

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Thursday, 10 June 2021 14:00 GMT +05:30
DIALOGUE TITLE	Women's Agency and Gender Equity in Food Systems
CONVENED BY	Norwich Institute for Sustainable Development (NISD), Rythu Sadhikara Samstha (RySS), Bharat Krishak Samaj (BKS) and TIGR2ESS
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/2062/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Independent
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	No borders

The outcomes from a Food Systems Summit Dialogue will be of use in developing the pathway to sustainable food systems within the locality in which they take place. They will be a valuable contribution to the national pathways and also of interest to the different workstreams preparing for the Summit: the Action Tracks, Scientific Groups and Champions as well as for other Dialogues.

1. PARTICIPATION

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

65

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0 0-18

8 19-30

27 31-50

25 51-65

5 66-80

0 80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

10 Male

55 Female

0 Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

17 Agriculture/crops

1 Fish and aquaculture

2 Livestock

1 Agro-forestry

7 Environment and ecology

1 Trade and commerce

10 Education

0 Communication

0 Food processing

0 Food retail, markets

0 Food industry

0 Financial Services

2 Health care

6 Nutrition

2 National or local government

0 Utilities

0 Industrial

16 Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

2 Small/medium enterprise/artisan

1 Large national business

Multi-national corporation

7 Small-scale farmer

Medium-scale farmer

Large-scale farmer

11 Local Non-Governmental Organization

12 International Non-Governmental Organization

Indigenous People

19 Science and academia

Workers and trade union

Member of Parliament

Local authority

6 Government and national institution

Regional economic community

3 United Nations

International financial institution

2 Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance

Consumer group

2 Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

HOW DID YOU ORGANIZE THE DIALOGUE SO THAT THE PRINCIPLES WERE INCORPORATED, REINFORCED AND ENHANCED?

Act with Urgency – In our background note and invite letter to the dialogue, we incorporated the sense of urgency with which the UN Food Systems Summit has been convened, as part of the Decade of Action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. We outlined the critical role of gender equity and women's agency in transitioning to sustainable, equitable food systems. Commit to the Summit – The Dialogue materials we prepared emphasized the importance of the Dialogues in the Food Systems Summit process and explained that the conclusions from this dialogue would inform the work of the Gender levers of each Action Track and the outcomes of the UNFSS. Be Respectful – The Dialogue method, the introductory remarks of our Convenors and Guests as well as the skilful facilitation of our Facilitators set the tone as an open, respectful conversation rather than a debate. All discussions were respectful and collaborative, despite each discussion group having members with diverse perspectives. Recognize Complexity and Embrace multi-stakeholder inclusivity – We invited participants with varying positionalities in the food system, from researchers and policymakers to development practitioners and farmers. This facilitated discussion that recognised the complexities of food systems in the Global South from the perspectives of different stakeholders. We also attempted to ensure balanced participation from both genders. Complement the work of others – A major focus of the Dialogue was to discuss the learnings from programmes that are already being implemented. Many participants shared resources about initiatives being undertaken on the ground. Build Trust – We followed the Chatham House rule, ensuring that social media posts about the Dialogue did not reference individual statements. Our Facilitators created a safe, open environment by encouraging participants to share their views and appreciating them for the same.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

As mentioned above.

DO YOU HAVE ADVICE FOR OTHER DIALOGUE CONVENORS ABOUT APPRECIATING THE PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT?

3. METHOD

The outcomes of a Dialogue are influenced by the method that is used.

DID YOU USE THE SAME METHOD AS RECOMMENDED BY THE CONVENORS REFERENCE MANUAL?

Yes

No

4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

MAJOR FOCUS

This dialogue sought to explore how the concept of women's agency (including empowerment) can be operationalised in food systems. Women's agency relates to the Gender lever of change that cuts across all Action Tracks. Investing in women's agency is now urgent, as despite considerable global awareness and progress on gender equality, several challenges remain to the exercise of women's agency in food systems. Through this dialogue, we sought to clarify the theory of change, while also identifying strategies to strengthen and support women's agency in research, policy and practice. The discussion was organised around five major themes:

Understanding Women's Agency in the Food System Discourse- The HLPE Global Narrative report 2030 emphasized that "agency" and "sustainability" are vital dimensions of food security that need to be elevated within policy frameworks. Despite women's crucial role in food production, processing, and consumption, they face several structural barriers that limit their agency within food systems. They have few rights to resources, including land, money and labour, are underrepresented in decision-making bodies and their priorities are hardly addressed. The critical role of women within food systems, including those in marginalised communities, needs to be recognised.

Building and investing in women's collective agency- Agency for poor rural women involves challenging multiple power hierarchies in the household, community, state policies and labour and product markets. Changing power relations and social norms requires collective action. Alongside traditional forms of sharing labour and resources, new models for exercising collective agency are emerging – such as self-help groups, cooperatives, and producer organisations. However, given the diversity of women's contexts, this process needs to be intentional and requires investment. Legal and policy frameworks that enable collective agency need to be operationalised through social mobilisation, dialogue and training.

Strengthening the interface between women's knowledges and science- Traditional crops, often nutritious, but considered low value, generally lie in women's domain. Women possess knowledge of their growing conditions, seed selection, preservation and processing. Scientific research has engaged with many of these 'neglected' crops, whether millets or tubers and roots, developing traits to make them more resilient and profitable. Yet adoption has been slow, mainly due to the lack of engagement with women's priorities and resource constraints. Where a mutually respectful interface between women farmers and science has been facilitated, such as in ICRISAT's Smart food campaign, or CARE's Farmer Field and Business Schools, women's equitable participation has strengthened agricultural knowledge and enhanced productivity.

Alternate pathways to improving nutritional outcomes- A key challenge to improving nutritional outcomes is the lack of access to and affordability of healthy diets to a large majority of people (SOFI, 2020). Women's empowerment and control over the food system is central to addressing this problem. Entry-points can include breastfeeding, growing homestead gardens, diversification of cropping systems on small plots, or the cultivation of naturally biofortified plants. All these require an understanding of culture and context specific nutritional knowledge, alongside strategies that make consumption practices more nutritious.

Rights, Entitlements and Representation- Globally, women lack rights to land, water, credit, labour, extension services, membership in cooperatives and decision-making bodies. Laws and policies need to guarantee women's human rights, ensure equal entitlements to resources as male farmers, and recognize women's paid and unpaid labour. Enforcement of these laws requires not just recognition of women's contributions to food systems, but also representation in decision-making bodies concerning policy-making, service provision, agricultural research or producer organisations.

ACTION TRACKS

- ✓ Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
- ✓ Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
- ✓ Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
- ✓ Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
- ✓ Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

- ✓ Finance
- ✓ Innovation
- ✓ Human rights
- ✓ Women & Youth Empowerment
- ✓ Policy
- ✓ Data & Evidence
- ✓ Governance
- ✓ Trade-offs
- ✓ Environment and Climate

MAIN FINDINGS

The major recommendations from the Dialogue are detailed below:

- 1. Collective Agency -** Collectivisation and mobilisation of women around their roles within food systems (as farmers, consumers, food systems workers) can help them exercise their agency even in the face of structural barriers and constraints. Cooperatives and Self-Help Groups (SHGs) have been successful models of collectivisation in the Global South and can be leveraged and scaled up further. In urban contexts, mobilisation of women around specific identities (migrant workers, informal workers, sex workers) should take place together with building alliances across larger interest groups (such as labour unions).
- 2. Social Entrepreneurship -** Encouraging and facilitating mission-driven social enterprises that employ gender transformative approaches can enable women's economic empowerment and financial independence. A key factor in building successful and sustainable social enterprises is social capital, which includes networks, skills, advisory support, finance and market linkages.
- 3. Access to Resources and Entitlements -** To exercise agency, women need to have unmediated access as individual citizens to resources such as land, water, commons, housing, finance, knowledge, extension and technology. Policies need to ensure that women's rights to these entitlements are substantive and not merely nominal.
- 4. Capacity and skill building -** Women in rural communities in the Global South often lack access to the resources required to build on their skills and capabilities. Capacity building of women in digital and financial literacy, marketing, non-traditional skills and leadership needs to be supported by governments, civil society and researchers. Women should also be enabled to participate in such activities, by being provided childcare services, transport, and doorstep extension, that can mitigate some of their constraints (such as time poverty, domestic responsibilities, etc.)
- 5. Challenging Social Norms -** Women's agency in food systems is constrained by harmful social and cultural norms. These can impact on their health, physical safety, nutrition, employment and reproductive autonomy. To effectively challenge these norms and social structures, we need to harness the power of women's collectives as well as sensitise men. The Gulabi Gang (Pink Saree Brigade) is an example of a women's collective that fights violence against women in rural Uttar Pradesh, India.
- 6. Involve, Engage and Sensitise Men -** There is an urgent need to engage men in women's empowerment at all levels, from the household to the community to the institutional level. This can be done through gender sensitisation and training. Involving men in gender transformative partnerships and social enterprises can even improve gender relations and reduce the domestic burden on women, as seen in the work of the Altertrade Philippines Foundation. Additionally, there is a need to facilitate male allies in research and policy who can champion and mainstream gender issues.
- 7. Representation of Women -** Increasing the representation of women in institutional structures, policymaking, finance, scientific research, and grassroots leadership is essential to develop their agency. Women need to be represented at all levels of leadership and policymaking, as men lack the lived experience of being a woman and can lack empathy for their challenges. It is important to go beyond tokenistic representation and incorporate intersectional concerns in women's representation. Research has shown that women leaders often support and enable other women to build and exercise their agency.
- 8. Gender-sensitive Research and Policy -** A gender lens needs to be incorporated in research, data and policy. Research agendas and methodologies need to be more gender-specific, participatory and value women's knowledge. Gender-disaggregated data is essential for understanding women's challenges and can contribute to gender-sensitive policymaking that mainstreams women's concerns.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/5

Discussion Group 1 - Understanding Women's Agency in the Food Systems Discourse

The questions that were addressed in the discussion include:

1. How might we further elaborate and complement the theory of change between women's agency and the transition to a more sustainable and equitable food system, contributing to SDG2?

- Emphasis on social enterprises that promote gender transformative approaches.
- Collectively organised women as stakeholders is very powerful - gives women agency and a forum to have their voices heard.
- In SE Asian countries, there are enterprises that have set a benchmark for women's agency in agricultural value chains.
- Voices of men matter as much as women's. Women negotiate with those important to their daily lives. Emphasise the communication between men and women and how it can be made gender sensitive.
- Most women work alongside their husbands. Having mixed gender social enterprises can be a complementary approach to developing women's agency and gender sensitivity. Involving all groups is key to women's empowerment. (Philippines)
- Negotiation is not just limited to the household - roles have evolved and women are asserting themselves outside the home, such as Indian banks being headed by women
- Where does the understanding of normative change come in? Research is important in answering such questions. Examples from India of challenging social norms and exercising agency: Gulabi Gang (Pink Sari Brigade) and SEWA empowering women to drive tractors and other male-dominated work.
- Orissa Millets Mission: Awareness and a market was created for millets. Trainings and exhibitions enabled the participation of women in financial management, reviving recipes, interacting with the Government, and being aware of latest policies
- Important to eliminate local taboos for nutritious foods that cannot be eaten by women at certain times, such as pregnancy/lactation (Orissa)
- Ensuring entitlements to property/land rights, involvement in major domestic decisions and awareness of human rights among women.
- Recognition of women's domestic and care work - women are seen as primary caregivers; this perception has to evolve.
- Need to focus on nutrition and sustainability while resolving short and long-term production oriented goals.
- With more male outmigration, women have to lead agriculture. Giving these women access to key resources and technology is important.

2. What are some of the major roadblocks to developing women's agency in Africa and Asia (such as poverty, lack of resources, community structures, or the lack of recognition of women's unpaid domestic and care work)?

- Violence against women limits them from making their own decisions freely; they are restricted by social norms.
- Women are not perceived to be entrepreneurs and therefore denied financing. If there were more women financing women, this would provide encouragement in pitching ideas for enterprises and finance.

3. What kinds of policies can create an enabling environment for women's agency, especially in farming and allied systems, without reinforcing existing gender divisions of labour and rights?

- Women need to be represented at various political levels. Men may not always be able to empathise with women's realities, which could impact the way certain policies are drafted and implemented.
- Fund of funds, a policy initiative by the Indian government, provides funds to venture capital and private equity that fund women.

Recommendations:

- Encourage effective communication between men and women, as involving all groups is key to women empowerment.
- Lack of finance is a major roadblock in developing countries. More women in leadership positions in finance, as well as policymaking and social enterprises, can help fund and empower other women.
- Policies focusing on entitlements to land and technology for women should be redrafted to enable women's control over these resources.
- Nurture social capital of women's enterprises and collectives, through capacity building, financial and advisory support.

ACTION TRACKS

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|---|--|
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KEYWORDS

- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| ✓ | Finance | ✓ | Policy |
| ✓ | Innovation | ✓ | Data & Evidence |
| ✓ | Human rights | ✓ | Governance |
| ✓ | Women & Youth Empowerment | ✓ | Trade-offs |
| ✓ | | ✓ | Environment and Climate |

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/5

Discussion Group 2 - Building and Investing in Women's Collective Agency

The discussion was guided by the following questions:

1. Many interventions that seek to operationalise women's agency face backlash from traditional power structures including the extended family, the village council, and even the state. How can this be addressed effectively, by both grassroots organizations and local government institutions?
2. Most models for building collective agency have been implemented in rural areas. Can these models be used in urban contexts for vulnerable groups of migrant workers, sex workers, transwomen and domestic help? What might be different in urban settings?
3. What are the key resources required for sustaining women's collective agency?
4. Despite the centrality of women's agency to building sustainable food systems, this has not always translated into public/private investments. How can we make developing women's agency a policy priority and direct more funds and resources towards it?

The following insights and outcomes emerged:

- Heterogeneity of Women- Women are not homogenous in their identity, access to information and vulnerability. Models of inclusion are usually selective and do not address the diversity among women. Change can only happen when there is more representation and participation of women in institutional structures.
- From Recognition to Action - We need a strategic framework for building the capacities of women's institutions. The lessons we have learned across BRICS countries is that women have hidden capacities that need to be unearthed. Women are the gatekeepers of family health and bear the brunt of disease and climate injustice. Policy makers should note that we need women-centered policy-making.
- Building Women's Collective Agency - Successful women's groups have been able to build alliances across the board. Power mapping can help women recognize the opposition on ground and simultaneously realize the benefits of collectives. Digital literacy, leadership development, and training in marketing will help women to organize, participate, transform institutional spaces and build solidarity. For example, SEWA's successful model.
- Challenging prejudices - Educational institutions can help break the androcentric perspective in agriculture. State institutions and corporate agencies should rethink their definition of a farmer. We need to deconstruct and decolonize our view on women's collective agency in order to change social norms.
- Urban Collective Agency - Lack of data is a key issue in identifying the challenges faced by certain groups and mobilizing them. It is important to build alliances with larger groups such as labour unions in cities. Unpaid care work and women in the informal sector need to be recognized. Inclusion of social movements, mobilizing groups, protesting and pressuring state governments could be solutions. The HIV programme is an example. An understanding of women's food preferences across caste, region, and religion needs to be incorporated into food security programmes. The role of women in food security needs to be acknowledged in state-led programmes as well as by labour movements in urban areas.
- Key Policy Priorities - Women need access to forests, land, water, commons and food resources. Access to finance, markets, non-GMO seeds etc. is needed even for household, communal and small-holder farmers. Livelihoods play a critical role not only in poverty alleviation but also in strengthening institutions such as SHGs. Women need to be supported in building agricultural knowledge, especially indigenous and agro-ecological farming methods. Data systems need to reflect women's contribution. Strategies should be devised considering different categories such as farming or non-farming households, landed or landless, etc. We need to invest in capacity building of women. Effective monitoring and evaluation of women's collective action programmes should be instituted. Evidence-based qualitative and quantitative research, documentation of cases and success stories, mainstreaming and creating ecosystems for women's agency is the need of the hour.

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KEYWORDS

- ✓ Finance
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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/5

Discussion Group 3 - Strengthening the Interface between Women's Knowledges and Science

Women's indigenous knowledge about food systems is considered incompatible with the scientific method. However, scientific research has often independently validated traditional systems of production and consumption, especially those practiced by women (agroecology, multi-cropping, nutritional benefits of millets and other neglected crops). There is a need for a stronger interface between women's knowledges and science, which can galvanise the transition to sustainable and equitable food systems. The discussion was based on this premise and guided by the following questions:

1. Women's knowledges span several food systems domains, such as production (indigenous crops), collection (wild and forest produce), livestock rearing, consumption (traditional culinary knowledge) and processing (salting, pickling). How can civil society, research and policy actors not only recognize and preserve, but also elevate the importance of these knowledges in the food systems discourse?
2. How can scientists position the value of local women's knowledge as equally relevant to agriculture and food science?
3. How can policy makers and implementing agencies, through their extension and outreach activities, involve women as active agents in the production and dissemination of knowledge about regenerative agricultural practices and localised food systems?
4. What are some successful examples of mutually collaborative practices between women's knowledge and science and technology, in agriculture, livestock rearing, food processing and consumption? How can we build on these?

The participants discussed the lack of recognition of women's knowledge in society, science and policy and the challenges in incorporating women's knowledge in scientific curriculums and research. The discussion also highlighted the roadblocks in operationalising women's knowledge in policy and extension support, including:

- Cultural attitudes and knowledge gaps among scientists, policymakers and extension agents.
- The hierarchical structure of the interface between science and women's knowledge. The research methodology of most sciences tends to be gender-blind, from data collection and analysis to outcomes.
- Rigidity of scientific institutions and systems.
- Policy and extension support are still male-dominated, although more women are pursuing education in agricultural sciences. This reduces access of women producers to knowledge and advisory services.

Recommendations –

1. Integrate women's knowledge into the scientific curriculum, especially in agricultural sciences. Facilitate the study of women's resilience strategies and exercise of agency in conditions of adversity.
2. While it is important to have women-only spaces to discuss gender issues, also involve and engage with men in their capacities as policymakers, extension agents and scientists. Encourage male champions who can challenge the notion that gender research is for women only. This will help change patriarchal attitudes and amplify the importance of gender in policy and practice.
3. Research methodology in the sciences, including data collection, analysis and outcomes, need to inculcate a gender lens. This could involve gender-disaggregated data, participatory methods and providing platforms for dissemination that encourage gender-sensitive research. The science-policy interface for such research also needs to be strengthened to facilitate evidence-based policies.
4. Utilising the opportunities provided by the pandemic to facilitate gender mainstreaming across interconnected issues such as health, nutrition and sustainability.
5. Study both the failures and the successes among initiatives that integrate women's knowledge and science. This will help us understand not only what strategies work, but also the reasons for the resistance and backlash that several interventions face.
6. Facilitate the appointment of more women as extension agents and resource persons to enable rural women producers to avail extension support. Sensitise and build the capacities of male agents to include women producers in their service delivery.

ACTION TRACKS

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KEYWORDS

	Finance	✓	Policy
	Innovation	✓	Data & Evidence
✓	Human rights	✓	Governance
✓	Women & Youth Empowerment		Trade-offs
		✓	Environment and Climate

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 4/5

Discussion Group 4 - Alternate Pathways to Improving Nutritional Outcomes

This session was guided by four key questions

1. Across the world, women are responsible for household consumption and therefore nutrition. How can we improve their access to the knowledge, resources and support they need to improve their family's food and nutrition security?

The recommendations from the session are:

- Data on women's knowledges, attitudes and practices towards food is essential to develop contextual understanding.
- Embed the idea of food groups, micronutrients and their sources in women's household consumption practices.
- Local governance bodies can be platforms for improving access and participation of women. An example is the Kerala model, where Gram Sabhas encourage discussions on food and nutrition among women.

2. Food-based dietary guidelines, while a useful standard, are often generalised and not accommodating of local cultures. Can making women equal participants in the production and dissemination of context-specific nutrition information contribute to better adoption of dietary guidelines?

Participation of women is important for accommodating cultural food preferences in dietary guidelines. Women should be enabled to not only cook nutritious meals, but also participate in all stages of the food value chain. Promoting women's participation in kitchen gardens and local markets can encourage production and consumption of locally grown food, mitigating food insecurity. Women can be community educators and disseminators of best practices, enabling households to understand the importance of their food choices for nutrition. Women's collectives such as SHGs and FPOs could sell home-cooked nutritious meals in villages and local markets.

3. How can men be engaged in the discourse around nutrition and household consumption, as they not just exercise control over family finances, but also help reproduce social norms contributing to the intergenerational cycles of malnutrition in women?

A crucial step is to engage men at multiple levels:

- a) Household - Ensure equitable distribution of food and recognise how this can improve nutrition of women and the household.
- b) Community - Change the knowledge, attitudes and practices of the community.
- c) Institutions - Ensure men's participation in diversification of cropping systems, agriculture extension services and local markets.

The historical gender inequality that has led to intergenerational cycles of malnutrition cannot be sustainably addressed without the participation of men.

4. Encouraging local production and consumption (through kitchen gardens and community wet markets) can help increase women's autonomy over household consumption and reduce dependency on markets. How can this be made a policy imperative, especially in LMICs?

The following suggestions emerged from this discussion:

- a) Policy shift to millets and other local grains is crucial, along with promoting women-run micro-enterprises and encouraging women-focussed technological innovations.
- b) Develop short supply chains to cater to local consumers and producers.
- c) Develop a dataset on land availability for kitchen gardens. Alternative methods can be employed for landless people.
- d) In Andhra Pradesh, convergence of the Department of Rural Development with the Department of Agriculture helped farmers shift to organic farming and enabled households to understand the importance of their food choices. Women play a crucial role in such initiatives.

Recommendations -

1. Ascertaining knowledge, attitudes and practices of women to develop effective measures to improve nutritional outcomes.
2. Support women to become educators, generating awareness on nutritious consumption patterns.
3. Support women with knowledge and skills to ensure their equitable participation in all stages of the food value chain.
4. Engage and sensitize men at multiple levels: household, community and institutional, to ensure their participation in enhancing nutritional outcomes.
5. Leverage government programmes for dissemination of relevant knowledge on FNS.
6. Development of grassroots leadership programmes for sustainable food systems.

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KEYWORDS

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 5/5

Discussion Group 5 - Rights, Entitlements and Representation

The discussion focused on the following questions:

1. In Asia and Africa, women lack land rights, and therefore legal recognition as farmers. This exposes them to exploitation of their labour and threat of eviction. How can legal safeguards be granted, and their implementation monitored, particularly for women in rural communities?
2. What are the gaps in current legislation on women's rights and entitlements, especially in Asia and Africa, regarding agriculture, nutrition and food systems? How can policies related to the food system be more gender sensitive?

In Asia and Africa, women have land rights, but face implementation challenges and patriarchal social norms. Marriage often weakens women's claim and ability to control land. Better monitoring, capacity building and implementation from the lowest bureaucratic levels are needed. Land rights may also be used to tie women down to land-based livelihoods and degraded lands. The key is to recognize that in food systems, women sustain themselves through several resources and livelihood activities. Land ownership rights are as important as usufruct rights over other productive resources.

SDG 5.4 notes women's unpaid care work. Women also do unpaid non-care work, especially in South Asia, where inherited socio-economic hierarchies make some castes and ethnic groups landless. Recognizing women's work for labour rights is necessary, especially in contexts such as tea plantations (e.g. Sri Lanka), where plantation and agricultural economies intertwine to create difficult working/ living conditions for women. The example of Pakistan's Sindh was given, where a law has been passed recognizing the minimum wage rights of women agricultural workers.

There is also a need for policy to ensure access to credit, technology and other resources required by women producers. Land improvement should not be limited to mainstream productivity but involve nutrition-centric agriculture. Gender-disaggregated data is crucial for policy and understanding disparities across intersectional categories of caste, class, race, age, ethnicity and religion.

3. There have been efforts to increase representation of women in local decision-making bodies, including local governments, producer organisations, agriculture, nutrition and health extension, yet gendered power structures often work against women's voice and agency. How can representation be made substantive, and not merely nominal, for women?

Substantive women's representation is crucial to achieving sustainable progress. The challenges to this include women being represented by men of the family and women being stuck at lower levels of decision-making. Representation can also be hegemonized by elite women. Women leaders are often considered leaders of only women rather than the whole community.

A crucial step would be to build women's capacity through budget allocations and collectives for improved access to resources. In the Odisha Millet Mission, women's SHGs play active roles - building nutritional awareness and negotiating better market access and wages. The Kenya National Farmers' Federation (KENAFF) also works to improve women's representation from grassroots to the national level.

Women's representation must often fit into mainstream development models. However, mainstream models devalue women's situated knowledge, such as intensive agriculture systems that have led to agrarian distress. Meaningful women's representation has to involve the re-imagining of the development paradigm.

Recommendations:

1. Strong implementation of legal, tenure, and usufruct rights and recognition of women farmers for workers' rights.
2. Farming systems investments to increase food and nutrition centric agriculture productivity and reduce women's drudgery on small and marginal farmland.
3. Gender-segregated data to map land access and other common and productive resources.
4. Inclusive definition of farmers, recognising the intersectionality of women.
5. Creating alternative development paradigms and valuing women's knowledge.
6. Intersectionality in women's informed representation.

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

ACTION TRACKS

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KEYWORDS

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Finance | <input type="checkbox"/> Policy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Innovation | <input type="checkbox"/> Data & Evidence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human rights | <input type="checkbox"/> Governance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Women & Youth Empowerment | <input type="checkbox"/> Trade-offs |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Environment and Climate |

ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

ATTACHMENTS

- **Concept Note**
https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Concept-Note_Womens-Agency-Dialogue.pdf
- **Agenda**
https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Agenda_Womens-Agency-Dialogue.pdf

CORRECTIONS, ADJUSTMENTS, OR CHANGES

Title Report on the Women's Agency and Gender Equity Independent Dialogue

Date 21/09/2021

Array

ATTACHMENTS

- **Report on the Women's Agency and Gender Equity Independent Dialogue**

RELEVANT LINKS

- **Report on NISD Website**
<https://nisd.ac.uk/new-report-enable-womens-agency-to-improve-food-systems/>