



COMMIT TO GROW EQUALITY: FAO COUNCIL SIDE EVENT

11 JUNE 2024, 12.30-14.00 | SHEIKH ZAYED CENTRE, FAO HEADQUARTERS, ROME

Context

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is strongly committed to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment within agrifood systems. It plays a crucial role in generating knowledge about gender dynamics in alignment with the 2022-31 FAO Strategic Framework, fulfilling the objectives of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, the Paris Agreement, and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly focusing on Goal 2 (Zero Hunger) and Goal 5 (Gender Equality).

In April 2023, FAO launched a new report entitled '[The status of women in agrifood systems](#)'. This report consolidates recent evidence and data on gender inequalities within agrifood systems, illustrating structural gender disparities and intersecting factors of socioeconomic inequality. It also reviews evidence of what has worked in increasing gender equality and women's empowerment, and includes several calls to action for the international community to improve outcomes for women and girls. These findings are complimentary to those in USAID's new [Impact Review on women's agricultural income](#).

According to FAO's report, closing gender gaps in farm productivity and wages within agrifood systems could boost global gross domestic product by 1 percent and decrease global food insecurity by at least 2 percent, leading to a reduction of 45 million food-insecure people. Furthermore, FAO estimates that incomes and resilience could increase for an additional 58 and 235 million people respectively if development programming focused more intentionally on women's empowerment as an objective of multi-faceted interventions in agrifood systems.

To achieve this, addressing challenges and structural inequalities hindering women is crucial, with financing for gender equality needed to close gaps in access to resources, assets and services. Catalyzing investment to tackle discriminatory social and gender norms is also critical. FAO is now committed to ensuring that the sector benefits from more targeted investments to close these gaps and empower women in agrifood systems.

Global Commitment

In March 2024, FAO launched a global process, [Commit to Grow Equality](#), to enhance gender equality in agrifood systems through financing and partnerships. The primary objective of this initiative is to secure both financial support and commitments for the agrifood sector, with a specific focus on advancing gender equality and empowering women. The funds raised will not be directed towards FAO but rather invested into initiatives within the agrifood sector. This endeavor is driven by the goal of fostering sustainable development within the sector and to increase investments in proven strategies to close gender gaps in agrifood systems, and to partner in new ways to focus on women's empowerment.

The process aims to unite Members, civil society organizations, private sector actors, and multilateral organizations, among others, to commit to specific investments and new partnerships to achieve these goals. The [launch event](#) included a discussion with high-level participants about the proposed process and the contours of a "[Commitments Matrix](#)" which can help guide the types of activities which should be financed.

Council Side Event

FAO's Rural Transformation and Gender Equality Division (ESP) will host an event to raise awareness about the 'Commit to Grow Equality' initiative amongst all Members on the sidelines of the 175th session of the FAO Council which will take place on 10-14 June 2024.

The side event will capitalize on the momentum of FAO's report on 'The status of women in agrifood systems', the recent endorsement of the Committee on World Food Security's (CFS) 'Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and



Women's and Girls' Empowerment in the context of Food Security and Nutrition', the G7 Summit under Italy's Presidency taking place at the same time (13-15 June 2024), efforts by the G20 to include issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment in the context of food security and nutrition in their discussions, and the FAO Council session to garner interest among Members and gain their endorsement and commitment to the Commit to Grow Equality initiative.

The event will serve the following key objectives:

1. Raise awareness of the importance of adequate financing for gender equality and women's empowerment for inclusive agrifood systems transformation;
2. Leverage unique strengths and common goals to build synergies and partnerships among key stakeholders and tap into ongoing discussions on e.g. financing for inclusive climate action;
3. Generate consensus on a Commitments Matrix for funding opportunities and concrete commitments for gender financing in agrifood systems through a commitment mechanism;
4. Secure commitments and generate endorsement for the autumn 2024 high-level commitment event.

The event will be webcast with interpretation offered in all six UN languages. The expected audience of the event are FAO Members, representatives of civil society and private sector organizations, and staff from FAO and the Rome-based Agencies, among others.

Proposed agenda

2 min	Welcome and housekeeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yasmina Bouziane, Director, Office of Communications, FAO
3 min	Opening remarks: call to action	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Máximo Torero, Chief Economist, FAO
15 min	Keynote speeches	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• H.E. Bruno Archi, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Italy to FAO (TBC)• H.E. Carla Carneiro, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Federative Republic of Brazil to FAO
10 min	Presentation of the initiative, participation modality and Commitment Matrix	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lauren Phillips, Deputy Director, Rural Transformation and Gender Equality Division, FAO
30 min	Evidence and examples of what works to advance gender equality and women's empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Louis Kwot Akolith, Undersecretary, Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, Republic of South Sudan• Juan Facundo Etchebehere, Senior Vice President Sustainability Strategy & Partnerships, Danone• Ayhan Baran, Counsellor for Agriculture, Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye (TBC)• Dr. Sahar Gul, Provincial Advisor for Gender (Sindh, Pakistan), Growth for Rural Advancement and Sustainable Progress (GRASP) Programme, International Trade Centre
20 min	Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All participants
5 min	Closing remarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• H.E. Jeffrey Prescott, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the United States of America to FAO (TBC)



**Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations**

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