

**FOOD SYSTEMS SUMMIT**  
**COALITION FOR ACTION: MAKING FOOD SYSTEMS WORK FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS**  
**CONCEPT NOTE**  
*(Max 800 words)*

<b>Title of coalition:</b>
<b>Making Food Systems Work for Women and Girls</b>
<b>Main objective of the coalition:</b>
<p>Gender equality and women's empowerment are key contributors to sustainable food systems, food security and nutrition for people, helping to ensure they are more resilient, empowered and better able to meet their essential needs. The achievement of the SDGs and Zero Hunger goal will not be realized where there are gender inequalities.</p> <p>The goal of the coalition is to ensure that women and men, boys and girls, and other groups have equitable roles, responsibilities, opportunities, and choices, and that countries, communities and households, individuals are equipped to participate in local, global and regional food systems activities in a meaningful, dignified, and equitable way. The coalition will do this through a focus on 4 critical levers of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. The Gender Lever, working with Action Tracks prioritised actions under each of these four areas;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Expanding women's agency</b> with three proposed solutions: (i) Alliance for Anemia Actions, (ii) Innovation hubs focused on profitable, nutritious foods (including indigenous crops) grown and traded by women, and (iii) Global Food 50/50, a global accountability mechanism for tracking women's representation, leadership and voice in food systems organizations.</li> <li>• <b>Increasing access and rights to resources, services and opportunities</b> with three priority actions (iv) Alliance of 50+ global and national financial institutions to implement gender-transformative finance mechanisms, (v) Blended financing mechanism to small initiatives locally-owned by women and youth, and (vi) Land Rights for women and equitable community-based decision-making mechanisms and information systems on land rights, and access and control over essential food-producing resources.</li> <li>• <b>Eliminating systemic institutional and legislative biases against women</b> with three priority actions (vii) Integrating Gender Transformative Approaches in policies, programmes, and systems, (viii) Alliance of countries adopting feminist food systems policies and regulatory frameworks that advance women's leadership in local, sub-national and national levels, gender-responsive budgeting, and the inclusion of appropriate sex-disaggregated indicators and targets for measuring progress, and (ix) Global Data Hub for Enabling Gender Transformative Food Systems Policies.</li> <li>• <b>Shifting harmful and constraining gender and social norms</b> with 1 priority action (x) A campaign and programme of work to tackle harmful social and gender norms, customs, and values that engages men and women, boys and girls together as agents of change at all levels.</li> </ul>
<b>Science based evidence to prioritize this coalition (scientific references):</b>
<p>Stark gender inequalities are both a cause and outcome of unsustainable food systems and unjust food access, consumption, and production<sup>1</sup>. Achieving gender equality and women's empowerment in food systems can result in greater food security and better nutrition, and in more just, resilient, and sustainable food systems for all. Evidence shows unequal access and rights to resources in food systems, undermine women's empowerment and productivity<sup>2</sup>.</p>

<sup>1</sup> Jemimah Njuki, Sarah Eissler, Hazel Malapit, Ruth Meinzen-Dick, Elizabeth Bryan, and Agnes Quisumbing (2021). A review of evidence on gender equality, women's empowerment, and food systems. Policy Brief. International Food Policy Research Institute and the UN FSS Science Group

<sup>2</sup> Doss, C. 2018. "Women and Agricultural Productivity: Reframing the Issues." *Development Policy Review* 36(1): 35–50.

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This differing level of access is shaped and reinforced by contextual social and gender norms. Harmful social and gender norms and practices shape the gendered distribution of paid and unpaid work, limit women's access to and control of productive resources, assets, and access to services, and undermine women's leadership potential from local to global scales.<sup>3</sup> They also facilitate exploitation and violence. This is compounded through the denial of rights and through formal and informal institutions and laws. There is widespread and systematic institutional and legislative discrimination and bias against women in access to resources, assets, services, and freedoms such as land, water, finance, markets, education, extension, employment, mobility, inputs, social protection, leadership, and more. Gender gaps in land tenure are particularly stark – between 70% and 90% of landowners in most countries are men<sup>4</sup> and as many as 29 countries deny female surviving spouses and daughters the same rights as their male counterparts to inherit land and non-land assets.<sup>5</sup> Women face disproportionate barriers in accessing finance and credit options compared with men<sup>6</sup>.<sup>7</sup> This dual problem of harmful gender norms and the denial of women's rights, which has been exacerbated by COVID-19, affects women and girls across the globe. Further, women in food systems are not a homogenous group and can face multiple and compounding forms of discrimination, requiring intersectional analysis and policy response.

Unequal food systems also result in women and girls being more vulnerable to chronic food and nutrition insecurity as well as shock-induced food insecurity. A scoping review for the Science group<sup>8</sup> aimed to elucidate evidence and identify evidence gaps for advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in food systems. The review showed that context-specific pathways link women's empowerment to important outcomes, such as household nutrition and dietary diversity, noting that these pathways may vary between and within contexts. This coalition aims to address these multiple barriers, building women's agency, increasing access and rights to resources and addressing the policy, institutional and legislative barriers as well shifting harmful and constraining norms. Gender transformative approaches are especially critical to address the interconnected layers of inequity and discrimination in food systems, including the inequalities in labour, assets (including financial), and leadership, as described above.

**Mechanisms of implementation (Global to National levels):**

The coalition is broad, inclusive and government led and supported. It will include stakeholders from the Rome Based Agencies, UN Women, Non-profits, development partners, community organizations and women's rights organizations, social movements, private sector and academia. Action will be both global and country level with sub coalitions forming around each of the proposed priority action areas, all supported by an umbrella coalition management team, and a research, monitoring and evaluation team to track progress on actions.

Sub-coalitions, government support and funding has already been secured for some of the priority actions; among them;

<sup>3</sup> CFS, 2017, Forum on Women's Empowerment in the context of Food Security and Nutrition

<sup>4</sup> FAO, [Gender and Land Rights Database](#)

<sup>5</sup> OECD, 2019, SIGI Global Report: Transforming Challenges into Opportunities, Social Institutions and Gender Index

<sup>6</sup> Dawood, T.C., H. Pratama, R. Masbar, and R. Effendi. 2019. "Does Financial Inclusion Alleviate Household Poverty? Empirical Evidence from Indonesia." *Economics & Sociology* 12(2): 235–52.

<sup>7</sup> Ghosh, S., and D. Vinod. 2017. "What Constrains Financial Inclusion for Women? Evidence from Indian Micro Data." *World Development* 92(April): 60–81.

<sup>8</sup> Jemimah Njuki, Sarah Eissler, Hazel Malapit, Ruth Meinzen-Dick, Elizabeth Bryan, and Agnes Quisumbing (2021). A review of evidence on gender equality, women's empowerment, and food systems. Policy Brief. International Food Policy Research Institute and the UN FSS Science Group

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- **Anaemia Alliance:** A group of global stakeholders (WHO, USAID, BMGF, GAIN, Micronutrient Forum, Nutrition International) has come together to propose a cross-sector Alliance for Anemia Actions, with the Micronutrient Forum as suggested host. The Alliance will seek funding and establish a work plan with those Member States that have expressed interest in an integrated approach to further progress on the reduction of anemia, to develop a Global Anemia Action Plan, including, but not limited to an Investment Strategy, Implementation Research Agenda and Advocacy and Comms Strategy.
- **The Global Food Systems 50/50 initiative:** Led by IFPRI and and Global Health 50/50 initiative with support from USAID has started implementation to develop an annual index and report on the status of women's voice, leadership and gender policies and outcomes in organizations working in food systems. A pre-launch of the initiative was announced at presummit with 52 organizations forming the first index. A full report will be launched at the Summit in September. The goal is to have over 200 organizations in food systems engaged in the initiative.
- **Integrate GTAs in relevant policies, programmes, and systems:** A group of stakeholders including CARE, FAO, IFPRI and governments including Netherlands, have convened this sub-coalition to work with governments to integrate gender transformative approaches in all government programs at national and sub-national level.
- **Global Data Hub:** Google, JHU, IFPRI, Data 2X, the World Bank and others have formed a coalition on a Global Data Hub to make food systems data available and accessible on one platform. A key part of this data will be sex disaggregated data

**Strategic partners (members, private sector, civil society, academia):**

To date, over 10 countries including Canada, France, USA, Finland, Sweden, and others have been meeting to strategize on the coalition. At the first coalition meeting, we will invite countries to sign a declaration of commitment to the coalition and to indicate interest in one or more of the game changing ideas. Partners including Rome Based UN Agencies, Civil Society, Research Organizations, Private Sector Organizations have been meeting to discuss taking forward the priority areas (see above). These include FAO, IFAD, WFP, SEWA, IFPRI, CARE, RECOTFC, The Micro Nutrient Initiative, Data 2X, OECD, Google, JHU, World Bank, etc. The coalition is reaching out to other groups including youth, indigenous peoples, UN Women, Women's Rights Organizations to ensure they are well represented.

**Monitoring and Evaluation (clear quantifiable indicators and targets linked to SDGs)**

A monitoring and evaluation mechanism to track progress on all action areas will be developed by a coalition management team. This will measure key indicators including: women's leadership in food systems, access to resources including finance and technologies, progress on women's land rights, number of countries adopting feminist policies, status of the nutrition of women and girls etc. The Data Hub will collate and make accessible sex disaggregated data on food systems around the world. The coalition partners will produce a report on "Status of Women and Girls in Food Systems" every 2 years which will serve as a reporting mechanism on the coalition.