Global leaders came together on 8 June 2021 to discuss the foundational role of women in food systems and the urgent need to empower women and improve their nutrition across food, health, and social protection sectors.

Women have higher nutritional needs than men; they need 2.5 times the iron required by men. Yet, women around the world eat last and least, particularly in times of crisis. Therefore, women have significantly higher levels of malnutrition than men. This impacts their health and productivity and that of future generations. For mothers, poor nutrition during pregnancy and lactation has serious consequences for birth outcomes and long-term health and productivity of their children.

Women nutrition is an issue of equity. A World Bank study found that women's nutritional status is driven more by intrahousehold inequity than just poverty with 75% of underweight women found in households where the male head was not underweight.

Despite their essential role in all aspects of the food chain, women still do not have the same rights or entitlements as men. While large numbers of women work in the field or as food vendors, few women have leadership positions higher up in the food system.
Redesign Farm Schools to be women-oriented
Invest in micro-finance training for women
Implement women-inclusive policies in rural financial institutions

Empower female farmers:

Enable policies that push for gender equity
Actively invest in female extension workers
Invest in women-led business development

Strengthen women entrepreneurship:

Governments and the United Nations champion women leaders in the food system
Women are included and also actively drive the development of farming-related technology
Incentivize banks to offer women-inclusive financial services
Challenge norms and traditional systems to ensure women a seat at the table
Generate gender-specific data for a better understanding of women’s issues and facilitate pro-women policy decisions

How can women be a part of the move toward resilient and sustainable food systems?

"Women matter at all stages of their life cycle"

Women Matter - Act Now

Prioritize and invest in Women Nutrition at the UN Food Systems Summit (FSS) and Tokyo’s Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021
Engage in and commit to women-focused Food Systems Solutions across all action tracks, in particular
- Women's leadership
- Social norms and influencing women's access to nutritious foods
- Addressing the gender finance gap
- Changing policies to make food systems gender-transformative

Women nutrition to be appropriately costed and integrated into global and country-level COVID-19 recovery efforts.

Powering Women Nutrition for Promising Futures