

## **FAO's inputs for the UN Secretary-General's report on the progress made in the implementation of the General Assembly resolution "Women in development" (A/RES/74/235)**

*Thematic area 1: Strengthening and implementing gender-responsive poverty eradication strategies, including social protection systems, to help ensure an adequate standard of living for women and girls, especially in response to challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic (paragraph 10)*

FAO promotes a multidimensional approach to reducing rural poverty, focused on increasing women's access to productive resources, decent employment and business opportunities, strengthening the capacity of rural institutions and services, and supporting measures to increase the coverage and effectiveness of gender-responsive social protection programmes and interventions.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, FAO collaborated with several organizations<sup>1</sup> to conduct studies<sup>2</sup> of the gendered impacts of the pandemic on rural households in in Sub-Saharan Africa (**Kenya, Niger, Rwanda, and Uganda**), Central Asia (**Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan**) and South Asia (**Nepal**). Results were used to inform policy and programming: a policy dialogue, organized jointly by FAO, IFPRI and the CGIAR GENDER Platform, provided a forum for policymakers to discuss the gendered impacts of COVID-19 and the importance of designing and implementing gender-responsive policies and programs to minimize the economic, food security, and social impacts of the pandemic on the most vulnerable groups.

FAO has also conducted assessments of social protection policies and COVID-19 response measures focusing on their gender responsiveness. The findings of the studies reiterate the need to strengthen gender responsiveness and inclusion of women and vulnerable groups. The studies also highlight the importance of enhancing resilience of rural populations, in particular that of rural women to prevent them from falling to poverty and to promote sustainable exit from poverty. This can be attained by strengthening rural women's livelihoods by providing access to productive resources and markets, and hence facilitating economic inclusion and by addressing gaps in access to social protection that are accentuated by informal and insecure employment and lack of access to labour markets.

Several programme initiatives implemented or initiated during the Covid-19 pandemic with support from FAO provide examples of how such approaches can be adopted:

- **Senegal:** As a response to the COVID-19 pandemic The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Equipment (MAER), with FAO, UN Women and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) launched Anticipatory Action Initiative: "le Panier de la Menagère" (Household Food Basket). Partnership also included the National Agency for Agricultural and Rural Council (ANCAR), Delegation for Social Protection and National Solidarity (DGPSN) and the Association of West African Women (AFAO). The initiative aimed to protect food supply chains and local producers, particularly women and young people and provide food assistance to vulnerable households affected by lockdown during this pandemic. The food baskets were targeted by using the national single registry, and incomes of local producer groups and associations were simultaneously improved through procurement of their products for the food baskets. Awareness activities to limit the spread of the pandemic were organized through community radio stations, Dimitra clubs and social networks. An e-advisory system linked to the Agricultural Services and Digital Inclusion in Africa (SAIDA) platform was developed, in

---

<sup>1</sup> University of Central Asia for Central Asia for the studies in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan; the International Institute for Food Policy (IFPRI) and the US Agency for International Development (USAID) for the studies in Sub-Saharan Africa; and Nepa School of Social Science and Humanities for the study in Nepal.

<sup>2</sup> The studies were based on primary survey data, seek to measure the impacts of the pandemic and social-distancing measures on the incomes, livelihoods, food security and nutrition of rural men and women and their families. The studies also aim to assess the gendered differences in the coping strategies, access to and benefits from social protection interventions, and distribution of unpaid care and work burdens.

partnership with ANCAR. 30,000 direct and indirect beneficiaries were registered in the e-platform to access awareness on the risks of Covid-19, information on commodity prices and the possibility of linking producers and buyers. The programme improved resilience of households affected by the effects of covid-19 and strengthened the food systems of targeted localities.

- **Egypt:** Using Global Affairs Canada (GAC) funding, FAO aims to address increases in poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition while strengthening the resilience of selected rural populations of Minya Governorate to economic and environmental shock. FAO is partnering with the Ministry of Social Solidarity to focus specifically on rural women using a two pronged approach of social protection combined with livelihood support, consisting of sustainably improving horticultural productivity through the promotion of sustainable agricultural practices, establishment of micro and small agri-food enterprises and awareness raising about nutritious foods and healthy diets. A gender-transformative approach serves to challenge existing gender-based inequalities faced by rural women and stimulate a process of change with regards to discriminatory gender roles and stereotypes.
- **Palestine:** Women and youth are more vulnerable to unemployment and limited purchasing power, leading to poverty and reduced access to food. With the financial support of the Government of Japan and in coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture, FAO provides agricultural-based livelihood support to men, women and youth in herding households affected by human-induced and natural shocks. The project also provides necessary in-kind and technical capacity-building support to women's cooperatives and youth of profitable, market-oriented and sustainable income-generating activities in the livestock value chain.
- **Uzbekistan and Tajikistan:** Within the GEF project "Integrated natural resources management in drought-prone and salt-affected agricultural production landscapes in Central Asia and Turkey" FAO provides packages of agricultural inputs for the production of food crops and sustaining livelihoods are provided to vulnerable households who are eligible for social assistance, including female headed households. In **Georgia** with support from the government of Austria FAO implemented small-scale investments in agricultural equipment to improve the quality of life of rural women, aimed to increase vulnerable women's free time and alleviate the burden of domestic and care labour.
- **Mexico:** Migrant female agricultural workers suffer multiple vulnerabilities that are accentuated by their lack of access to social protection. FAO, ILO, UN Women, together with the Office of the 2030 Agenda Mexico and the state governments of Oaxaca and Jalisco are implementing the project "Cerrando brechas: Extendiendo la Protección Social para las Mujeres en México" that seeks to develop a methodology for the implementation of support programs for day laborers in the states of origin, transit and destination, according to their specific needs. The project has carried out a participatory design of diagnosis and social protection strategies for agricultural workers and formulated an action plan for the institutions involved in social protection, focusing on work, health, education, gender and interculturality, fostered collaboration between actors and carried out capacity development and awareness activities.
- **Paraguay:** FAO has supported participatory development of national legal frameworks to promote women's rights and empowerment. Specifically, through a process initiated in 2011, FAO supported the Ministry of Women to achieve in 2020 the approval of Decree No. 3678, by which Law 5446/15 "Public Policies for Rural Women" is regulated. The regulation constitutes a fundamental advance for the fulfillment of the specific rights of rural women, who encounter obstacles in the sphere of the economy, health, education and participation, preventing them from fully enjoying their rights.

The lessons emerging from this work show the importance of collaboration between public institutions at different levels and the key role of multisectoral responses to strengthen gender equality outcomes in public, private and social sectors, as well as coherence and continuous dialogue between the public, private and social sectors at the state level with participation of agricultural workers themselves.

**Thematic area 2:** *Increasing investments in and implementation of gender-responsive policies and programmes for full and productive employment and decent work for all women, including their participation in and access to labour markets, and addressing women’s disproportionate job losses during the COVID-19 crisis (paragraphs 31 and 32)*

FAO’s work to increase rural women’s access to decent employment opportunities includes project interventions as well as provision of tools to support policy-makers in formulating gender-sensitive rural employment interventions.

As part of the FAO’s project “Building resilience in the **Sahel Region** through job creation for youth”, activities aim at building resilience and social cohesion among young women and men, while improving their livelihoods stability, including via employment schemes and equal participation to national dialogues and regional fora. Central to the approach, in all its components, is the equal visibility, empowerment and participation of both sexes, while also assuring the inclusiveness of concerns from various other potentially vulnerable youth groups, in line with the Leave No One Behind (LNOB) principle. The project (GCP/GLO/050/GER) has published the following documents:

- **G5-Sahel Regional Learning Route** - Strengthening the resilience of the G5 Sahel region through the creation of jobs for rural youth: <https://www.fao.org/rural-employment/resources/detail/en/c/1458939/>
- In **Mauritania** the G5 Regional Learning Route (Arabic) was launched and received media attention with reports and videos ( <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0dMXSQ0SrIY> ;(Agence Mauritanienne d’Information – AMI): <https://fr.ami.mr/Depeche-61237.html>
- Discussing “Socio-economic triggers of youth radicalization and negative coping mechanisms” at the ISP Virtual Model United Nations Conference: <https://www.fao.org/rural-employment/resources/detail/en/c/1458937/>
- In **Mauritania**: National Youth Consultation on challenges and opportunities for rural youth employment and resilience: <https://www.fao.org/rural-employment/resources/detail/en/c/1456349/>
- *Atelier de consultation sur les défis et les opportunités pour l’emploi et la résilience des jeunes ruraux en Mauritanie (RIM Rural)*: <https://rim-rural.org/2021/10/29/atelier-de-concertation-sur-les-defis-et-opportunités-pour-lemploi-des-jeunes-ruraux-en-mauritanie-du-28-au-29-octobre/>
- In **Mauritania and in Burkina Faso** there is the organization of the regional learning route *Mauritania leg of the learning route*: The Mauritania leg of the learning route has gathered more than 80 participants from Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger, 50 of them were young rural women and men from different regions and constituencies of each country. 30 representatives of government institutions, mostly ministries of agriculture and employment and coordinators of youth projects in the region attended.
- Three capacity development workshops were organized virtually for all the five countries (**Mauritania, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali and Niger**) participants (youth groups and governments officials)
- A compendium of best practices related to youth employment and resilience in connection with the experience of the Regional Learning Route (as per Sub-task 1.3.1) is presently under development (and foreseen to being published in 2022).
- National assessment and analysis to identify root causes of youth radicalization in rural areas and specific interventions for prevention report has been finalized and approved by Senior Managers in FAO (to be published in January 2022) and to being launched in early February 2022 (more on this in the next progress report).

FAO provided policy and programme support to countries for the design and implementation of initiatives that promote productive employment and decent work in agri-food systems for youth, with specific attention to young women. Across all FAO youth employment projects, gender equality is a crosscutting priority and young women are among the priority groups. In particular, under FAO’s [Integrated Country Approach \(ICA\) for boosting decent jobs for youth in agri-food systems](#), implemented in **Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean**, this is achieved by guaranteeing

specific quotas for young women beneficiaries (not less than 40%), dedicated training sessions for young women (when relevant), and training modules on gender equality and women's empowerment for trainers. See module 4 on rural women's empowerment in the context of the decent work agenda in [FAO e-learning course on Productive employment and decent work in rural areas](#); also adapted for the Latin America and Caribbean region [here](#); as well as multiple resources under the Module on [Women and Decent Work](#) in FAO Decent Rural Employment Toolbox.

On youth in particular, FAO is guided by its [Rural Youth Action Plan](#) (2020), designed with the goal of contributing to the realization of the SDGs by equally empowering rural young women and men, protecting children and other excluded youth groups.

FAO is actively involved in supporting the [policy convergence process launched by the Committee on World Food Security \(CFS\)](#) at its [CFS 49 Plenary on 13 October 2021 on Policy Recommendations on Promoting Youth Engagement and Employment in Agriculture and Food Systems](#). Young women are addressed explicitly in several of the policy recommendations and the final objective is for the CFS to adopt policy recommendations at the next CFS 50 session in October 2022.

FAO advocated for COVID-19 responses to be sensitive to the needs of more vulnerable groups, including women, children, youth, informal and agricultural migrant workers, and aligned with green recovery plans. Related policy briefs published are available [here](#). Specific workshops and webinars were conducted on gender related dimensions, see [2020 Webinar: Engaging young women and men in rural and agriculture development and resilience building in the face of COVID-19 and beyond](#), as one of the activities of the Network for Parliamentarians in Africa.

***Thematic area 3:** Promoting the transition of women from informal employment to formal employment, including access to decent work, improved wages, social protection and quality childcare (paragraph 11)*

Progressive business formalization is considered a priority for more productive young women and men engagement in agrifood value chains, not only for its benefits to societies in terms of generation of public revenues, but more specifically for the benefits that it can provide to enterprises and their workers, in terms of access to social security, strengthened business linkages, eligibility for public procurement tenders, as well as access to finance and business development services.

Under its [Integrated Country Approach \(ICA\) for boosting decent jobs for youth in agri-food systems](#), FAO is partnering with the International Labour Organization (ILO) in selected African countries to train coaches from national institutions on business formalization. Around 20 coaches were trained in 2021, and nationally adapted coaching frameworks have been developed. Following the training of coaches, an actual coaching programme for youth agripreneurs will be rolled out in **Rwanda, Uganda and Nigeria** in the first half of 2022 and involve up to 50 informal entrepreneurs per country, with priority given to young women given their higher levels of informality.

- Knowledge has been generated to inform the stakeholders involved in the strategic planning for agriculture and rural development, on the topics prioritized by the current phase of the ICA project, namely youth access to finance, use of communication/ICT and youth participation in value chains.
- In **Kenya, Uganda and Guatemala** studies on youth financial access were completed, a youth-focused communication ecosystem/ICT study is ongoing in Kenya based on a methodology tested in [Guatemala](#) in 2018 (similar studies were not planned for the remaining countries) and value chain studies were completed in [Uganda](#) and are ongoing for Kenya and Rwanda.
- National and regional multistakeholder dialogues, including to adapt to the Covid-19 scenario, participation in fora and Webinars and directly through joint implementation of planned activities, while supporting youth networks and organizations in each country. Around 60 national and subregional organizations/stakeholders, of which 38 youth organizations and groups, were provided

technical or organizational support and exposure, strengthening their capacities and engagement, as well as 1 400 individual youth (30 percent young women).

- In **Senegal and Uganda**, ICA-supported youth organizations have become implementing partners for FAO and government interventions. A similar approach is being followed in **Rwanda** (which already benefits of strong youth networks), as well as in **Guatemala and Kenya** (where youth networks are weaker). At the regional level, focus has been on Eastern Africa exchanges, with a regional youth platform being supported by the Eastern Africa Farmers Federation (EAFF) and FAO as a follow-up to the Regional Youth Forum conducted in Kampala, **Uganda** in Nov 2019.
- In **Latin America**, through the digital platform ChispaRural.GT, ICA initiated a collaboration with national rural youth networks established in the Central American Integration System (Juventudes Rurales SICA) with support by PROCASUR. The e-learning course “Productive employment and decent work in rural areas” was offered in tutored modality between May and July 2020 and was completed by over 60 participants from regional institutions, ministries, Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), universities and the private sector.
- Multistakeholder mechanisms and partnerships around youth employment promotion have been very active in **Uganda** (on the broader national employment strategy) and in **Senegal**, and **Kenya** (around specific programmatic priorities), and are incipient in **Rwanda** and **Guatemala**.
- Specific policy, strategy or programme development:
  - o In **Guatemala**, the programmatic priority identified is to design a business development support package for rural youth agripreneurs, including digital tools and access to finance, for its uptake by the Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Agriculture and Financial institutions. Building on past ICA support activities, a pilot group of 50 beneficiaries entrepreneurs (individual and grouped) has been identified, and selected youth-led cooperatives, already formalized during the previous ICA phase, received direct support to foster their engagement in the value chain. Finally, ICA conducted an assessment of the previously supported platform [www.ChispaRural.GT](http://www.ChispaRural.GT), defining an improvement plan for 2021.
  - o In **Uganda**, in 2017, the National Strategy for Youth Employment in Agriculture (NSYEA) was developed with ICA support under the leadership of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF). ICA provided continuous support to the NSYEA Technical Working Group for implementation and monitoring of the strategy. A progress assessment undertaken by CURAD and UNFFEE (with an interactive online baseline mapping developed by Ensibuuko) is under development and will inform the development of the NSYEA Action plan for 2021-2022. Further, following a successful first edition, phase two of the Youth Champions Initiative was launched in the last quarter of 2020 by FAO, MAAIF, and the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) as a national flagship, with support from two youth organizations (YOFCHAN, UNYFA). More than 1 400 applications were received, thrice the number received in the 2017 round. In the first quarter of 2021, the best 270 youth agripreneurs will be awarded at district and regional levels; following additional screening, 135 Youth Champions (50 percent female) will be selected as national champions and receive training at the Uganda National Farmers Leadership Center (NFLC).
  - o In **Senegal**, after piloting it in 2017, ICA has consolidated the MIJA model for sustainable rural incubation and service provision for youth agripreneurs, in partnership with the Agence Nationale pour la Promotion de l’Emploi des Jeunes (ANPEJ). The three platforms of Mbilor, Leona and Silane have been made fully operational and the MIJA training package has been completed, including modules on horticulture, poultry farming, cattle fattening, and aquaculture. 20 MIJA Trainers have been trained in November 2020, and are formalizing a network, while 20 return migrants (of which six women) and 65 local youth beneficiaries (of which 14 young women) have been trained for two weeks in December. The MIJA model has generated interest in the development community and discussions are ongoing for its further uptake by IFAD, GIZ, local communities, as well as FAO subregional office for West Africa.

- As for **Kenya**, new ICA country, the main programmatic priority identified was the need for a better coordinated approach on youth in agribusiness at county level (Siaya and Kakamega counties were prioritized). Support has been provided to the domestication of the 2017 National Youth in Agribusiness Strategy in Siaya, while adaptation to Kakamega will come in 2021. For this, synergies have been established with GIZ and the large-scale Agriculture Sector Development Support Programme Phase II (ASDSP II), funded by Sida in both counties. In both Kakamega and Siaya, FAO/ICA was nominated as a member to the County Agriculture Sector Steering Committee (CASSCOM). While the youth-sensitive value chain and youth engagement assessment are still to be finalized, youth engagement in the mango value chain has already been supported in Siaya, connecting 190 young producers (98 male and 82 females) to a global market for dried mangos (through partnership with Agricycle global/private sector), of which 40 youth with disabilities. Further, ICA Kenya Launched the *47 Champions national agripreneurs competition* in collaboration with Kenya Climate Innovation Center, the Youth Enterprise Fund, GIZ and the Ministry of ICT, Innovations and Youth (selection will be finalized in 2021).
- In **Rwanda**, following the formal request for a Youth Employment in the Agrifood system strategy received from Government in mid-2020, a consultant has been selected and the related support will be provided in 2021. In parallel, an in depth youth-sensitive value chain has been conducted in the horticulture sector, which will inform the above mentioned national strategy with recommendations and an action plan. FAO signed a Letter of Intent with JR Farms to support their Green Agribusiness Fund (GAF), an initiative aimed at strengthening youth agripreneurs through equity funding, market network, capacity building and mentorship. For the 2020 pilot, two youth-led Rwandan companies were selected.
- **Uganda** has a National Strategy for Youth Employment in Agriculture (NSYEA) in force since 2017, for which additional monitoring and implementation support has been provided by the project, as well as specific technical support for its *Youth champions and Mentorship* component. Further, youth priorities have recently been mainstreamed in Uganda's National Development Plan (NDP III) Agro-industrialization programme and in the Agriculture Sector Strategic Plan (ASSP III), as a result of dedicated youth consultations organized with the National Planning Authority in Northern, Eastern, Western and Central regions. A regular **youth-inclusive programmatic coordination mechanism is in place**, through the NSYEA technical working group (TWG) with active youth representation from YOFCHAN and UNYFA, the two main youth organizations.
- In **Senegal**, FAO supported, in the previous ICA phase, the development of a dedicated Rural Youth Employment policy (never formally adopted), and its possible adaptation into a Strategy of the forthcoming National Employment Policy is still being discussed. Within this frame, the ICA project has focused on supporting the MIJA rural incubation hubs, as a model for training and incubation in the agrifood sector. A working-level coordination mechanism is in place around the MIJA, while broader inclusive policy dialogue has been promoted through the support to the establishment of a Confederation of youth organizations (in partnership with Rikolto). Efforts are ongoing to promote the uptake of the MIJA approach under larger-scale programmes, like the IFAD and African Development Bank (AfDB) funded AGRIJEUNES project, launched in 2019, or through the government-led *Fonds de financement de la formation professionnelle et technique* (3FPT Fund), which is developing a dedicated spin-off project to boost young agripreneurship through the MIJA model.
- In **Guatemala**, FAO already supported in 2017 the development of the Decent Work Policy and the Youth Extension Strategy of the Ministry of Agriculture, as well as the design of the School Feeding Law and programme. Their respective implementation has been further supported in the current phase of the project, by focusing on structuring a business development support package for rural youth agripreneurs, including digital tools and access to finance, for its uptake by the Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Agriculture and Financial institutions. A technical working group for supporting rural youth agripreneurship in the Western Highlands has been established.

- In **Kenya**, FAO supported in 2017 the development of the Kenya Youth in Agribusiness Strategy. In 2020, ICA has supported its domestication in Siaya County and will support the same in Kakamega in 2021, as a decentralized model for potential replication across the country. Related technical working groups have been established at county level, and in the frame of the 47 champions' initiative, yet coordination demands additional efforts.
- In **Rwanda**, the Ministry of Agriculture in Rwanda requested support in the development of a National Strategy for Youth Employment in Agrifood systems, formalized only in mid-2020, which represents the main strategic entry point for fostering improved coordination around the youth employment priority. The horticultural sector has been prioritized for piloting relevant mechanisms for training, mentorship, incubation and/or coaching. A related technical working group will be established in 2021.

As part of the ILO/FAO project “[Eliminating child labour and forced labour in the cotton, textile and garment value chains: an integrated approach \(Clear Cotton Project\)](#)”, FAO is working in **Burkina Faso, Mali and Pakistan** to strengthen livelihoods of vulnerable rural families, with a specific focus on gender equality. One of the activities implemented in these three countries was to provide training, including through Farmer Field Schools (FFS), to promote decent work and enhance income-generating capacities of women, with particular focus of vulnerable households at risk of child labour in cotton production.

In **Pakistan**, FAO contributed to a research study on the linkages between the time burden of women and child labour, and how to enable women to get a more equal role, in more inclusive cotton growing communities.

***Thematic area 4:** Prohibiting all forms of discrimination against women, including in the world of work, including against women facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, such as migrant women and women with disabilities (paragraphs 16, 43, 44, 47)*

FAO is increasingly using an intersectionality approach, combined with the gender analysis, to identify and address the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination that men and women face, including the specific needs and priorities of refugees, IDPs and migrants. Particular attention is given to analyze the situation of both women and men who migrate, and those who stayed behind, taking into account that due to unequal and discriminatory gender and social norms often rural women and girls lack access to information, assets and social networks.

FAO's work related to migration at global, regional and country levels is guided by its Migration Framework, which was approved in 2019. This Framework presents what FAO does on migration, identifying its main thematic areas of work along the migration cycle.

Inclusiveness is one of the three guiding principles (together with sustainability and managing complexity) of FAO's approach adopted to ensure that the needs of vulnerable, disadvantaged or marginalized group are adequately addressed in its interventions on migration, giving special attention to gender, age and cultural dimensions.

FAO's work helps to minimize the adverse drives of migration and boost alternatives in rural areas; to support the development of seasonal and circular agricultural migration schemes and to advocate for the rights of agricultural migrant workers and their families; to encourage the investment of remittances in agricultural and non-agricultural activities and to enhance the adaptive capacity to climate variability and change; as well as to build the resilience and agricultural livelihoods for migrants and host communities. For the latter the work includes assisting migrants to engage in food systems and agricultural activities and to access land and assets in host communities, strengthening social cohesion, contributing to sustaining peace, supporting food security and nutrition interventions targeted to migrants, their families and host communities. FAO's work on migration focuses on generating and disseminating knowledge and evidence; providing policy support; developing the capacities of staff and

strategic external partners; increasing advocacy and outreach , and facilitating strategic and multi-stakeholders partnerships.

FAO is contributing to raise awareness and to strengthen the capacity on gender and migration issues, including vulnerabilities of migrant women as well as challenges faced by women left-behind in male-out migration contexts, in rural areas. As part of its learning activities FAO has developed the [e-learning course on Gender and Migration](#) that is available in English, Arabic, French and Spanish. This course presents the main gender concepts and available data about women migrants; an analysis of the gender dimensions of migration at different phases of the migration cycle and how vulnerability, discrimination and gender roles affect women’s challenges and opportunities. It also provides some recommendations on possible policy measures to address gender aspects and how to orient research on rural migration, fostering its potential to empower women and maximizing the positive effects of migration.

***Thematic area 5:** Promoting and protecting women’s labour and human rights in the workplace through targeted measures, including universal minimum wage, social protection and equal pay for work of equal value, reducing occupational segregation and gender pay gaps and ensuring collective bargaining and recruitment, retention and promotion of women.*  
(paragraph 28)

FAO contributes towards a better understanding of gender issues and the realities faced by female workers whilst ensuring that women representatives are present and active in all decision-making processes, particularly in the global banana industry. By hosting the Secretariat of the World Banana Forum (WBF), FAO provides retailers, importers, producers, exporters, consumer associations, governments, research institutions, trade unions, and civil society organizations with a space where the main stakeholders of the global banana supply-chain work together to achieve consensus on best practices for sustainable production and trade. The WBF particularly focuses on women’s labour and human rights issues from the perspectives of women’s employment opportunities, women’s empowerment, gender pay gap, health and safety, and sexual harassment and gender-based violence in the workplace. It also established World Banana Forum Declaration to Living Wages for Men and Women Working in the Banana Industry.<sup>3</sup>

In 2022, FAO initiated a coaching programme for youth organizations and networks (pilot to be completed in 2022) to strengthen their capacities in terms of inclusiveness and accountability to diverse and/or vulnerable youth groups, including young women. Related Gender and social inclusion guidelines for youth-led organizations in the agrifood system are being developed. They will orient youth organizations to i. understand social inclusion, gender equality and intersectionality and why their adoption is beneficial for the organization; ii. self-assess gender and social inclusion in the organization to identify main gaps and areas for improvement; and iii. embed inclusive approaches in the organizational practice - from governance to planning, implementation, and M&E.

***Thematic area 6:** Recognizing, reducing and redistributing women’s and girls’ disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work and representing and rewarding women’s paid care work, especially given the increases in the unequal burden on women and girls during the COVID-19 period*  
(paragraphs 29, 33 and 44)

According to the ILO, women spend 4.1 times more time than men in Asia and the Pacific on unpaid care work which involves tending to others, cooking, cleaning, fetching water and firewood and other non- market essential daily tasks within households that go unremunerated. In some countries, women end up spending 11 times more time than men on such tasks (ADB and UN Women 2018). This ‘invisible’ work contributes at least US\$10.8 trillion a year to the global economy and encompasses

---

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.fao.org/world-banana-forum/working-groups/social/gender-equity/en/>



both reproductive and productive work on which humanity and economies depend, and yet it has remained heavily ignored.<sup>4</sup>

As an example of FAO work, the multi-year Livelihoods project (LFSP) in **Zimbabwe** (2015-2021) implemented a household methodology, which included sessions to build shared visions for the family and which impacted the redistribution of household tasks. Fathers rethought their roles and took on more household tasks. (<https://lfpzwcom.files.wordpress.com/2021/09/inspire-v3-story-book.pdf> p. 20). The project also introduced innovative stoves which reduced women's work burden, saved trees and lives (<https://lfpzwcom.files.wordpress.com/2021/09/inspire-v3-story-book.pdf> p. 8).

***Thematic area 7: Supporting women's entrepreneurship, expanding existing women-owned and -led micro, small and medium enterprises and facilitating opportunities for new women entrepreneurs (paragraph 37)***

In order to empower rural women to access and compete in the market place through MSMEs and producer groups, FAO works to unlock women's entrepreneurial potential by making agri-businesses more economically, socially and environmentally sustainable. FAO's interventions cover different regions in **Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, Asia and the Pacific**, including a number of Small Islands Development States. Activities encompass knowledge generation, capacity development, awareness raising and policy dialogue and provision of technical support to a range of stakeholders engaged in agri-food value chains, such women and men of different ages and ethnical backgrounds, service providers, government representatives, private sector actors, etc.

**Institutional support:** Based on evidence and participatory processes, FAO works to enhance policy dialogue according to the agreed international commitments on gender equality, human rights, and environmental sustainability. For instance in **Cabo Verde**, FAO supported the development of the Gender Equality Strategy in Fishery Sector 2022-2025, to be endorsed on 2022

**Capacity development:** FAO works to reinforce institutional capacities to enhance efficient, gender-sensitive and climate-resilient enterprises at local, regional and national level, and to strengthen entrepreneurial capacities of women operating along selected value chains through tailor-made training and improved service provision. During 2020 and 2021, FAO assessed and supported different value chains in **25 countries** (fisheries, tourism, poultry, honey, cacao, banana, cotton, livestock, dairy, mushrooms, etc.) in collaboration with national ministries of agriculture and related institutions and producer organizations. Women involved in these FAO interventions have benefitted by gaining access to additional resources, climate resilient services, innovation and improved practices.

FAO is currently implementing the programme *Empowering women in food systems and strengthening the local capacities and resilience of SIDS in the agri-food sector*,<sup>5</sup> focusing on three targeted regions: **Barbados and Saint Lucia** in the Caribbean; the **Comoros and Sao Tome and Principe** in Africa; and **Palau and Samoa** in the Pacific. During 2020 and 2021, the reached 1,572 overall beneficiaries and trained 406 women and 130 men through hybrid and face-to-face trainings. Among them, 402 individuals (including 301 women) directly benefitted through equipment based on needs assessments, tailored capacity development trainings, and business plans development; 314 farmers at community level working on fisheries and poultry accessed services and equipment; and 622 beneficiaries attended four global webinars. Over 30 business plans for women's enterprises in SIDS have been developed and women's operating businesses were established on fish processing. In Comoros, a virtual platform is in place on micro finance targeting women entrepreneurs.<sup>6</sup> In Palau, research has identified local products with marketing potential and creating the layout and printing labels to increase economic

---

<sup>4</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/women-s-unpaid-and-underpaid-work-times-covid-19>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.fao.org/3/cb0685en/cb0685en.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Plateforme d'informations sur la micro-finance. Informations relative aux prêts et aux différents critères d'éligibilité: <http://www.facekm.net/>

outcomes for the women involved in agribusinesses as well as to preserve local ecosystems and cultural landscapes. In Samoa, producers received technical advice around local markets and selling through online platforms via The Maua App from WIBDI.

FAO is currently implementing the EU funded UN Joint Program “Support to Rural Entrepreneurship, Investment and Trade in **Papua New Guinea**”,<sup>7</sup> in partnership with ILO, ITU, UNCDF and UNDP. As of 2021, the program helped to develop the capacity of 5,065 cocoa farmers (including 929 women and 1989 youths) as master trainers (Trainers of Trainers) to provide grassroots extension services on cocoa seedling production and management practices. The programme also develop the E-Agriculture Strategy and Action Plan to address existing challenges in the access to information, networks, digital services and platforms that are critical to support policy decisions and innovative services. Additional activities focus on improving the quality and timeliness of data and information availability (in particular for Cocoa, Vanilla and Fisheries) for better decision making to the livelihoods of female and male farmers.

FAO is conducting activities for “Empowering Women through Mushroom Value Chain in the Western Area Rural District of **Sierra Leone**.” So far, the activities helped to empower 120 members of six women farmers’ organizations by equipping them with mushroom production techniques, crop houses, and post-harvest tools and providing them with income generation activities. The programme has established the Mushroom Union for Sustainable Health and Reliance on Own Money, to increase incomes and self-reliance of women engaged in the mushroom industry. The Union is soliciting support from the Government of Sierra Leone, development partners, stakeholders, and benevolent organizations.

In 2022, in the context of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) roll-out, FAO in collaboration with the UN International Trade Centre started the implementation of a pilot programme entitled “Empowering women and boosting livelihoods through agricultural trade: Leveraging the AfCFTA”. The programme aims to empower women producers, processors, and informal and formal traders in agriculture and agro-processing value chains as well as women-led Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) in agriculture by enabling them to benefit from trade opportunities created by the AfCFTA. The Programme will identify key topics and priorities for women (with a focus on digitalization and innovation) in the AfCFTA, conduct policy analysis of select AfCFTA Phase I and Phase II Protocols and Annexes, coordinate public-private dialogues and trainings for women’s organisations, carry out a mapping of women’s participation in regional value chains, and provide capacity building events for women traders and agripreneurs.

**Knowledge generation:** FAO produces technical papers and tools, and contributes to documenting and sharing promising practices and successful approaches to increase knowledge about empowering rural women and making agri-food systems more gender equitable. Examples include:

- Gender and Food Loss in Sustainable Fish Value Chains in Africa  
<https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cb8399en>
- E-learning on Gender Sensitive Value Chains  
(<https://elearning.fao.org/course/view.php?id=543>, also available in French and Spanish)
- FAO, KIT and Twin. 2019. Changing the terms of women’s engagement in cocoa and coffee supply chains. <https://www.kit.nl/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Changing-the-terms-of-women%E2%80%99s-engagement-in-cocoa-and-coffee-supply-chains.pdf>
- INRA. 2019 Réflexions sur le développement du secteur laitier et sa durabilité dans différentes parties du monde. Article. <https://productions-animales.org/article/view/2561>
- Video published on the FAO channel on Sustainable tourism: Empowering women and men in Palau : [https://youtu.be/G\\_yPloHPRem](https://youtu.be/G_yPloHPRem)

---

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.fao.org/papua-new-guinea/streit-png/en/>

- Video published on the FAO channel on International Women’s Day, on FAO’s Multi-partner Flexible Mechanism Empowering women through Slow Food communities:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Shea2QYkM68>

***Thematic area 8: Preventing and eliminating all forms of violence, sexual harassment and discrimination against women and girls, including in the world of work, and addressing the increase in gender-based violence during the COVID-19 period (paragraphs 16 and 35)***

FAO seeks to achieve gender equality and reduce discrimination against women and girls through various initiatives and activities that also support the elimination of all forms of violence. Through the adoption of gender-responsive and gender-transformative approaches (including the Dimitra Clubs and the Caisse de Résilience), FAO reinforces food security and the economic rights of women, mainly by increasing their access to and control of productive resources, services, local institutions, decent employment, healthcare, education and information, by reducing their workload and by increasing women’s participation in decision-making and planning processes.

Since the outbreak of the COVID-9 pandemic, FAO has continued to invest in the collection, analysis and use of sex- and age-disaggregated data to produce the evidence base for gender-responsive planning, and to generate knowledge about the existing gender gap in agriculture and food systems to identify possible solutions to overcome them. Data has been used to assess the gendered impacts of the pandemic and the lockdown on rural women and girls in order to design differentiated preventive and protection response measures and gender-sensitive monitoring and reporting frameworks, as well as to assess women’s access to social protection and assistance.

With the onset of the pandemic outbreak, FAO has published the policy brief named *Gendered impacts of COVID-19 and equitable policy responses in agriculture, food security and nutrition*, which compiles evidence to explore the socio-economic implications of the pandemic on food systems and rural economies and provides concrete recommendations to mitigate its impacts on rural women and girls; and the document *Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)* that provides guidance on how to create and implement accountable, inclusive and gender-sensitive communication strategies by ensuring timely, reliable and culturally appropriate key messages through diversified communication channels. These strategies specifically address not only potential misinformation and disease-related-stigma, but also help to identify and address the risks of GBV and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) by adapting, translating and disseminating related messages through radio, TV, social media, print and other medium.

In **Pakistan** FAO has provided information on available social assistance programmes, hygiene, food safety, nutrition and healthy diets using different communication channels and tailoring the messages to different target audiences, including illiterate women. FAO has also used digital media and distanced messaging to promote virus mitigation and combat misinformation. Over 80,000 information, education and communication (IEC) materials (e.g. posters and brochures), translated into local languages and displayed in supermarkets, local food shops and other public places, were developed and distributed. Health and physical distancing guidelines were also shared remotely via radio broadcast, WhatsApp, and FAO Pakistan social media channels, including Urdu messages and infographics. Interventions initially piloted within a single intervention district have since been replicated and are now operational throughout every province in Pakistan, as well as carried out by partner agencies.

Every year FAO collaborates with the other UN Rome-based agencies, namely IFAD and WFP, in the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence campaign (25 November – 10 December), called by the UN Secretary-General for preventing and eliminating violence against women and girls around the world, managed by UN Women. In support of the UNiTE campaign the Rome-based agencies organize a series of awareness raising events to share innovative approaches, good practices and lessons learned for addressing the global pandemic of violence against women and girls. Similar initiatives are also organized by FAO’s decentralized offices in collaboration with strategic local partners.

*Thematic area 9: Integrating a gender perspective into climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes and providing adequate resources to ensure the full and equal participation of women in all levels of decision-making and implementation in these areas (paragraph 48)*

FAO is supporting countries to build the resilience of women and men belonging to different age, socio-economic and ethnic groups and the most vulnerable and at high-risk groups, to mitigate the impacts of climate change and disasters and help them to respond to threats and recover from shocks more quickly. This implies also recognizing the important roles of women and men in agriculture and in ensuring food security and good nutrition, and in engaging them in building resilient and sustainable agri-food systems and rural livelihoods.

Technical support and policy advice is provided to national and international strategic partners to increase the access for women and youth to productive resources, financial and agriculture advisory services, climate-smart and labour-saving technologies and good practices. Special efforts are made to assist countries with the equitable management of natural resources, such as land and water, through the design and implementation of gender-responsive and youth inclusive policies and projects, and responsible governance mechanisms, which reflect and address the specific needs of men and women belonging to different socio-economic and age groups, and the most vulnerable people including ethnic groups, refugees, elderly and people with disabilities.

The approach taken by FAO to integrate a gender perspective into climate actions and disaster risk management is based on supporting inclusive and gender-responsive processes, by establishing mechanisms that enable national/local authorities to give equal voice and decision-making power to all people; empower women and youth as agents of change and resilience builders, and protect individuals from poverty, inequality, unemployment and violence; raise awareness and strengthen the capacity of policy-makers and local communities on how to better prevent and manage conflicts, ensure food security and good nutrition in protracted crises and manage risk; and identify and address the vulnerabilities and needs of rural men, women and youth, especially marginalized and at high-risk groups, including different forms of gender-based violence.

Examples of the work undertaken by FAO includes the generation of methodologies and data to measure vulnerability and resilience for enhancing understanding and addressing multiple risks and reducing food systems vulnerabilities; the identification of measures and good practices towards gender equality and women's empowerment; the provision of normative guidance on regulatory frameworks and strategies; strengthening social protection systems to support disaster risk management and climate change adaptation, taking into account the gender aspects; as well as raising awareness and strengthening the capacities to design and implement gender-responsive climate and resilience building actions.

Increasing attention is also given by FAO to support the uptake of gender transformative and community engagement approaches (Dimitra Clubs) in climate negotiation, peace building and conflict prevention initiatives, to improve community dialogue, enhance women's and youth's voice and participation in decision-making. These approaches seek to remove structural barriers to gender equality and support the equitable distribution of resources and allocation of roles and responsibilities between men and women; and to challenge and change rigid gender norms and roles, and unequal power dynamics and discriminatory social structures. Both a gender and an intersectionality approaches are used recognizing that women often experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination linked to their gender, age, ethnic group, health status and education level, among others. The works involves the use of participatory and experiential learning methodologies, with the active engagement of men and boys as allies for change and advocates for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, to facilitate dialogues and behavioural changes at household, community and institution levels.

Among the activities undertaken by FAO there are a series of awareness raising events organized at the COP 26 and the 66<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women to discuss on issues related to gender equality, youth inclusion and gender parity with the aim of empowering women and youth to become active participants at climate and peace building negotiation tables. This work also includes training women agricultural experts to become leaders and negotiators so they can equally represent their countries in global negotiation tables and decision-making space on climate change such as the COP26. To assess the situation data are also collected on women's participation in national delegations and the time spent by women and men as active speakers in plenary and technical tables.

Increasing efforts are also made to raise gender awareness and strengthen the capacity of Parliamentarians and policy-makers on how to integrate the gender dimensions in mitigation and response to climate change, the COVID-19 and in resilience and peace building efforts. This work implies the organization of a series of webinars to share promising approaches and good practices with relevant experts, the planning of face-to-face training and online learning courses and the production of the evidence and guidance materials for gender-responsive planning. For example, FAO has produced a guide and policy brief for gender-responsive disaster risk management and a training module to support the design and implementation of gender-responsive climate-smart agriculture projects.

***Thematic area 10: Improving and systematizing the collection, analysis and dissemination of high-quality, accessible, timely, reliable disaggregated data, with a focus on women's employment, informal employment, access to decent work and social protection, entrepreneurship, and unpaid care and domestic work through time-use surveys and satellite accounts to assess the contribution of such work to national income (paragraphs 49 and 50)***

FAO supports national statistical systems and governmental institutions through guidelines, best practices and standardize indicators for the collection and use of gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data.

The FAO Statistical Programme of Work 2020-21 included 30 statistical activities related to sex-disaggregated data or gender statistics and provides sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics through seven databases, in partnership with World Bank, IFAD, UN WOMEN. Nine capacity development activities aimed at increasing awareness and statistical knowledge among stakeholders were provided, seven of which were related to one or more SDG indicators. Several FAO databases now include sex-disaggregated data and gender relevant statistics, including FAOSTAT, the Gender and Land Rights Database (GLRD),<sup>8</sup> and the Rural Livelihood Information System (RuLIS).<sup>9</sup> These databases are disseminated externally through websites, yearbooks, flagship publications, such as SOFI<sup>10</sup> and SOFA,<sup>11</sup> and the SDG website.

The main FAO's tools and activities for sex-disaggregated data are as follows:

- FAO disseminates gender statistics on women's land ownership and is the custodian agency for SDG Indicators 5.a.1 and 5.a.2.
- FAO provides guidelines and standards for the collection of comparable sex-disaggregated data in:
  - World Programme for the Census of Agriculture 2020 (WCA 2020)
  - Agricultural Integrated Surveys (AGRIS), and the 50 x 2030 Initiative
  - Guidelines for collecting data for sex-disaggregated and gender-specific indicators in agricultural surveys (GSRS, 2018).<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.fao.org/gender-landrights-database/en/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.fao.org/in-action/rural-livelihoods-dataset-rulis/en/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.fao.org/publications/sofi/2021/en/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.fao.org/publications/sofa/sofa-2021/en/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.fao.org/3/ca6401en/ca6401en.pdf>

- Since 2014, the SDG indicator 2.1.2 (prevalence of food insecurity at moderate or severe level) provides the opportunity to estimate the prevalence of food insecurity at individual-level, based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)<sup>13</sup> methodology collected through the Gallup World Poll (or by national institutions, whenever available).
- Under the 50 x 2030 initiative, FAO is collaborating with GAAP2-IFPRI to develop a Women's Empowerment Metric for National Statistical Systems (WEMNS) for the LSMS and AGRIS.

---

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.fao.org/policy-support/tools-and-publications/resources-details/en/c/1236494/>