

WOMEN AS ARCHITECTS OF AGRIFOOD SYSTEM PRODUCTIVITY, SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE

WHY THIS MATTERS

At a moment of compounding global shocks – from fertilizer spikes and environmental stress to geopolitical disruption – fully harnessing women's contributions across agrifood systems is not simply a social objective; it is an economic and food security imperative. Women comprise **42% of the global agrifood workforce** and play critical roles as farmers, entrepreneurs, workers, traders, processors, and stewards of natural resources and agricultural biodiversity. They are disproportionately concentrated in the local food systems that sustain household and community food security, and often remain in agriculture during periods of conflict, climate, and economic crisis – helping stabilize livelihoods and food production when shocks occur.

The economic case is clear: closing the gender gaps in farm productivity and agrifood sector wages would increase global GDP by approximately **1% – nearly USD 1 trillion** – while reducing global food insecurity by around 2 percentage points and **lifting 45 million people out of food insecurity**. Targeted investment compounds these gains: if half of small-scale producers benefited from development interventions focused on empowering women, an additional **58 million people would see significantly higher incomes and 235 million more would have greater resilience to shocks**.

Progress in closing gender gaps across agrifood systems has largely stalled in recent years. These impose measurable costs – not only on women, but on their families, communities, and economies – in food security and nutrition, agricultural productivity, supply chain resilience, and growth across G20 and partner economies alike. Building on momentum including the internationally- agreed Commission on World Food Security [Voluntary Guidelines](#) and the 2026 [UN International Year of the Woman Farmer](#), G20 governments should act now to mobilize greater public and private investment, directing those resources toward the highest-impact constraints on women's participation, and strengthening the institutions, data systems, and accountability mechanisms needed to sustain progress.

The W20 recommends a standing G20 subgroup on Gender and Agriculture and deliverables that extend to successive presidencies. This framework draws on the expertise of W20 Knowledge Partners: the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), the International Land Coalition, and Landesa.

THE CHALLENGE

Misallocated and Insufficient Finance:

Around 60% of the more than US\$650 billion in agricultural support governments around the world spend annually is price-distorting or harmful to human health and the environment, and only about US\$0.35 of every dollar spent delivers farm-level income gains. ODA is falling yet retains a key catalytic role in crowding in other stakeholders and resources; concessional instruments—guarantees, blended finance, first-loss facilities—is insufficiently mobilized to generate multiples of private capital for every public dollar deployed; and just 0.8% of climate finance goes to small scale agrifood systems, with women farmers receiving only a fraction of that small share despite being among the most exposed to climate risk.

Structural Barriers to Participation:

Women are significantly less likely than men to own or control agricultural land, access finance, benefit from extension and digital services, utilize productive infrastructure, participate in higher-value markets, or influence the decisions that shape agrifood systems. Nearly 90% of reporting countries indicate that fewer than half of women have secure agricultural land rights. Women-owned agrifood micro, small, and medium enterprises face an estimated US\$1.7-1.9 trillion financing gap.

Data and Accountability Gaps:

Many countries still lack the sex-disaggregated and gender data needed to surface women's roles and constraints across agrifood systems, or to assess whether investments are reaching women and delivering results. Governments lack the capacity, tools, including gender responsive budgeting, and systems to translate evidence into effective policies that benefit women and agrifood systems



1. CALL TO ACTION: MOBILIZE AT LEAST US\$100 BILLION BY 2030

in public, concessional, climate and private finance for women in agrifood systems.

Why it matters: Investing at this scale begins to unlock the US\$1 trillion in additional GDP that closing gender gaps in agrifood systems can generate. At roughly US\$20 billion per year, the target is a small fraction of current public agricultural expenditure and is achievable by rebalancing support toward higher-impact public goods, paired with gender-responsive budgeting to ensure sex-disaggregated tracking of who benefits. Domestic public investment should be complemented by more strategic deployment of official development assistance (ODA), concessional finance, climate finance, and multilateral development finance. Together, they should be used more strategically to address market failures, reduce investment risks, and catalyze substantially greater private capital. The value of this finance ultimately depends on investing it to address the 6 structural barriers identified in this Framework.

2. ADDRESS STRUCTURAL BARRIERS AND ENABLE WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION

The G20 should take coordinated action across six interconnected priorities:

1) Strengthen women's leadership and decision-making across agrifood systems; **2)** Advance women's land rights and improve land governance; **3)** Expand women's access to financial tools and services, **4)** Unlock digital and AI-enabled tools and services for women farmers; **5)** Invest in women-centered infrastructure and **6)** Promote market integration and commercial opportunities.

Flagship Targets by 2030:

- **Leadership:** All G20 countries adopt, implement, and regularly report on a national strategy to strengthen women's leadership across agrifood systems.
- **Land Rights:** At least 40% of countries adopt and implement legal and policy reforms guaranteeing women's equal rights to land and productive resources.
- **Financial Inclusion:** Double the share of growth-oriented finance benefiting women-led agrifood enterprises through publicly supported agricultural finance portfolios, with at least 10 G20 governments adopting the [WE Finance Code](#) across publicly supported agricultural finance institutions.
- **Climate Finance:** At least 20% of climate finance directly benefits women farmers, women-led agrifood enterprises, and women's producer organizations, with annual public reporting on progress.
- **Digital Inclusion:** Halve the rural digital gender gap in phone ownership and mobile internet use, and double the number of women farmers and women-led agrifood enterprises using digital and AI-enabled tools.
- **Infrastructure:** At least 50% of women farmers and women-led agrifood enterprises in project areas gain access to at least one new or improved productive infrastructure service, with all projects benefiting from strengthened gender-responsive design, women's leadership in project governance, and GBV safeguards.
- **Markets:** At least 50 million more women farmers participate in formal producer organizations, cooperatives, and enterprises, with women's participation in public procurement and agrifood value chains increased by at least 10%. Access to commercial markets are expanded, e.g., through the International Trade Center's [She Trades Initiative](#).

3. STRENGTHEN DATA AND ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS FOR INVESTING IN WOMEN

G20 governments should strengthen the data, evidence, and accountability systems needed to guide investment decisions, measure progress, and accelerate results by: a) investing in national statistical and administrative systems that generate, analyze, and publicly report data by sex and other contextually relevant characteristics across agrifood systems; b) institutionalizing gender-responsive budgeting; and c) strengthening transparent monitoring, reporting, and accountability mechanisms to track investments, implementation, and outcomes.

Targets by 2030:

- All person-level indicators collected through publicly funded agrifood programs and administrative systems are disaggregated by sex and other contextually relevant characteristics; at least 10 G20 countries incorporate the [Women's Empowerment Metric in National Statistical Systems \(WEMNS\)](#).
- Institutionalize gender-responsive budgeting across the agriculture sector, consistent with SDG indicator 5.c.1, with at least 10 G20 countries establishing regular public reporting on gender-responsive agricultural expenditures and outcomes.
- Expand reporting to the [FAOSTAT Gender](#) in Agrifood Systems Domain through sustained investment, technical assistance, and capacity support to at least 15 partner country national statistical systems.

The W20 Agriculture and Food Security full report, in the **W20 Guidebook for Policymakers**, presents 17 recommendations each accompanied by measurable targets, implementation metrics, and illustrative case studies to support adaptation and implementation across diverse national contexts. www.Women20.org