of crucial areas to meaningfully advance gender equality. These commitments were developed by drawing on the findings of *The status of women in agrifood systems* report, as well as existing multilateral frameworks and agreements. Since its initial announcement at the 68th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), the matrix has been open for comment and feedback.

Partners can continue to provide feedback or collaborate with CGE to craft new commitments which are relevant and evidence-based but currently not included.

The commitments matrix is organized by sector to help different constituencies identify which area and specific commitment(s) are right for them. Due to the diverse nature of those making commitments, baselines and targets may vary accordingly.

## Monitoring and reporting

By joining, all participating entities agree to report on their agreed commitments on an annual basis, using their established baselines, in a light-touch format until 2030. Where appropriate, those engaged also agree to establish an individualized baseline against which the commitments can be monitored.

These reports will be aggregated by the CGE Secretariat and synthesized into an annual report which will be disseminated every year during CSW. In 2025, the focus of the CSW on Beijing +30 (10-21 March 2025) will provide a powerful opportunity to launch a first version of the report and build further momentum towards 2030. The CGE Secretariat will lead a consultation process among key stakeholders on the design of the report and reporting process between November 2024 and April 2025. As of now, the CGE Secretariat anticipates issuing an annual reporting request to focal points in all participating entities in December of every year to enable time to review submissions and to prepare the report for each CSW.

The Rural Transformation and Gender Equality Division at FAO serves as the Secretariat for the CGE. FAO has committed to support the reporting function and to continue to facilitate the process overall, through 2030.



## A growing movement to accelerate progress

Many recent political agreements offer momentum and platforms on which to build stronger action around agrifood systems transformation that is rooted in gender equality, among them:

- The **2024 Group of Seven (G7) Leaders' Communique** emphasized the Group's commitment to gender equality, including the promotion of gender transformative and multisectoral approaches, and launched the **Apulia Food Systems Initiative** which will seek to address discriminatory rules and norms that affect gender equality as a core element.
- Building on the **Group of Twenty (G20) New Delhi Leaders' Declaration**, under Brazil's Presidency, the G20 convened the first meeting of the **G20 Working Group on Women's Empowerment**. Additionally, the G20 has launched the **Global Alliance against Hunger and Poverty**, which includes criteria and advocates for policies specifically focused on gender equality.
- In May 2024, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) passed a resolution introduced by the United States of America and co-signed by more than 120 Member States declaring **2026 as the International Year of the Woman Farmer**. The resolution recognizes that "supporting women farmers is critical to accelerating the transition to more sustainable agrifood systems through productivity growth that optimizes agricultural sustainability".
- In 2023, the **Committee on World Food Security (CFS)** endorsed the **Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition** which provide concrete policy guidance on gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive public policies, programmes and innovative solutions. They aim to address the root causes of gender inequalities across several dimensions while also promoting innovative partnerships and increased investments in human and financial resources.

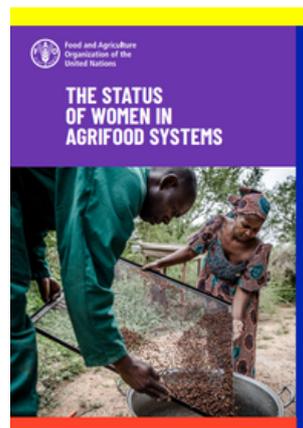
Agreements like these are essential to unlock and guide the progress needed, but agreements are only as good as their implementation. Enhanced, specific commitments are needed to further accelerate action across the full spectrum of agrifood systems and by all relevant actors.

# Turning knowledge and policy guidance into actionable commitments

**The status of women in agrifood systems report contains robust data, analysis and evidence for action.**

**Highlights include:**

- Agrifood systems are a more important source of livelihood for women than for men in many countries. In sub-Saharan Africa, **66 percent** of women's employment is in agrifood systems, compared with **60 percent** of men's employment. In southern Asia, **71 percent** of women in the labour force work in agrifood systems versus **47 percent** of men.
- The gender gap in land productivity between female- and male-managed farms of the same size is **24 percent**.
- Men have **greater ownership** or secure tenure rights over **agricultural land** than women in **40 of 46** countries reporting on SDG Indicator 5.a.1.
- Women engaged in wage employment in agriculture earn **82 cents** for every dollar that men earn.
- While **75 percent** of policy documents relating to agriculture and rural development from **68 countries** recognize women's roles and/or women's challenges in agriculture and rural development, only **19 percent** included policy goals related to gender.
- Closing the gender gap in farm productivity and the wage gap in agrifood system employment would increase global gross domestic product by 1 percent (or nearly **USD 1 trillion**). This would reduce global food insecurity by about 2 percentage points, reducing the number of food-insecure people by **45 million**.
- If half of small-scale producers benefited from development interventions focused on empowering women, it would significantly raise the incomes of an additional **58 million** people and increase the resilience of an additional **235 million** people.



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# Examples of commitments

To help illustrate what commitments can look like, the following are hypothetical examples of the types of commitments, linked to various commitment areas, the CGE is expected to include:

- **[Commitment Areas 01 and 02]** International Organization X commits to define and establish a tag for gender transformative projects, and to ensure 10 percent of its projects are tagged as gender transformative by 2030.
- **[Commitment Area 05]** Country B commits to providing financial support for the implementation of the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition. Countries C and D commit to supporting efforts to promote the uptake of the Voluntary Guidelines by raising awareness of policy makers and key stakeholders at the global and subregional levels and by building the capacity of national actors in at least four countries by 2026.
- **[Commitment Area A3.3]** NGO X commits to expanding its financial literacy and village savings and loans programs to five more southeast Asian markets by 2030.
- **[Commitment Area B3.1]** Country A commits to putting in place a national policy and implementation mechanisms aimed at doubling women's sole and joint registration of land rights by 2030.
- **[Commitment Areas C2.2 and C2.3]** Company Y commits to invest in training and childcare facilities in partnership with its sesame supplier in country M.
- **[Commitment Area C5.1]** Company Z commits to implement processes to gather verifiable gender-based ownership data on its suppliers from the farm gate through retail by 2026.



## For more information

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Write to Commit to Grow Equality at CGE@fao.org

<https://www.fao.org/gender/commit-to-grow-equality/en>

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