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Platform

TH3.3: Fostering an enabling environment for equality and empowerment in agri-food systems



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Equality and empowerment by gender and intersecting social differentiation in agri-food systems: Setting the stage

Gender and social equality in agri-food systems are essential to achieving **SDG 5** and support progress across all SDGs

Current thinking has evolved from focusing on gender gaps to **enabling gender-transformative change** in agri-food systems, fostering **gender and social equality** and women's empowerment

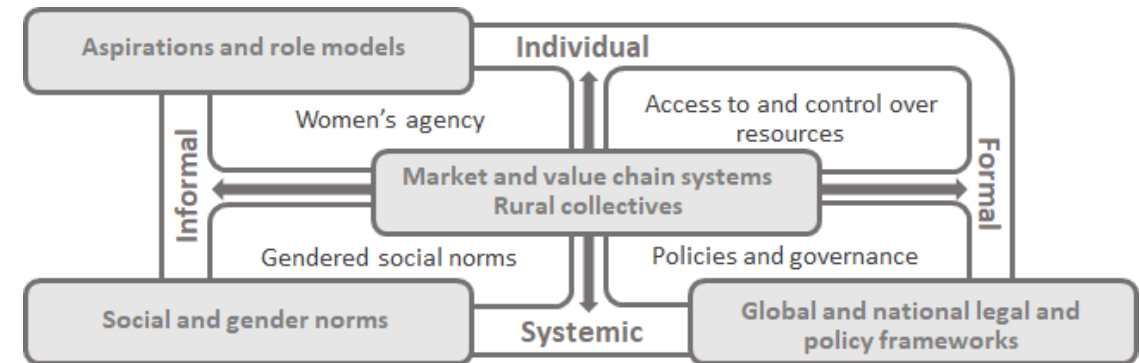
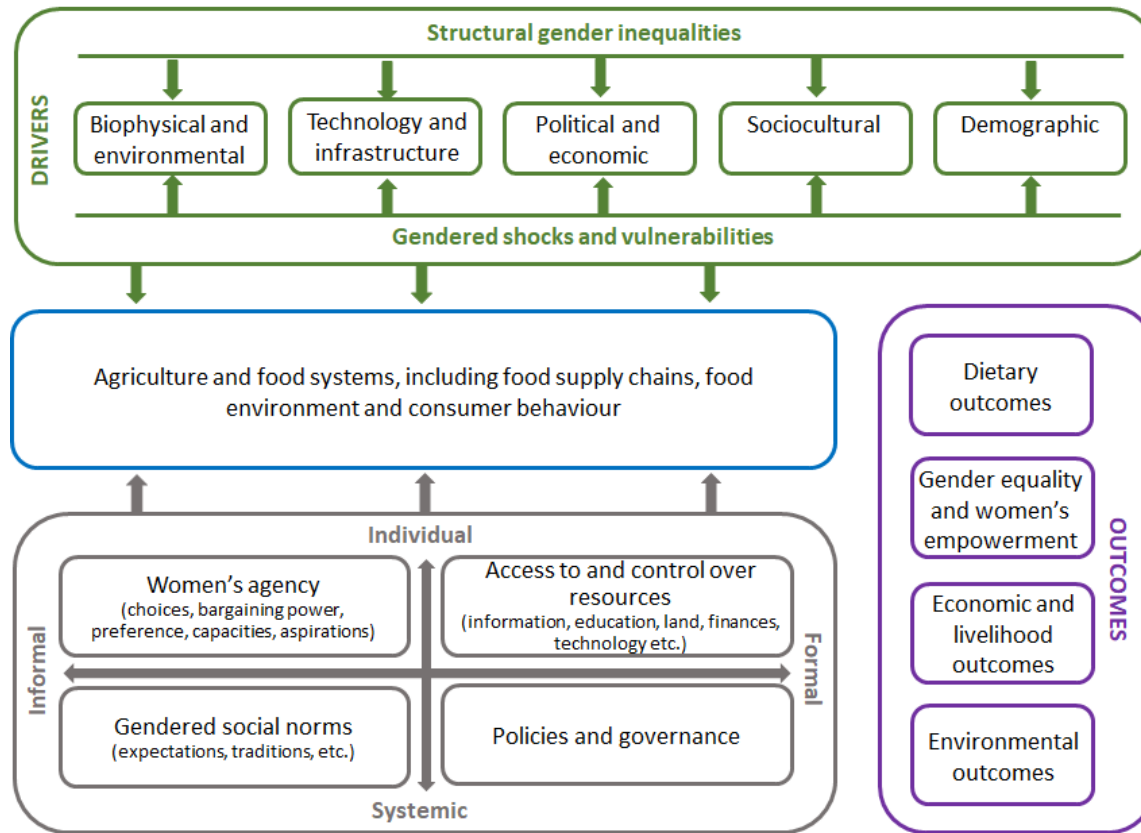
A global snapshot shows **persistent structural barriers** are root causes of gaps by gender and intersecting differentiation. Gender-transformative change in agri-food systems requires a holistic and **inclusive approach to dismantle those barriers**

CGIAR GENDER Impact Platform teams address **key themes** important for transformative change and women's empowerment in **six background papers** for the forthcoming **FAO Report on the Status of Rural Women in Agri-food Systems 10 Years after the 2011 SOFA** (State of Food and Agriculture):

- a) **Fostering an enabling environment** for equality and empowerment in agri-food systems
- b) Making **complementary agricultural resources, technologies, and services** more gender-responsive
- c) **Measuring women's empowerment** in agriculture: Innovations and evidence
- d) Beyond crops: Towards gender equality in **forestry, fisheries, aquaculture, and livestock development**
- e) Addressing gender inequalities and strengthening women's agency for **climate-resilient and sustainable food systems**
- f) Closing **gender gaps in productivity** to advance gender equality and women's empowerment

An enabling environment for equality and empowerment in agri-food systems

Conceptual framework



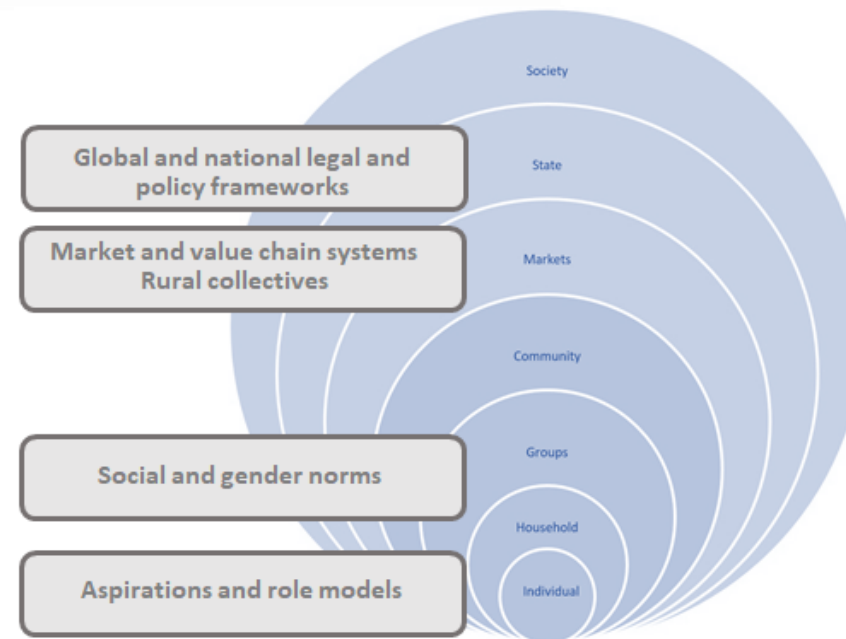
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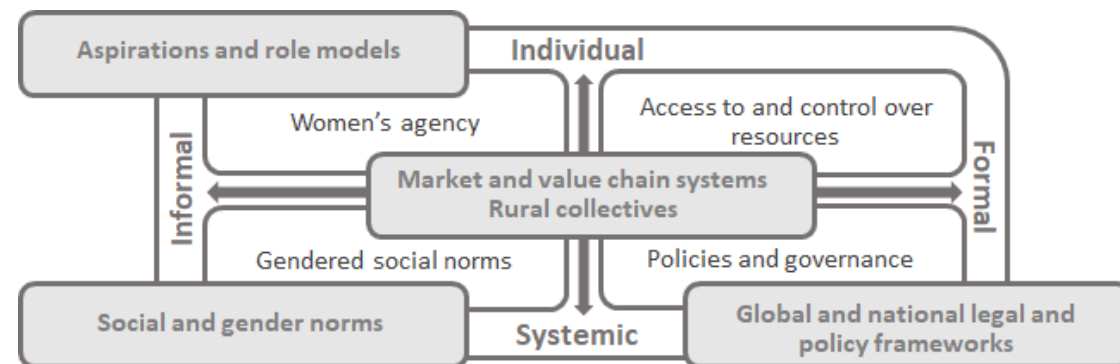
Structural constraints to equality can be found at different nested scales and are interrelated across scales:

- i) the scale of the state where we focus on global-, regional- and national-level policy and legal frameworks
- ii) the scale of markets where we focus on market and value chain systems and collectives
- iii) the scales of the community, household and individual where we focus on social and gender norms, role models and aspirations

(Collectives cross over to the scales of groups and community; norms to the scales of markets and the state)



Fostering an enabling environment requires a holistic approach across multiple nested scales



An enabling environment for equality and empowerment in agri-food systems

Current status and the evolution over the last 10 years

1. **Global policy:** Increasing attention for gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) and need for data, e.g., SDGs
2. Improved (**national**) **policy** and legal frameworks for GEWE and increasing gender mainstreaming, but varies across regions and countries
3. Increase in inclusive **market systems** interventions and 'gender-sensitive' **value chains**
4. More attention for rural **collectives** to enhance women's access to and benefits from resources and services



5. Status and trends of key gender **norms** vary across regions and countries
E.g. Acceptability wifebeating: low to moderate support in Latin America and Asia, wide support in sub-Saharan Africa, declining trend
6. Evidence of **norms** shifting to recognition of women's role as farmers and household 'developers', and greater acceptability of women's mobility
7. Young women and men primarily **aspire** for higher education, salaried, non-agricultural jobs rather than ag-related jobs

What has proven to be effective enabling environment for equality and empowerment in agri-food systems?

1. International guidelines => **Policy** guidance, coherence, motivation to align actions with SDGs
2. Inclusive consultation processes => Effective gender inclusion in **policymaking**
3. More and improved global data => Identify inequalities, hold governments accountable
4. Combining scaling of agricultural technologies, process upgrading, financial inclusion, enhancing micro-entrepreneurship with
 - i) GTAs
 - ii) capacity development of women (and youth)
 - iii) proving the business case for upgrading women's and youth's roles=> More inclusion in **market and value chain systems**
5. **GTAs** => Enhance
 - i) women's sense of self-worth and intrahousehold decision-making power
 - ii) gender-equitable attitudes
 - iii) equitable sharing of resources and benefits
 - iv) shift gender roles and **norms** wrt women's knowledge and engagement in agri-food systems
6. Female role models => Increase women's **aspirations** in agri-food systems
7. Programs with a **holistic** approach => Enabling environment for GEWE
E.g., increasing women's benefits from value chain (VC) participation + enhancing commitment by VC actors + addressing constraining women's roles and gender norms



Key policy messages and recommendations for the way forward to strengthen (gender) transformative change for inclusive agri-food systems?



1. Translate international **policy** frameworks on gender equality to national and local contexts
2. Promote **policy** coherence across multiple sectors and governance levels for meaningful impacts on GEWE in agri-food systems
3. Consultative **policymaking** processes engaging women's rights groups and CSOs
4. Close critical data gaps for accountability to gender-equality goals and advocacy efforts
5. Address structural constraints at the scale of **markets** by
 - i) a better understanding of opportunities and risks in empowerment processes
 - ii) opportunities in non-traditional sectors for transformative change
 - iii) engaging multiple actors
6. Tackle root causes, including women's land rights and norms that invalidate women in agricultural roles, that prevent women to equally benefit from **collectives**
6. **GTAs** can shift
 - i) individuals' mental models, values and beliefs
 - ii) transform women's and men's (understanding of) social relations
 - iii) promote less discriminatory, more positive gender **norms**Scale GTAs in non-reductionist ways, include other social actors, watch out for harmful consequences
8. Include female role models in agri-food systems in agricultural extension programs, leadership positions, (mass) media and communication campaigns to raise women's and girls' **aspirations**

Key recommendation

Foster an enabling environment for gender and social equality and empowerment in agri-food systems

By tackling structural barriers across multiple scales in a holistic way

While concurrently reducing existing inequalities in access to and control over resources, resilience and leadership

An enabling environment for equality and empowerment in agri-food systems

Review method



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Search terms and data sources

Key search terms: gender mainstreaming + agriculture and food system + policy; gender and inclusion + policy, gender-responsive policy/institutions, markets (as institution), labor market (as institution), governance (and institutions), market systems approach + gender + norms; norms + value chains (systems/institutions), collectives, community-based, gender-transformative approaches, social norms, gender norms, aspirations, role models

Review studies and collections: Gennovate (<https://gennovate.org>) and Align (www.alignplatform.org); Young Lives; Reviews of gender-transformative approaches (Wong et al. 2019; FAO, IFAD and WFP 2020; McDougall et al. 2021; McDougall et al. 2022); Biskupski-Mujanovic, S., and D. Najjar. 2020 (Collectives)

Data sources: Global Gender Gap Index; World Bank Women, Business, and The Law Data; Demographic and Health Surveys, Afrobarometer, Latinobarómetro, World Values Surveys

Thank you

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