

ASG SUN Coordinator Afshan Khan
CFS Fifty-First Session "Making a Difference in Food Security and Nutrition"

EMPOWERING WOMEN AND GIRLS AND PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY: ENDORSEMENT AND UPTAKE OF THE CFS VOLUNTARY GUIDELINES ON GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S AND GIRLS' EMPOWERMENT (GEWE) IN THE CONTEXT OF FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION (for decision)

October, 2023

Background Documents:

- [CFS 2023/51/3 – CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition](#)
- [CFS 2023/51/4 – CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition – Draft Decision](#)

Speech:

Thank you for giving me the floor. I am Afshan Khan, Assistant Secretary-General and Coordinator of the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement. We welcome the CFS voluntary guidelines on gender equality and women's and girls empowerment in the context of food security and nutrition.

SUN works to realize the vision of a world free from malnutrition in all its forms. Yet the multiple crises plaguing the world today are rapidly reverting progress made in reducing malnutrition in the past decades. Women, mothers and girls are particularly affected. It is simply not acceptable that in 2023, at least

two-thirds of adolescent girls and women are affected by undernutrition, anemia, and/or micronutrient deficiencies (UNICEF, 2023), and 130 million girls are denied the human right to education around the world, (OHCHR, 2023). At the same time, community health workers - most of them women and a critical element for providing basic nutrition services to children and mothers - are woefully underpaid and excluded from the health system.

To build a resilient and sustainable future for all, we must collectively and urgently address gender-based inequalities, unequal access to resources and exclusion that continues to limit all women's and girls agency and decision-making powers. We cannot succeed in scaling up nutrition or achieving the SDGs if we do not address the drivers and impact of gender-based discrimination.

As a Movement, SUN brings people together for joint action behind country priorities – governments, civil society, the United Nations, donors, businesses and scientists. Translating gender equality and empowerment into action and results at the country and local level is a central piece of our approach. Aligned with the *SUN Call to Action: 'Scaling Up Gender Equality and Women's and Girls'*

Empowerment to Fight Malnutrition’ we will support the promotion and roll-out of the Guidelines across the 66 SUN Countries, including in the ongoing review of national nutrition plans for gender transformative and responsive actions. We also must acknowledge the need for highest level political commitment and ownership to accelerate our efforts on malnutrition, gender equality and women’s and girls’ empowerment. We need systems approaches that break down silos and reach across sectors to embed gender transformative and responsive nutrition action across food systems, health, social protection and climate actions. The SUN Multi-stakeholder platforms are critical vehicles to drive such commitment and rally all stakeholders behind one vision, one plan, one budget and one monitoring-and-evaluation system to achieve their gender and nutrition goals.

The implementation of the guidelines will require a cross sectoral approach between various Ministries and I would like to encourage the members of the CFS to lead such collaboration to ensure comprehensive implementation including sufficient budgeting and investment for gender transformation and nutrition.

Again, I commend the Committee and Open Ended Working Group for the development of these Voluntary Guidelines. As a country driven movement, SUN looks forward to their deployment and the opportunity to come alongside countries as they interpret and apply guidelines within their national policies and multi-stakeholder action plans.