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Youth Policy Recommendations
Access to Justice for Young Women
in Agrifood Systems

Background and methodology

In 2025, the World Food Forum (WFF) Youth Assembly led a global consultative process involving over 10 000 young people from more than 100 countries to draft [youth-led recommendations on the empowerment of young women in agrifood systems](#). The recommendations were launched at the High-Level Political Forum 2025 and highlighted multiple priority areas, including those related to unequal access to justice (such as climate justice and reproductive justice) and young women's access to land rights.

In alignment with the priority theme of the seventieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW70), “ensuring and strengthening access to justice for all women and girls, including through inclusive and equitable legal systems, the elimination of discriminatory laws, policies, and practices, and the removal of structural barriers,” the Youth Assembly organized focused follow-up consultations to gather more detailed, geographically grounded and practical recommendations on these issues.

The methodology consisted of an online consultation exploring three major themes: (1) informal and precarious agricultural work, (2) gender-related barriers to land ownership and tenure security, and (3) a cross-cutting theme on human rights, intersectionality and access to justice in agrifood systems. A global survey, which combined a mix of closed-ended and open-ended questions, complemented the online consultation. The resulting recommendations are rooted both in the lived experiences of participating youth, especially young women, and in robust evidence emerging from recent publications of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) analyzing these issues, including [The status of women in agrifood systems](#) (FAO, 2023), [The unjust climate](#) (FAO, 2024) and [The status of youth in agrifood systems](#) (FAO, 2025).

These recommendations contributed to the [CSW70 Global Youth and Adolescent Recommendations](#) facilitated by UN Women.



Open the document.



Key Messages

1. Young women are essential to agrifood systems yet remain structurally excluded.

Young women are central to food production, rural economies and community resilience, yet they continue to be denied equal access to land, decent work, social protection, finance and climate-resilient resources. These exclusions are systemic and must be addressed through binding policy action.

2. Young women are excluded from decision-making that shapes their lives.

Land, agriculture and climate policies are still designed for young women rather than with them, resulting in tokenistic participation and limited influence. Young women must be recognized as rights holders, decision makers and leaders. Young women must also be seen as a heterogeneous group, and the intersectionality of their experiences must be respected and acknowledged, with policies and programs able to meet diverse needs.

3. Legal commitments on women's land rights often exist, but they are incomplete, contradictory, or poorly enforced, and fail young women in practice.

Denial of justice is not only a legal issue, it is also a lived reality shaped by gender norms, economic inequality and systemic exclusion. Legal and policy commitments are routinely undermined by discriminatory customs, weak enforcement, corruption and limited access to justice. Closing the implementation gap is an urgent priority.

4. Unpaid care and subsistence labour carried by young women is invisible in policy, yet it absorbs the greatest impacts of climate and economic shocks.

Young women shoulder disproportionate unpaid caregiving and subsistence work in agrifood systems, work that increases during climate crises and economic stress but remains unrecognized, unsupported and uncompensated. This invisibility deepens inequality, limits young women's economic participation and agency, and undermines climate resilience and access to justice.

5. Climate justice must be centred in the conversation on climate action. Climate change is a threat multiplier that deepens gender and age inequalities.

Climate change increases unpaid labour, income insecurity, health risks, displacement and exposure to violence for young women in agrifood systems. Climate action that does not explicitly centre young women will reinforce inequality.

6. The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) must move from commitments to enforceable action.

The CSW must champion stronger accountability frameworks and national legal and policy reforms backed by dedicated financing, monitoring, implementation and enforcement that guarantee young women's land rights, labour protections and access to climate-resilient resources, backed by financing, monitoring and accountability. Hearing young women's voices requires translating them into concrete national obligations and measurable progress.

RECOMMENDATIONS



I. Legal recognition and policy reform

1. **Legally recognize young women as rights holders** in agrifood systems, including in land, resource governance and decision-making, including those working in informal and family-based agricultural labour.
2. **Recognize equal land ownership and inheritance rights in national law**, explicitly guaranteeing young women's independent, unconditional rights to individually, jointly or collectively own, inherit, buy, register and control land, without requiring male consent or secondary status.
3. **Institutionalize joint and co-titling as the default legal standard** for marital and family land, with opt-out provisions only through informed and voluntary consent.
4. **Harmonize statutory, customary and religious legal systems** to eliminate contradictions that allow discriminatory land and labour practices to persist at the community level.
5. **Recognize informal agrifood workers and extend labor protection to informal workers and young women in these roles**, including fair wages, occupational safety, social protection and protection from exploitation.
6. **Adopt enforceable national action plans on women's land and labour rights**, with clear timelines, budget allocations, measurable targets and penalties for non-compliance.
7. **Support youth-led organizations to establish youth observatories for monitoring young women's rights violations** especially when it comes to implementation of reforms affecting young women's land and labor rights, evidence development to inform advocacy, policy improvements and accountability mechanisms.
8. **Develop mechanisms to extend justice beyond courts and national policy frameworks** to the local institutions, customary authorities and workplaces that shape young women's daily realities.
9. **Establish inclusive participation and consultation mechanisms in land governance and land policy-making**, ensuring young women's representation and voice in land administration, customary institutions and dispute resolution processes.



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II. Enforcement, justice and legal empowerment

1. **Fund accessible, gender- and intersectionally responsive legal aid systems**, including mobile legal clinics, community paralegals and legal hotlines targeted at young rural women.
2. **Train land, labour and local government officials on gender- and age-responsive implementation**, with clear sanctions for discriminatory practices and abuse of authority.
3. **Establish confidential, accessible grievance and reporting mechanisms** for land dispossession, labour exploitation, wage theft and gender-based violence in agrifood systems.
4. **Strengthen local enforcement capacity**, including rural labour inspectors and land oversight bodies, with explicit mandates to protect young women's rights, recognizing that access to justice must function at the community level where most violations occur. Require local governments and customary authorities to be legally accountable for enforcement, with penalties for land grabbing, illegal evictions and labour exploitation.



III. Economic, financial and climate justice

1. **Develop alternative collateral and financing mechanisms**, such as group guarantees, social collateral and lease-to-own schemes, to enable young women to access credit without land titles.
2. **Subsidize land registration, titling and documentation costs** for young women, particularly in rural, conflict-affected and climate-vulnerable areas.
3. **Ensure climate finance and adaptation programs do not have requirements that would enable the systemic exclusion of women and especially young women**, for example in regard to land ownership. Moreover, ensure land, legal aid and climate programs explicitly include displaced, migrant and conflict-affected young women, regardless of documentation status.
4. **Guarantee priority access for young women to climate-smart technologies, inputs and training**, regardless of land ownership or formal employment status.



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V. Learning and leading

1. **Develop gender-responsive information and awareness programmes on women's rights.** The programmes must be tailored to reach women, especially young women, who live in rural areas and have limited access to information, using local languages and going beyond written forms of communication.
2. **Invest in leadership development, mentoring programmes, legal literacy and advocacy training** to strengthen young women's capacity to claim rights, influence policy and hold institutions accountable.
3. **Institutionalize policy co-creation mechanisms** that formally involve young women's organizations, cooperatives, and grassroots groups in national and local policymaking.
4. **Mandate quotas for young women's meaningful participation** in land governance, agricultural planning and climate decision-making bodies at all levels.

VI. Data, monitoring and accountability

1. **Require systematic collection and public reporting of intersectionally (gender, age, disability, community) disaggregated data** measuring land ownership, labor conditions, access to finance and climate resources. This data should be designed to identify legal and policy gaps, inform reforms and support evidence-based advocacy.
2. **Align local monitoring and reporting with international commitments**, including the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*, the Sustainable Development Goals and CSW outcomes, and enable independent civil society oversight. Ensure that monitoring reflects the cross-cutting nature of land and gender, and uses SDG Indicator 5.a.2 measuring women's equal right to land as a structured platform for inclusive governance, accountability and reform.





From policy to action

The WFF Youth Assembly, led by the Youth Policy Board (YPB), is a youth-led platform that enables young people to shape agrifood systems policy and governance. It offers a structured, inclusive space to engage in decision-making at local, regional and global levels. The Assembly convenes a diverse group of stakeholders - including young farmers, parliamentarians, Indigenous youth, civil society, academia, youth organizations, national delegations and partners - ensuring broad representation.

The priorities identified through the Youth Assembly inform international policy dialogues and guide country-level action through the WFF National Youth Chapters. These self-organized platforms turn global commitments into locally driven solutions, empowering young people to lead community initiatives, contribute to national policymaking and advance lasting transformation in agrifood systems.



Learn more about WFF
National Youth Chapters.



Learn more about the WFF
Youth Assembly Secretariat.