BACKGROUND NOTE
ON
Gender Equality for Agriculture and Food Security: A Pathway towards Sustainable Development Goal

RESEARCH AND INFORMATION DIVISION
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Gender Equality for Agriculture and Food Security: A Pathway towards Sustainable Development Goal

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Abbreviations</th>
<th>Full-Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>ACABC</td>
<td>Agri-Clinics and Agri-Business Centres</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>ATMA</td>
<td>Agricultural Technology Management Agency</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>CIAE</td>
<td>Central Institute of Agricultural Engineering</td>
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<td>CIWA</td>
<td>Centre for Women in Agriculture</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>CSS</td>
<td>Centrally Sponsored Scheme</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>DOA</td>
<td>Description of the Action</td>
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<td>DAC&amp; FW</td>
<td>Department of Agriculture Cooperation and Farmers Welfare</td>
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<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organisation</td>
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<td>FSG</td>
<td>Food Security Groups</td>
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<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<td>GOI</td>
<td>Government of India</td>
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<td>ICAR</td>
<td>Indian Council of Agricultural Research</td>
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<td>IFAD</td>
<td>International Fund for Agricultural Development</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>MGNREGA</td>
<td>Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act</td>
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<td>MIDH</td>
<td>Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture</td>
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<td>NSSO</td>
<td>National Sample Survey Office</td>
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<td>NMAET</td>
<td>National Mission on Agricultural Extension and Technology</td>
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<td>NHM</td>
<td>National Health Mission</td>
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<td>NABARD</td>
<td>National Bank of Agriculture and Rural Development</td>
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<td>NGRCA</td>
<td>National Gender Resource Centre</td>
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<td>22.</td>
<td>PLFS</td>
<td>Periodic Labour Force Survey</td>
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<td>SAME</td>
<td>Sub-Mission on Agricultural Extension</td>
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<td>SBLP</td>
<td>Self-help Group Bank Linkage Programme</td>
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<td>SDG</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goals</td>
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<td>SHGs</td>
<td>Self-help Groups</td>
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Abstract

The analysis in this study looks at the relationship between gender equality and food security. It takes the view that both women and men are farmers in small-scale farm households. Gender inequalities vary regionally and locally and change over time due to economic, social, and cultural variables. This paper calls for a deeper comprehension of women’s contributions to the evolving field
of food security. It still takes a considerable organisational change to recognise the role that women play in agriculture and to ensure that they have access to research, credit, land tenure rights, markets, and other aspects of production, innovation, and participation. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary to modify established gender norms and implement measures and strategies that will pave the way to transformed and equitable gender systems.

“Women are the largest untapped reservoir of talent in the world”

-Hillary Clinton

Introduction

In the late 1970s, by measuring each nation’s growth in many areas of human well-being, projects were started to track how well each nation was performing in terms of development. In the year 2015 the SDGs were unveiled, which represents the most extensive effort to date. The SDGs issued a strong call to action with an emphasis on social inclusion, taking into account economic and environmental issues. It includes seventeen objectives and 160 targets that must be met by 2030.

In the year 2022, the main aim of this SDG Summit was to reinforce the continued relevance of the 2030 Agenda and establish a blueprint for ending poverty, tackling climate crisis, boosting economy, gender equality etc. and show a way forward for a better future for all on a safe and healthy planet. Among the total seventeen goals, the second and fifth goal aims to reach Zero Hunger and Gender Equality respectively (SDG Moment, 2022)\(^1\). This paper will focus on the two goals and highlight the role of women in agriculture and its relevance to food security. Women play a vital role in every aspect of food system as producers, wage workers, processors, traders and consumers, and over half of the world’s food is produced by them. But in contrast to males, they

\(^1\)https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sdg-moment/
frequently face obstacles to achieving their goals due to employment status, cultural practises, or legal restrictions that uphold uneven access to resources, loans, and extension services.

According to a study by FAO, “rural women frequently manage multiple tasks like producing crops, rearing cattle, collecting firewood for fuel, working for pay in agricultural fields or other rural enterprises, engaging in trade and market, processing and preparing food, taking care of the family members and taking care of their home,” among other things. Although many of these activities are crucial for the welfare of people, they are not always classified as “economically active employment” in the national accounts (FAO United Nations, 2011). The agricultural sector in developing nations employ, on average, 43 per cent women. However, women face issues such as lower access to resources including land, farming equipment, lack of funding and services associated to agriculture than males. In order to advance general social and economic development, particularly in developing countries, it is crucial to provide women with equal access to productive resources, including the right to inherit and own land and other property, credit/capital, appropriate technologies, markets, and information (Patil, and Babus, 2018). With the application of contemporary technology, the agricultural sector in developing countries has undergone changes that have led to an overall development. However, these changes only made the barest of improvements for rural women. In terms of gender equality within the agrarian hierarchy, women who work in agriculture occupy a low place. They experience poverty and exploitation more severely than men do, and they occasionally are not even considered to be engaged in active labour (Ghosh, and Ghosh, 2014).

The Economic Survey, 2017–18 in India stated that “the contribution of women to agriculture and food production cannot be disregarded for sustained development of agriculture and rural economy.” According to the report, rural women are vital to the growth of agriculture and related industries, which calls
for improved access to resources including land, water, credit, technology, and training. A further factor contributing to the feminization of the agricultural industry in India is the exodus of men from rural areas, and policies addressing this issue may assist female farmers economically and guarantee food security.

The introduction of organic farming has also piqued the interest of numerous organisations in regards to the advancement of women in agricultural sector. As instance, consider the policies India’s North-East region has enacted on women and organic farming. These policies primary goal is to give women farmers the chance to cultivate their own crops and run “only women stalls” where they can sell their products. To support the family’s nutritional needs, women in North-East India have long tended fields and kitchen gardens. In recent times, the governments of Nagaland and Sikkim have urged its citizens to cultivate surplus using organic seeds and additives in order to establish economic stability.

In her research, Bina Agarwal (2018) noted that women SHGs had a significant impact on agricultural fields and had achieved superior results to those of fields run by male groups. Similar circumstances were observed in Nagaland and Sikkim, where women are actively participating in SHGs and have had success in achieving both food security and economic gains. Additionally, during the COVID-19 lockdown, these kitchen gardens gave women farmers an advantage and enabled them to successfully meet their domestic nutritional needs.

The purpose of this paper is to contribute to a preliminary discussion related to the development of women in the context of sustainable agriculture and food security globally with special reference to India. This paper primarily focusses on SDG 5 to address the question: “Can this Goal help ensure household food security?” Food security is a complicated notion that includes not only the overall supply of food but also how it is distributed among individuals, as well as nutritional and caloric adequacy. Along with the environmental sustainability of food production systems, diversity in food production and procurement are important factors.
In this paper, the topic is conceptually presented, along with a framework for identifying concerned issues. The main connections between women’s emancipation, agriculture and food security, are then demonstrated. The paper further classifies the barriers to advancement and examines key components of development by outlining potential policy orientations and offering suggestions for stakeholders to take into account when developing voluntary guidelines.

**Methodology**

In order to evaluate the most recent data on gender concerns in food systems, this paper does a scoping review. Instead of generating a summary response to a specific question, a scoping review gives an overview of the research evidence that is currently available. This sort of review is helpful because it has a larger "scope" than typical systematic reviews and offers the chance to pinpoint significant ideas, research gaps, and the types and sources of information that may be used to guide practise, legislation, and research (Harris et al., 2021; Liverpool-Tassie et al., 2020; Daudt et al., 2013).

**Women in Agriculture**

Eighty percent of all economically active women work in agriculture, where they make up 33 percent of the labour force and 48 percent of independent farmers. According to data conducted by the ICAR, women make up 75 percent of those who produce major crops, 79 percent of those who engage in horticulture, 51 percent of those who do post-harvest work, and 95 percent of those who work in animal husbandry and fisheries. The union government has acknowledged that agriculture, India’s major production endeavour and a significant contributor to GDP, is increasingly becoming a female activity. According to the most recent All India Report of Agriculture Census (2015–16), there were 146.45 million operational holdings in the nation in 2015–16, up from 138.35 million in 2010–11. This is an increase of 5.86 percent. In 2015–16, male operating holdings (excluding institutional) were 86.0 percent, while female holdings were 14 percent, compared to 87.2 percent and 12.8 percent,
respectively, in 2010–11. This data shows that, the number of women managing or running agricultural properties across the nation is increasing.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare designated October 15 of each year as Women Farmer’s Day in recognition of the crucial role that women play in agriculture, although gender-specific action to provide women their rights is still just on paper. For sustainable production and food security, women are also actively involved in keeping livestock and backyard poultry. In the management of livestock and dairy, they frequently supervise the cleaning of sheds, feeding of animals, and gathering of fodder, whereas males typically handle the health of the livestock, their sale and purchase, and consequently the money from those operations. Women still have little influence over livestock and fewer opportunities to access sales and marketing funds. Despite being over represented in the labour force, women have virtually little rights, sources of income, or representation in local farmer organisations relating to agriculture (Rangnekar, 2004). As a result, these drawbacks have detrimental externalities such as poor family health and worse educational performance for their children.

Due to such stereotypical gender-based issues, women in rural parts of developing countries and particularly in India do not have access to the same opportunities or resources as males. There are disparities between the gender when it comes to having access to resources including land, energy, technology, loans, pesticides, and fertilisers. Women also have less access to markets, public services, social protection, training, and information (Garcia, 2013). The impact of such pervasive gender inequalities on household income, the security of food and nutrition, and child development is significant. Women farmers and their children are frequently exposed to hunger and malnutrition, especially when a crisis occurs because of little female participation in decision-making. Gender-responsive strategies focus on current inequalities and work to eliminate or reduce them. They emphasise how important it is for women to act as change
agents and how they contribute to agriculture. From household to global sizes, the empowerment of rural women may promote innovation and offer far-reaching and long-term advantages. According to the FAO, women might enhance their outputs by up to 20 to 30 percent, if they had the same access to productive resources as males. This would result in a 2.5 to 4 percent increase in agricultural food production, which would lead to a 12 to 17 percent decrease in the number of malnourished people.

**Gender Division of Labour & Differential Wages**

The roles of women differ from place to place, although they are generally involved in “unskilled” tasks like planting, transplanting, weeding, and harvesting that frequently fit well within the context of family life and child care. Additionally, many women engage in unpaid subsistence labour in the agricultural sector. Chagell (2010), in his work mentioned that, the majority of the work performed by women on the agricultural fields are cutting, picking, weeding, washing & drying grains, storage, and processing. According to information provided by the Ministry of Agriculture, in rural areas, 75.7 percent women and 55.4 percent men are employed in agriculture in 2019–20 (Jadhav, 2021).

Despite having a huge impact on agriculture, women’s incomes are still very low. According to NSSO statistics the gender gap in India is among the widest in the world. Indian women earned, on an average 48 percent less compared to their male counterparts in 1993-94. The gap declined to 28 percent in 2018-19. However, the PLFS (2020-21) showed an increase in the gap by 7 percent in between 2018-19 and 2020-21. It has also been seen that men earn more money in both skilled and unskilled sectors in comparison to women. According to the Census 2011, the percentage of women who work in agriculture is 30.33 percent for main and marginal cultivators and 42.67 percent for main and marginal agricultural labourers. However, the government does not maintain any
information on the number of women who work in agriculture, such as those who sow, hoe, weed, and harvest (Jadhav, 2021).

There are several reasons why women’s employment is underreported in official statistics. Their employment is frequently informal, flexible, home-based, and frequently an extension of their domestic duties, making it challenging to distinguish it from paid work (Kanchi, 2010). Sadly, neither an official acknowledgement of their work nor any methods to accurately assess it in economic terms to guide policymaking exist. Hirway (2012) argues that this “non-missing labour force”—a group of people who are working but aren’t being counted—has significant ramifications for the nation’s employment and labour policies. She also makes the case that time usage statistics have the ability to fill in some gaps left by the NSSO and provide fresh data on the labour force.

**Women, Land and Productive Resources – Issues and Initiative**

The capability approach adopted by Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum argues that achieving equal access to resources is essential for achieving gender equality and economic empowerment. For female self-actualization, early access to health and educational resources is crucial. FAO estimates that women in India own fewer than 10 percent of agricultural land, and even when they do, they have no influence over it (UN India, 2014). Important resources like land and other economic assets are distributed unequitably by gender. A farmer is currently thought to be someone who owns land and holds title to that land. This discriminates against female farmers, agricultural labourers, sharecroppers, and many other people who work in agriculture but are never able to take advantage of government programmes, awards, assistance services, or insurance. It’s critical to separate land ownership from the aforementioned definition of a farmer. Rural India is experiencing movements calling for the designation of “farmer” for women (WGWLO, 2003-04). Land is a significant element associated with rural poverty, according to IFAD (2001). Arable land is
regarded as the most valuable type of property in India due to its economic, political, and symbolic importance. It is an asset that generates wealth and supports a living (Agarwal, 2003). The economic position and power relationships inside and among various social groups are determined by access to land (Bakshi, 2008).

According to the Washington-based research group’s 2012 report, “Investing in Women”, women farmers, who own little land, can produce 60-80 percent of the food in developing countries like India. Numerous studies from South and West Asia show that women in equivalent occupations are more likely than men to work part-time or seasonally, while having the same levels of education and experience. The authors continue that, “Cultural norms and limited property or inheritance rights limit the types and amounts of financial resources, land, or technology available to women,”. The report cites the Economist Intelligence Unit’s recently released Global Food Security Index, which shows that countries with more gender-sensitive business environments, as determined by labour policies, access to finance, and comparative levels of education and training, have an abundance of nourishing food that is also affordably priced. This link demonstrates how equal access to resources and opportunity enables women to create higher-yielding, higher-quality agricultural output. To safeguard women’s demands and interests, the paper urges changing national rules on managing assets, employment, and migration. Furthermore, enhanced property or inheritance rights must be adopted in conjunction with encouraging policies in order to safeguard and strengthen women’s abilities to utilise their land or agricultural assets. According to Charity Oxfam (2017), women who own land or have control over assets are better positioned to improve their lives, deal with crises, lower their risk of poverty, and increase food security.

The mission to end poverty in Kerala known as Kudumbashree was founded in 1997 and has been in the forefront of leasing land for farming to women collectives. Its model of group land leasing and integration with other initiatives
has made it easier for women farmers to acquire agricultural inputs, such as machinery and services. The model, which includes female farmers, tenants, sharecroppers, and landless agricultural labourers, has been effective and is being imitated in other states. According to studies, mothers who own property and other assets have better outcomes for their children’s survival, education, and health than fathers who hold these same assets. A study of marginal farmer households in Kerala found that the mother’s construction of a home garden (whose produce she oversaw) consistently had a positive impact on children’s nutrition (Kumar, 1978). The ability of women to manage social and economic risks can therefore be enhanced by giving them access to and control over productive assets like land (Addison et al., 2008).

**Tools-technologies and Credit Facilities**

Designing technology to make the lives of women better appears to be gaining popularity. Some of the centrally financed organisations, like the CIAE in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, collect data on the general physical characteristics of male and female farmworkers to inform the creation of tools that are gender-inclusive. The CIWA Orissa is also engaged in the study and creation of equipment for female farmers and employees. The contribution on agricultural mechanisation, under the NMAET, also includes specific measures and subsidies for obtaining agricultural equipment and implements. There are also additional programmes with a subsidy element for using equipment. Drudgery is a good word to capture a lot of the typical post-harvest tasks performed, especially by women: threshing and winnowing, de-hulling, grinding and pounding, preparing food and processed goods, marketing, and load carrying. If these generate cash, the work is almost always poorly compensated. The process of technological innovation includes developing the ideas, skills, and behavioural patterns necessary to help people escape the cycles of poverty in which they reside (Appleton, 1995).
Major obstacles include lack of knowledge and awareness of these technologies’ availability, prompt accessibility, pricing, and some of them not being tailored to the unique needs of women and men. According to a report from the Ministry of Agriculture (2014) that conducted research on the topic, “the seemingly simple act of manually removing the husks off maize cobs is trickier than it sounds. For each kilogramme of grain she produces, a female worker utilises her palms 55 times, her fingernails 144 times, and her fingertips 522 times on average”. Similar to this, a study by Mrunalini and Maheshwari (2000) on the activities involved in raising silk worms found that preparing leaves for the worms to eat was the activity that was most likely to involve drudgery according to an index of drudgery calculated using a linear combination method and taking time, perceived difficulty, and frequency of performance into account as variables. The majority of physically demanding and exhausting duties, such as seeding, transplanting, and weeding, are frequently carried out by women.

Credit is one of the most important inputs for profitable and sustainable farming systems. Major barriers prevent the poor and female farmers from obtaining loans and other financial services including crop insurance, risk coverage, and compensation for crop loss and damage. Their inability to control the land is the main cause. The productivity, capacity for investment, and revenue of farms owned or run by women are negatively impacted by the disparity in access to loans and support services. Since women make up the majority of small and marginal farmers, having access to adequate, timely, and affordable institutional finance is crucial. On average, female-headed plots have a 44 percent lower level of agricultural labour productivity than male-headed plots (Lopez and Lopez, 2015). Based on this data and research, a World Bank article from 2015 makes the assumption that labour and credit market inefficiencies, which discourage income-generating activities and limit access to inputs, respectively
have a more negative impact on women’s farm productivity than they do on men.

Regarding the precise number of women obtaining credit for agriculture from different sources, there is no gender-disaggregated data. In order to support group decision-making, the NABARD developed an SBLP in 1992 that offered ‘doorstep’ banking for the underprivileged and women. There is also a lack of information or evidence regarding the overall amount of SHGs’ savings and credit activity that was given to rural families, particularly to women for farming activities.

Policy Initiatives
In 2004–2005, the Department of Agriculture Cooperation and Farmers Welfare was given an NGRCA by the MoA &FW. Its goal is to make sure that gender is taken into account while developing agricultural policy and programmes. According to the regulations for the various beneficiary-oriented programmes of the DAC&FW, states and other implementing agencies must spend at least 30 percent of their budgets on women farmers. A similar policy was drafted in 2016, to ensure and promote equal opportunities for women through engendering macroeconomic policies and trade agreements, creating gender-disaggregated land ownership databases, skill development and training for women, entrepreneurship development, reviewing labour laws and policies, equal employment opportunities with appropriate benefits related to maternity and child care services, and more.

The strategy also attempted to allay women’s worries by offering them assistance services including child care facilities and nutrition programmes for women. The gender aspects of farming were highlighted in a separate chapter titled “Women in Agriculture.” The NCF then introduced a private member’s bill on the empowerment of women farmers, which regrettably was not then
passed. Access to credit was also emphasised, and NABARD distributed Kisan Credit Cards to women, however the availability of credit to women farmers was heavily reliant on the ownership of the land. The “Women Farmers’ Entitlement Bill,” 2011, which was introduced by Professor Swaminathan in Parliament in May 2012, seeks to provide women farmers with access to water, loans, and inputs, thus there is some hope at the end of the tunnel. As more and more men go to metropolitan regions in search of job, it is stated that “the mahila and yuvakisans will determine the future of Indian agrarian and rural economy. However, they are unable to get finance because they do not have pattas or land in their names.

This issue is addressed in the bill, which also aims to provide youth and women with the equipment they need to continue farming and draw more people into the industry. To keep young people in agriculture, a Panchsheel (five-point programme) is required which will cover post-harvest management, technology and inputs, credit & insurance, land, water & gene care, as well as remunerative marketing opportunities.

Some of the ongoing important agricultural program and policy for the Indian farm women are listed below:

i. **National Mission on Agricultural Extension & Technology (NMAET):** There are three main sub-schemes operating solely for women under this CSS scheme, including SAME, ACABC, and Mass Media Support to Agricultural Extension, each receiving a 30 percent allocation of funds. The major objective of this programme is to give women farmers training and financial assistance through SHGs so they can establish kitchen gardens and promote off-farm pursuits like cattle raising and beekeeping, among other things, in order to achieve domestic/household food security.

ii. **Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH):** In order to help SC/ST and female farmers in particular, this CSS covers 60 percent of the cost of the equipment and input needed for horticulture
production. It also ensures adequate maintenance of the equipment. Under this mission, women are organised into SHGs and given access to agricultural inputs, technology, and extension support to help them become self-sufficient.

iii. Integrated Scheme for Agricultural Marketing (ISAM): The SC/ST and women farmers receive a 33.33 percent subsidy through this programme from NABARD. This program’s primary goals are to increase agricultural marketing, establish cold storage facilities, offer vehicle extensions, and develop an integrated value chain in order to increase farmers’ income.

iv. National Food Security Mission (NFSM): Under the NFSM, 30 percent of the money are given to women farmers. A further intervention under the NFSM educates farmers, especially SC/ST, and women farmers, on cropping systems in order to increase their understanding of improved technology for boosting crop production and productivity.

v. National Mission on Oilseeds and Oil Palm (NMOOP): Thirty percent of the NMOOP’s financial budget goes to female beneficiaries and producers. Concerned implementation organisations will be in charge of keeping an eye on the execution of different parts, including database upkeep and resource distribution for SC/ST Women recipients.

vi. Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM): The SMAM promotes 31 ICAR-developed drudgery-reducing technologies for women in agriculture through training, demonstrations, and financial assistance. Women farmers frequently receive agricultural mechanisation instruction from the Farm Machinery Training and Testing Institute.

vii. Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs): Different training programmes are offered by KVKs on new technology in agriculture and allied fields, which have benefited farm women by increasing crop output and farm
income. Under its on-farm trial and front-line demonstration programmes, KVK assessed various women-specific income-generation solutions.

viii. **ICAR- Central Institute for women in Agriculture (ICAR-CIWA):** In terms of research on issues impacting women in agriculture, ICAR-CIWA has been at the forefront. To investigate the suitability of technologies for women and make suggestions for changes, it has focused on participatory action research with rural women in various technology-based topic areas.

ix. **Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP):** The MKSP was created by GOI as a component of DAY-NRLM, the Department of Rural Development. The objective of this initiative, which has been running since 2011, is to improve women's participation and productivity while also giving rural women a sustainable means of subsistence. (Compiled from Farm Women Friendly Hand Book, GOI)

Additionally, a number of donor-funded bilateral and multilateral programmes, as well as community-based and civil society groups like MAKAAM and Oxfam-India, are involved in advocating for and conducting research on agriculture, particularly from the perspective of gender. The organization’s purpose is to ensure that women farmers are visible, particularly marginalised small-holder women. Its development vision is influenced by social justice, diversity of knowledge systems, and ecological approaches. With the equitable participation of these women in decision-making in various institutions, it also aims to establish and protect rights over productive livelihood resources (land in particular) as well as entitlements over a variety of assistance systems.

**Gender responsive budget in Ministry of Agriculture**

In the Union Budget for 2021-22, the overall amount of the gender budget continues to be less than 1 percent of GDP and less than 5 percent of the total expenditures outlined. The Gender Budget received, on average, 5 percent of overall spending from 2005-06 through 2020-21. The initial Gender Budget
projection for the current fiscal year was Rs 143,462 crore ($19.6 billion), which was increased by Rs 63,800 crore ($8.7 billion). This rise was mostly caused by COVID-19 emergency measures, such as LPG connections for low-income households and MGNREGS, as well as direct benefit transfers under the PM Jan Dhan Yojana. As a result, the gender budget for the current fiscal year was boosted to 6 percent of the entire allocation and crossed 1 percent of the GDP (updated estimate, or the amount expected to have been spent). The entire budget, however, has been decreased by 26 percent from 2020–21 to Rs. 1,53,326 crore ($21 billion) in the Union Budget for 2021–22. It accounts for 0.7% of GDP and 4.4% of all budgetary expenditures (CGBA, 2021). Chayal.K. et al. (2010) analysed the financial allocation for women in agriculture. The paper notes that a general budget reduction over the past three decades has disproportionately affected tiny and marginal women, based on evidence from other empirical research and its own analysis. Gender disparities have only partially been resolved by the simple earmarking of minimal money in a few chosen agriculture programmes. Only 14 out of the 55 initiatives allocated funds specifically for women. However, either the operational rules for the schemes are unavailable or, if they are, the procedures for mainstreaming gender at all levels and at different stages are not indicated. One example of a DOA, MP Gender Budget statement revealed that all programmes included a 100 percent expenditure on women. A 50 percent funding allocation for women in all agricultural programmes is recommended by the report from the perspective of public financing. The development of all officials’ capacity as well as a strong monitoring mechanism with disaggregated data are crucial. It is crucial to develop new policies that take into account women’s needs in light of the changing climatic conditions. Effective programmes like the MKSP of the Ministry of Rural Development and significant convergence of the schemes need to be strengthened and expanded.
Two centrally supported programmes under DAC & FW were investigated by Seethalakshmi et al. in 2017. These included the ATMA scheme under the GOI’s modified NMAET and the NHM, a sub-mission under the MIDH, which was also under the DAC’s division of horticulture. The study was limited to Betul and Anantapur, two distinct districts in Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh. The research demonstrates a general trend throughout the horticultural industry as well as diverse effects on men and women. Due to the transition and their reliance on the erratic markets for horticultural products, women and children in particular are at risk for having access to adequate food and nutrition. The study highlights the stark contrasts in the funding strategies of these schemes, which reflect shifting objectives and macro-policy changes at the national level. Both the "large ticket subsidies" in the NHM and the "little ticket subsidies" in the ATMA scheme are mentioned. For instance, a wealthy farmer can receive over Rs 16 lakh in subsidies for intensive agricultural methods or the polyhouse farming system recommended by NHM. Contrarily, under the ATMA system, the FSG group, which consists of 10–12 women, receives only Rs 10,000 per group and can only form two FSGs each block. Food security is assumed to be carried by underfunded women’s organisations, while individual farmers—often men—receive significant subsidies for crops that need expensive inputs and sophisticated technology. The NHM consistently excludes the underprivileged, particularly women. As part of the extended changes, the ATMA scheme envisions integrating gender issues into all of the activities. However, through activities of food security groups, nursery promotion, etc., which do not give women enough room to advance and assert themselves as farmers in their own right, the women are largely sought to be gender stereotyped in their traditional roles as providers or nurturers of food security. The study’s conclusion said that some of the most significant problems and difficulties that this preliminary investigation raises need to be investigated in greater detail in the future.
Conclusion
In conclusion, the women oversee farm operations but are not regarded as farmers; they work in the fields primarily doing planting, sowing, and weeding but are not landowners; they harvest and process but do not have control over the market or the income; and they typically put in 16 hours per day of paid and unpaid labour with no leisure time. Despite making such a significant contribution, they are not the owners of productive assets (land, cattle, fisheries, technologies, credit, finance, markets), and they face wage discrimination based on gender. There is strong evidence that improving food security and nutrition is considerably aided by reducing gender-based inequality. Therefore, from a policy standpoint, it is crucial to recognise the role that women play in ensuring food security and nutrition and to address barriers to gender equality by creating supportive governmental and legal frameworks. In order to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment and meet SDG2, policy must remove obstacles and offer incentives. Removing obstacles will require changing all laws, societal conventions, and other restrictions that limit women’s participation in food systems. On the other hand, offering incentives will require the introduction of new policy or the modification of current policy to affect behaviours, attitudes, and practises among people and institutions (including investment decisions). Transparency and accountability should be upheld while maintaining inclusion and facilitating equitable access to resources. Additionally, it should coordinate the allocation of resources, both public and private, to priority regions in a fair manner that is consistent with SDG2 and SDG5 requirements.

Recommendations
Following are some of the recommendations drawn based on the above narrative, which will contribute to Voluntary Guidelines for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in the context of Food Security. This guideline is voluntary, non-biding and complementary support to the national, regional and
international initiatives abiding national and international law. They primarily address governments at all levels and implement public policies addressing all forms of discrimination against women and girls that negatively impact upon food security and nutrition. Additionally, they also add value to other actors of policy discussion and implementation processes, such as governments, civil society, research organisations & universities, intergovernmental & regional organizations, development agencies etc.

i. Expand the possibilities for women’s access to savings through group-based structures, as well as financing for small enterprises and entrepreneurs for better financial inclusion of women.

ii. Create multi-stakeholder task groups on social norm reform to conduct a national evaluation of social norms in all sectors relevant to food security and nutrition and to design cross-sector response plans with distinct indicators and targets.

iii. Increase funding for public education and awareness initiatives regarding women’s and men’s rights and entitlements in the context of nutrition and food security.

iv. Promote women’s leadership, secure women’s involvement and representation, and allow women’s views to be heard at local, national, and international levels within the food security and nutrition arena by implementing affirmative action at organisational, policy, and legislative levels.

v. Create a framework for tracking funds and set investment goals to encourage greater accountability for and integration of gender equality and women's empowerment into all activities and interventions related to the food system.

vi. Invest in systematic studies of gender and diversity in the food systems, collecting both qualitative and quantitative data, and making sure that the
data used in cost-benefit analyses includes valued non-market advantages and social and environmental returns.

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