



REPORT: Notes of the Meeting

Recognizing the Rights of Women Agricultural Workers in South Asia: Roundtable on Policy, Politics and Impact Amari Watergate Hotel, Bangkok, Thursday 25th October 2018

A regional roundtable on rights of women agricultural workers was organized by UN Women and LANSA on October 25th 2018 in Bangkok. The purpose of the roundtable was to initiate a regional dialogue on recognition of women agricultural workers by providing participants a platform where they could share their work with each other and brainstorm solutions for advancement of rights of women agricultural workers in each of the countries. The event brought together researchers, activists, civil society representatives and policy makers from India and Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and SAARC. The group included two policy makers from Pakistan, Dr. Nafisa Shah, Member, National Assembly and Mr. Ismail Rahoo, Minister for Agriculture, Supply and Prices, Government of Sindh and the chair of the National Commission on Status of Women in Pakistan, Dr. Khawar Mumtaz. The list of participants and agenda are in the annex.

Ms. Maria Guimaraes, Strategic Partnerships Specialist, UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific provided opening remarks and welcomed the participants. She endorsed the need for a regional network that would bring together representatives from different countries to discuss sustainable solutions that translate into policy change for women agricultural workers and said that, "If we really want to bring transformative change into the lives of women agricultural workers, we need to have access to policymakers. Women agricultural workers are key drivers for national growth strategies, yet their contribution is not recognized." She mentioned that we need transformative change so that women can buy property, have access to state's resources including land and public healthcare services. Despite a lot of activism happening on the ground, she said, we need to question that at what levels women's voices translate into policy action. Women's voices need to be heard and represented, and their rights should be protected. She concluded by stressing the importance of nutrition in the agriculture sector, and praised contributions made by researchers working on agriculture-nutrition linkages and the LANSA consortium. Ms. Guimaraes also thanked Mr. Haris Gazdar, Dr. Bhavani, and Dr. Nitya Rao for taking the lead in organizing the regional meeting.

Dr. R V Bhavani, Programme Manager, LANSA, MSSRF thanked all the participants for their contributions and participation. She gave an overview of LANSA, its focus countries and in-country partners – India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan, and international partners – IDS, IFPRI, and LSHTM. Dr. Bhavani emphasized that LANSA research had focused on exploring the gender pathway particularly in Pakistan and India. LANSA's first attempt to push forward a regional dialogue on rights of women agricultural workers was initiated in 2017 at the annual conference of the ANH Academy in Kathmandu. A panel of policymakers was organized, some of whom were also present at the current event. She said that LANSA has been trying to build on this momentum and hopes that it could be taken forward beyond the lifetime of LANSA.

The day's proceedings were divided into 4 sessions. The first session was focused on research presentations from studies conducted in India and Pakistan. The second session, focused on capturing regional perspectives, brought together representatives from national commission on the status of

women, Pakistan, FAO, SAARC and UN Women-India representatives who shared insights on ongoing projects at the regional and country levels for women agricultural workers. The third session was divided into two segments. The first half brought together activists who have been working on raising the issue at grassroots. They discussed challenges, and strategies for effective advocacy on the ground to advance rights of women agricultural workers. The second segment was a group activity in which participants in each of their groups discussed possible policy, programmatic, and legislative changes needed to address the rights of women agricultural workers of the region. Each group presented its recommendations on the way forward - strategies that will need to be adopted by the region to help establish rights, benefits, and protection for women agricultural workers. The outcome of the recommendations culminated into a joint statement on recognition and promotion of rights of women agricultural workers in the region. It was read by Dr. Rukmini Rao and all participants gave consensus on the contents of the statement. The concluding session was a policy discussion in which Dr. Nafisa Shah, Member of National Assembly, Pakistan and Mr. Ismail Rahoo, Minister for Agriculture, Supply and Prices provided perspectives on how women in agriculture should be supported – legislations, effective implementation of policies, or provision of opportunities for women agricultural workers to unionize. Dr. Nafisa Shah said that the Pakistan Peoples Party may in fact be the only party in the country, and also from the South Asian region which has pledged to recognize women agricultural workers as workers in its election manifesto. “There is not only need for policy commitment but also political commitment from parties in South Asia.” She suggested that women’s voice should be brought into focus, and qualitative research may help in bringing their voices to policymakers. The issue of class and status, she said arises as one of the key challenges when it comes to recognizing rights of only the woman worker.

Session 1: Sharing of research findings and their implications

Chair: Ms. Maria Guimaraes, Strategic Partnerships Specialist, UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

Dr. Nitya Rao, LANSA Gender Crosscut lead, University of East Anglia - LANSA research findings from India and Pakistan

Synthesis

- FAO’s 2012 report showed the gender gaps in agriculture
- Majority of women are engaged in agriculture but the important point is that women’s work is highly labour intensive, involving energy expenditure and a lot of time. They have huge productive work burdens which implicates their time available for care within the household – reproductive work
- Overall there is lack of recognition of women’s work across the region but there is more to it than just lack of recognition of the numeric figures. Context is particularly important – the fact that women undertake agricultural work is not enough. We need to highlight who works and under what conditions, the labour arrangements. Women work in difficult conditions and there are different types of labour arrangements. But who are the different types of women who undertaken agricultural work? In India, women from lower caste groups such as Dalit women and poor communities are found to work in agriculture sector. In Pakistan, conditions are similar – women from lower caste groups work
- LANSA synthesis has argued that there is a need to highlight specific groups of people who undertake such work

Gender and Nutrition pathways

LANSA research has focused on three particular pathways (articulated by Suneetha Kadyala in 2004) that mediate the relationship between women's agricultural work and their health status:

- 1- Women employed directly in agriculture, women's empowerment/ pro-nutrition decision making (positive)
- 2- Time-care pathway: Women intensively involved in agri work and may not give time to household wellbeing, cooking or feeding. This pathway could be positive or negative
- 3- Women's own health: women often (negative implications on women's own health)
 - Conducted systematic review of available literature on each of the pathways. From about 500 studies, a list of 15 was selected. No evidence on the pathway of women's work and nutrition was available for Afghanistan and Pakistan. 5 countries were focused on – India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Afghanistan. Not much quantitative evidence on each of the pathways

Research in India and Pakistan

India: Odisha; focus crops – rice and millets; Uttar Pradesh; focus crops – wheat and rice

Smaller sample; time-use and diet surveys; 56 percent of overall work is done by women and about 80 percent of agricultural work is done by women only; 95 percent of domestic and care work done by women. In peak agricultural seasons of paddy growing and cotton harvesting, women faced 30 percent care deficit and 3 to 4 percent of seasonal body weight loss which can have longer term implications for women's health. Nutritionists may suggest that 1 – 2 percent of weight loss may be okay.

- Pakistan: Main crops – wheat, cotton, sugarcane
- Out of the women who reported doing agricultural work, 43 percent were engaged in agriculture during pregnancy. This had a negative effect on maternal BMI after controlling for education and health
- Women who worked in cotton picking during pregnancy were likely to have stunted children; 14 percent
- Similar insights from Pakistan and India – strong effect between mother's weight loss and child stunting
- LANSa research has given visibility to women's work who face a general lack of recognition. Main contributions – bringing women's work into focus; women's work is even more feminized than what we find in national data; drivers of women's work – women are participating because of various constraints, various factors around season, types of work, class and caste.
- Research found that main channel in the pathways framework is women's work and its effect on her own health. Hence, women's work is an important pathway
- There is need for more contextual factors – cropping patterns (driving women's work), household socio economic status; human capital, alternative care available, labour market arrangements). Women's work is a key mediator between household ses and work
- How do you value women's work in the context that their work is unpaid, free labour
- Policy priorities include – proper childcare initiatives led by the state; universal maternity entitlements, food distribution system, public investment for reducing women' time in cooking energy and collecting water, tailoring social protection policy

Dr. Sudha Narayanan, Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research: Insights on women in agriculture and nutritional empowerment

- Background: UN's sustainable goals on ending hunger and improving nutrition and ensuring food security by empowering women and girls. Rural women fare worse than their male counterparts.
- Two different projects – Becoming a Young Farmer and IMMANA project on Empowerment and Nutrition in India (Odisha and Bihar) and Bangladesh.
- Women farmer's constraints in India – access to land for young women is a big constraint; factors associated with why women farmers have limited access, more land is owned by men. As a result women cannot avail other entitlements such as subsidy or credit which are tied to land record and production
- Division of tasks between men and women continues – heavy tasks done by men, sowing and weeding. System is not ready to provide support to women for undertaking heavy men's tasks
- Extension officers convince single women farmers to participate in forest plantation by telling them that they will be able to pay off their daughter's dowry if plant teak
- Difficult to collectivize – one of the many constraints for women farmers
- Village markets versus wholesale markets– distinction between male and female farmers. Male farmers have access to wholesale markets whereas women farmers sell produce in smaller quantities
- Women's empowerment plays a key role in their nutritional status and also their children's
- IMMANA study conducted to assess nutritional empowerment on agrarian workers in Odisha and Bihar which found that women's economic empowerment needs to be linked with women's nutritional empowerment.
- Domains such as food, health, fertility, institutions were explored as key drivers of nutritional empowerment and allowed us to see whether women have knowledge, agency, and institutional support that translate into better nutritional outcomes for women.
- The Women Empowerment and Nutrition (WEN) Grid – can we measure each of the cells in the grid and find out whether women are doing well nutritionally. Work can be a source of income which cross cuts with food and health both
- Interviews were conducted with women and their husbands, mother in laws
- 62% of women undertake unpaid work on own farm; men are more likely to do paid work
- Surprising results – men and women were both doing poor but women perform even poor during the lean season
- Social norms preventing women to eat well. Women eat last; their diets are restricted by their mother-in-laws; domestic violence is a really big issue. Reducing of meals or eating in portions are predominant coping strategies for women to tackle domestic violence
- In peak seasons – there is enough to eat for both men and women. In lean seasons, there are stark differences. National data suggests that anaemia changes in women according in lean season
- They also have limited support to undertake household and care work and work in poor conditions. Women avoid seeking healthcare for two reasons – no one to take; no one to take care of children in the house
- Higher caste women are likely to face constraints of going out of the house. While drudgery reduction and providing toilets are important interventions, women reported that these provide opportunities for women stay connected with each other
- Freedom for young women; the higher the caste it is less likely to go out of the house
- Resources matter the most – institutional, fertility, health, and food.
- Policy implications – improve women's access to land, identity card for women farmers, labour market programmes

- Specifically direct interventions in nutrition to improve nutrition for women taking into account seasonality differences

Questions:

- Khawar Mumtaz: Does better nutrition and BMI lead to empowerment of women within the household or outside?
- Marianna – dietary restrictions imposed by mother in laws. Any actions/programmes or awareness raising activity to address this issue for women and children?
- Benazir – what does empowerment mean? Is it poverty alleviation that leads to empowerment or is it poverty that links to nutritional issue?

Responses:

- Nitya – looking at the other way; something to think about; social protection can address the poverty issue and minimize risks; empowerment effect has a role to play when women from non-poor class are also anaemic. In India, men go to the markets to make purchases and women have said that men should be trained as well
- Sudha – women in rich families are overweight but they are less likely to interact with others or go out because of restrictions; social norms also important
- Dietary restrictions - mother in law would fast; daughter in law would also do the same; not imposed on children
- Poverty is one aspect and empowerment is a process that builds capacity of a woman to make her own choice that could translate into improvement in her wellbeing.

Session 2: The Rights and Status of Women – Regional Perspectives and National Initiatives

Chair: Ms. Sally Barber, Regional Programme Coordinator – Migration, UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

Ms. Marianna Bicchieri, Land Tenure Officer, FAO – ‘Challenges and opportunities towards the realization of women’s rights in agriculture’

Issues affecting women agricultural workers

- Despite their essential contribution to agriculture and rural development, women face a great deal of discrimination and gender-related constraints, including:
 - Lack of representation and participation in decision-making processes in rural institutions
 - Lack of decision-making power and voice in society
 - Time constrains as a result of triple work burden in the productive, reproductive and social spheres
 - Limited access to extension and financial services
 - Limited access to decent rural employment opportunities and markets
 - Despite playing a crucial role in agriculture and household food security women lack secure land tenure rights
 - Rural women tend to access land and natural resources through their relationships with men, either fathers, uncles or husbands
 - Customary tenure systems: major gender inequality
 - As agricultural works, they generally do not enjoy their labor rights

As result...

- Agriculture is underperforming in many developing countries partly due to women’s lack of resources and opportunities to reach their full potential
 - Persisting gender inequalities hinder the realization of women’s human rights and the achievement of equitable growth and eradication of poverty

One of the most important policy-framework to work with is CEDAW - Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

- Article 14 outlines special measures to eliminate discrimination against rural women and promote their social economic development
- General recommendation No. 34 on the rights of rural women (2016) provides additional guidance on how to implement CEDAW

*“The Committee considers rural women’s rights to land, natural resources, including water, seeds and forests, and fisheries **as fundamental human rights**”.*

- The **right to work without discrimination** is recognized in the UDHR (arts. 2 and 23), in the ICESCR (arts. 2(2) and 6–8) and in the CEDAW (art. 11).
- Women have a **right to employment opportunities and treatment equal to men**, including equal remuneration for work of equal value (UDHR, art. 23(2), ICESCR, art. 7(a)(i) and CEDAW, art. 11).
- Women also have the right to enjoy **special protection during pregnancy and paid maternity leave**, and the right not to be dismissed on grounds of pregnancy or maternity leave (CEDAW, art. 11(2)).

Detailed provisions on women’s labor rights are contained in several ILO conventions:

- The **Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention** 111 of 1958 prohibits sex discrimination in both opportunity and treatment, and provides for affirmative action
- The **Equal Remuneration Convention** 100 of 1951 states the principle of equal remuneration for men and women for equal work or work of equal value
- The **Termination of Employment Convention** 158 of 1982 prohibits dismissal on grounds of sex, marital status and absence during maternity leave
- The **Maternity Protection (Revised) Convention** 103 of 1952 entitles pregnant workers to a maternity leave of at least 12 weeks
- The **Plantations Convention** 110 of 1958 and its 1982 Protocol protect the labor rights of plantation workers, without discrimination on the basis of sex
- International instruments are complemented by national agricultural labor rights;
- In reviewing national and international labor legislation, as it applies to agricultural workers, it must be remembered that in many countries (especially developing countries) these rules are not applied to a large sector of the economy: the informal sector.
 - Furthermore, rural women in developing countries do not have access to the judicial systems and do not know their rights.
 - Customary rights may prevail, so women may not enjoy their legal rights.

Overcoming challenges to promote women rights

- Developing a strong enabling environment for gender equality and women's rights through knowledge generation, awareness-raising, policy development and technical assistance

Promoting the rights of women agricultural workers

- **Crucial working with a broad range of stakeholders with twin-track approach:**
 - Decision makers: ensuring that legal and policy frameworks are adequate; supporting the implementation of existing legislation; harmonizing statutory and customary rights
 - National, provincial and local level authorities: ensuring awareness about the importance of gender equality and rural women's rights
 - Rural institutions: strengthen and ensure that women and men equally benefit from and participate in such institutions; harmonizing statutory and customary rights
 - Women and men: awareness raising about gender equality (showing the advantages for all) and legal empowerment of women
 - Advocating gender equality in agriculture....
 - ... convincing who holds the power to share it...
 - Some powerful arguments are needed....
- The number of undernourished people in the world has been on the rise since 2014, reaching 821 million in 2017

Gender gap in agriculture

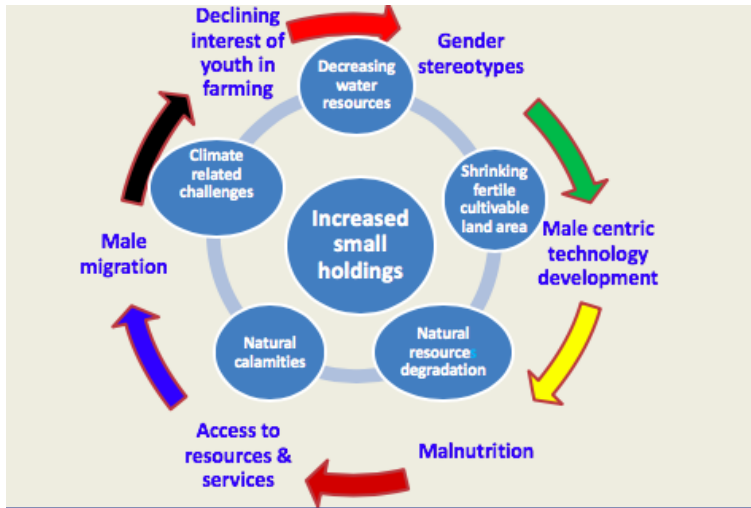
- Closing the gender gap in agriculture would generate significant gains for the agriculture sector and for society
- If women had the same access to productive resources as man, total agricultural output in developing countries could raise by 2.5-4 percent
- This raise could, in turn, reduce the number of hungry people in the world by 12-17 percent.

Dr. Younis Ali, Senior Technical Officer, SAARC Agriculture Centre– 'Enabling policies for women's empowerment for agriculture development in South Asia (recommendations from regional expert consultation in Bhubaneswar, Sept 2018)'

Emerging challenges in South Asia include;

- Food and nutrition insecurity
- Low agricultural activity
- High post-harvest losses
- Highly vulnerable to climate change
- More rain-fed farming
- Lack of quality standards
- Weak Agric. export performance
- Low agric. industrialization
- Worst agribusiness environment
- Inadequate off-farm employments

Challenges in Agriculture for Farm Women in South Asia



Women in Agriculture

Opportunities

- Farm sector Feminization
- Large untapped potential of rural women to be harnessed
- Program of agricultural intensification in underdeveloped regions and diversification of agriculture into high value crops and SME
- Capacity building of rural women through initiating women specific schemes in agriculture sector
- Upward mobility of rural women and a level playing field as a decision maker
- Reducing gender disparity within household and community

Recommendations:

- Specific policy for recognizing women farmers, their contributions in agriculture and economy and set specific program interventions for their development
Set up an institutional mechanism for scaling out and scaling up the issues of women farmers in all SAARC member countries.
- Introduce new policies in regional and national level to promote access of women smallholder farmers in support mechanism and extension services for agriculture development
- For women farmers empowerment, needs to address counting of women farmers and their contributions whether it is paid or unpaid in the national system of account.
To review the national agriculture policies to ensure the welfare and development of women agricultural laborers.
- Specific policy and laws is required to increase women access to market and value chain and development of women entrepreneurship in all member countries
Specific policy and intervention in regional and national level required for women farmers

accessibility in finance and credit

Promote vocational agriculture education for women, establish vocational institutes

- Specific policy and guideline required to promote climate resilient agriculture.
Essential to form regional platform of women farmers and workers/laborers and a regional platform of men and women farmers and laborers.
- Gender sensitive syllabus in agricultural educational institutes, e.g. College Natural Resources. Gender mainstreaming and budgeting in agricultural developmental plans
- Promotion of gender friendly farm machineries, technologies and methods which is currently unavailable in South Asia.
- Introduce joint ownership of land in family
- Strengthening innovation and research programme in multi-disciplinary way integrating various dimensions of gender for improvement of livelihood, health and nutrition.
- MoU between Govt. and International development agencies on women empowerment in Agriculture (MOA, SAC, AFA, ICAR-CIWA, ActionAid, FAO, IFAD)
- Develop rural Women based indicator road map for agricultural development in the country

Women in Agriculture: Recommendation

Gender integration:

- **Reach:** Include women farmers, labour, girls and entrepreneurs in program activities, number of proportion of women participating in project activity.

- **Benefit:** Increase women's well-being (e.g. food security, income, health and skilling)

Positive and negative outcome indicators such as productivity, income, assets, nutrition, time use etc.

- **Empower:** Strengthen ability of women to make strategic life choices and to put those choices into action

- Women's decision-making power; reduction of outcomes associated with disempowerment

Dr. Yasmin Zaidi, Director, Centre of Gender and Policy Studies and Dr. Khawar Mumtaz, Chair, National Commission on Status of Women, Pakistan– 'Rural Women in Pakistan – Status Report 2018'

Where do rural women work

Around...

-20 per cent in own home

-62 per cent in the field

-6 per cent shop/business/office industry

Women's work and the rural economy

How we count/value women's work is important to reflect the *actual* work that women perform. For instance, 60 per cent of rural women are not being paid, for men, the corresponding number is 17 per cent.

Valuating Rural Women's Unpaid Work

Estimated value of the work of unpaid rural female workers is approximately 6 billion US dollars equivalent to 2,6 % of GDP

Women's Reproductive work: over 6 hours, including care work and other household chores. We are thus devaluing work by not recognizing it. For instance, agricultural work as informal work and not

recognized as formal work translates into women not accessing social protection. Hence, regarding social security/insurance schemes- rural women are largely excluded since their work falls outside the formal economy

Drivers of change

Change Education and Skills
Women's Paid Work
Climate Change
CPEC

Cross Cutting drivers of Change

Technology
Urbanization
Policy, laws and institutions

Climate Change and the Rural Economy

Pakistan ranked 7 of 10 countries (Global Climate Risk Index 2017)

Agriculture: Expected decline in production of wheat, rice, cotton, sugarcane will impact nutrition and work of rural women

Opportunity non-farm work/new skills

Migration: Climate shocks trigger shifts in agricultural productivity leading to migration which influences livelihoods

Opportunity: Women as household decision-makers, exposure to different areas/neighborhood/towns

Natural Disasters (droughts, floods and deforestation) forces crops switching, safe of productive assets increased work burdens (as men migrates)

Opportunity: Support improved livelihoods, provision of land to landless

China Pakistan Economic corridor

- **Connectivity** (roads, infrastructure, technology, education, information, employment)
- **Investments** (agriculture, livestock, industry, education, skills)

Women needs to be prepared, utilize the opportunity of investments for women to gain, such as investment in agriculture, industry and skills.

Ms. Sanya Seth, Programme Analyst, UN Women India Multi- Country Office – 'Status of women farmers in India and efforts made for recognition of their rights'

Status of women in India

- 79 % of rural women work in agriculture
- 60 % of all agricultural activity carried out by women
- Low wage rate; 50-75 % of men's wages
- 81% women agricultural workers- SC, ST, OBC

- Only 9 % of women own land
- Agriculture sector 24,9% of state GDP; 85, 6% rural workers dependent on agriculture
- Women cultivators 33 % of agriculture workers
- 35% population SC & ST
- Proportion of landholdings by women is 9,6%
-

International and national framework and mechanism to promote the rights of women agricultural workers

Agenda 2030: Achievement of gender equality is essential for achieving the goals related to poverty reduction, food security, inclusive growth and environmental sustainability

CEDAW and Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) guide member states to strengthen women's economic rights and independence

The constitutional commitments of right to life, right to equality and right to livelihood can be achieved only by ensuring equal human rights, entitlement and economic opportunities to women farmers

The National Policy for Farmers, 2007, provides the framework for broadening the definition of the 'farmer' and envisions economic wellbeing of farmers by ensuring access to productive assets and marketable skills, as well as child-care facilities and nutrition for women farmers.

Why support and promote women farmers?

- In India women farmers generate a significant proportion of the household's income, leading to improved quality of life, health and education indicators
- Women produce a large proportion of food consumed locally and contribute to the food and nutrition security of families and communities
- Women farmers perform important work in production and postharvest processing activities in national and global agriculture supply chains, therefore becoming important determinants of national and global food security, quantity and quality of yields, and future growth of the agriculture sector
- Women farmers are important actors in agricultural and rural enterprises, fueling local and global economies

Key initiatives by India

- A comprehensive framework for establishing gender responsive laws, instructions policies and programmes in the agricultural sector is essential for ensuring equal rights and opportunity for women farmers

Specifically focusing on

VOICE: Identity, citizenship and leadership

CHOICE: Access, ownership and control of productive resources

SECURITY: Freedom from all forms of violence

Significant changes

- The draft report on Doubling Farmers Income (DFI) incorporated recommendations made by MAKAAAM, UN Women and NCW during the regional and national consultations that were held in 2016-17 on 'Realizing Rights of Women Farmers'
- Work with Ministry of Agriculture on Gender Responsive Budgeting
- Review indirect taxes and policies, especially related women farmers and their product

Key enablers of the forum

- On ground presence
- Individual champions inside and outside of MAKAAAM
- Strategic partnerships with a range of stakeholders: NCW, UN Women, national and some state governments, Community Forest, Rights-Learning and Advocacy, All India Kisan Coordination Committee and Right to Food campaign
- MAKAAAM leadership using their influence as members of high-level committees and as experts feeding into national and intergovernmental policy forums (e.g. CSW)

Some key achievements included

- Formative years focused on building visibility, identity and recognition of women farmers. On ground coverage of around 100,000 women farmers.
- Particular focus to 'leave no one behind'
- Informed and influenced ongoing political and policy spaces, around sustainable and ecological agriculture, land rights and forest rights, food security and social protection such as:
- Legal and policy discourse
- Campaigns and movements
- State chapters of MAKAAAM formed, taken and local names, identities and priority themes (e.g. land rights, farm suicide survivors, forest and common property rights, etc)
- Growing confidence of women farmers across India in their own identity as 'farmers' in a patriarchal world
- Increased visibility and recognition of rights of women farmers in local, regional and global policy platforms

Q&A

Opportunities and challenges:

- Climate change will change the work in the region, how are we working to mitigate and/or adapt
- Women should be in high-value crops- however it also causes heightened food insecurity.
- Women are custodians of eco-friendly techniques and agricultural products, responding to climate change.

Session 3a: Challenges and Strategies for Effective Advocacy and Organizing at Grassroots, National and Regional levels

Chair: Haris Gazdar, Collective for Social Science Research

HG: Perspectives from the grassroots with respect to on the ground activism and at national levels

Ms. Rafi Gulani, Sindh Haryani Union, Pakistan - 'Challenges and practical problems in organizing a union/network of women agricultural workers union in a situation where the broader legal and administrative context is ambivalent or hostile'

- Farmers' rights have been addressed from many years by many organizations. There also exists some laws about farmers but still these laws do not protect women workers who also have the responsibility to care for their children along with undertaking farm work
- Women's rights are not addressed appropriately, for example, their social and health issues largely remain unaddressed
- Women also bring their children with themselves to the farm fields because there is nobody to look after them in the households
- A union for women agricultural workers, "Sindh Haryani Union", was launched in Sanghar District of Sindh Province in 2015 that aims to unite women agricultural workers to advance and protect their rights and well-being
- Members of the union consist of women agricultural workers in ten villages in Sanghar District
- Women have been sensitized to raise their voices to push forward their rights. They have the right to live with dignity. Sindh Haryani Union has been working to promote the rights of women agricultural workers by providing them necessary information regarding their rights.
- With over 500 members, Sindh Haryani Union aims to unite women agricultural workers to protect their rights.
- Since 2015, Sindh Haryani Union has been working continuously with women agricultural workers and has received over 1500 memberships
- Union members include uneducated *hari* women
- The Union launched an education and awareness campaign on health and safety on avoiding the adverse effects of pesticides and chemicals used in agriculture
- Possibility to access formal labour laws - women agricultural workers have been recognized by the recent labour policy in Sindh
- Agriculture Minister, Mr. Ismail Rahoo and MNA, Dr. Nafisa Shah should help *hari* women to register with the government institutions. Existing institutional arrangements only caters the registration of industrial workers. We need to change process of registration to accommodate women agricultural workers
- Educated communities should play their role for the recognition of agricultural workers
- Women face sexual harassment at work place and they also get harassed when they go for open defecation
- Sindh Haryani Union also launched a campaign for the provision of sanitation facilities at the work place as well as at household level
- No specific law covers the right for women agricultural workers to unionize and register with government. Difficult for women agricultural workers to get registered with government institutions

Ms. Suneetha Kashyap, Mahila Umang Producers Company, India on 'Organizing women farmers and getting our voices heard – issues and challenges'

- Suneetha Kayshap started working for women when she joined Grassroot Foundation Platform that addresses issues related to drinking water, renewable energy and sanitation at village level.
- Mahila Umang Producers Company was launched in 2001 at village level when Suneetha observed that single women (widow) should help single women since they have no employment. Women, who were farm producers had no access to good markets and needed support.

Challenges

- There was no market specifically for women
- No specific market for grain trading like millet etc.
- Started form 200 members' group
- Another big challenge was to generate finance. We have collected money and the organization has millions of rupees in its bank account
- Farmer group known as 'Umang' started from some products such as mango pickles and plum chutney. Currently the organization has 110 products under umang
- Umang has three brands
- More than 1 crore rupees has been exchanged among the women as loan
- Top to bottom, and bottom to top approaches

Achievements in last 10 years

- Promoted local farmers
- In 2014 – MAKAM, India provided good opportunity to raise issues of local farmers
- Despite the land rights given by law in 2005 women are not giving their share in properties
- Struggle started from one state. Now 25 states have joined MAKAM and raised voices for the rights of women farmers such as land transfers etc.
- Need to promote seasonal food producing activities
- Also need to raise issues related to violence
- 80 % of agricultural work in our state is being done by the women who are considered to be the backbone of farming. Lack of policies and rights for women and no training or facilities for women workers are available
- Since last few years, we have been raising the point "Government is not giving loan or financial facilities to women since they don't have documents of lands, etc"
- We need more support to support women farmers at all levels

Ms. Saloni Singh, Didi Bahini, Nepal - 'Efforts made to improve the lives of women in agriculture'

- Nepal has an elected federal republic government
- Women farmers produce food, care for livestock and also undertake household work
- Women form half of Nepal's population
- 81% population lives in rural areas
- Nepal's economy depends on agricultural products and is considered to be agro-based
- Almost 2/3rd of the population that is engaged in agriculture comprises of women
- 90% of the landholdings are owned by men
- Women continue to live in difficult position in rural areas
- Women have dual burden – they live in difficult and unsafe situations and undertake agricultural work, rear livestock, do child care and household chores, etc

- Agriculture consists of diverse dimensions but 90 % women are still engaged in farm related activities rather than in processing or marketing activities
- Mostly men are engaged in marketing and processing related activities. Marketing and processing activities can give more empowerment and exposure to women
- Unemployment also affects women mostly
- Political change - from monarchy to democracy and then to republic federal country huge political change has demanded so much from women
- Elected government has only 41 % women – 97% deputy governors in municipalities are women. Women engagement in politics has increased but their workload has never been reduced
- Important factors show that women can play effective role in politics
- Demographic changes in country: Rural agricultural works have also increased after new development interventions like eco-friendly agriculture, eco-friendly tourism etc. These interventions also burdened the adult women.
- Need to address these changes to understand the status of women agricultural farmers in country

Suggestions/Highlights

- Feminization of agriculture: Need to consider changes like global, political and climatic for pro women policies
- Government should come forward with gender and social inclusion policies as mandatory policies for all sectors
- Policy makers especially for agriculture and forests do not consider women workers - not enough efforts at policy level for breaking vicious circle
- Need to look at nutrition and health related issues in research and academic levels
- Partners working in collaboration should be increased at regional level, international level and at national level as well. There is a need to change the style and understanding of work. Information is available but understanding of approaches and processes is required to achieve targets

Recommendation: SAARC regional agricultural center is working well but it should be more active to achieve desired results

Dr Sujatta Wijetilleke, NGO Management Development Centre, Sri Lanka - 'Status of women agricultural workers in Sri Lanka'

Background

- The agriculture sector is the cornerstone of Sri Lanka's economy, more than 77% of the population of 21 million is residing in rural areas and depends on agriculture for their livelihoods
- Agriculture productivity contributes about 18% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which keeps fluctuating from time to time. Sometime women move to middle East and send more incomes
- Agriculture sector provides 30% of the employment and uses about 55% of the land area
- 29.7 per cent work in the agriculture sector and play a vital role in their contribution to the national economy, through agricultural production and processing
- Agricultural output comprises of Rice, Fruits, Vegetables and Livestock primarily for domestic consumption, forestry and fisheries
- Export crops such as Tea, Rubber, Coconuts and Oil palm are particularly significant

Women' role and position

- Women working in Paddy/Chena cultivation and the Plantation sector, constitute as the major women's labour force of the country. Women's work load is intensive and time consuming
- Their workload keeps increasing with the expansion of plantations, changes to Chena and dry land farming, and when men concentrate on cash crop production and opt for wage labour where ever possible.

Present situation

- Almost half of rural poor remain as small-scale farmers especially in paddy cultivation
- Despite the country's vast strides in education (free education after independence from primary to university), health and other favourable indicators, the status and role of women in agriculture remains rather bleak
- A majority rural population remains in subsistence agriculture sector where "small holdings" are categorized as unpaid family workers
- Women in this sector perform numerous labour intensive tasks such as land clearing, land tilling, planting, weeding, fertilizer/manure application, harvesting, and food processing and livestock management
- They engage in 30% of all tasks in paddy farming and 65% of tasks in dry land farming
- Women also play a major role in vegetable cultivation and floriculture, being actively involved in land preparation, seeding, planting, weeding harvesting and preparation for the market by the women
- In the dry zone areas they contribute to seeding, weeding, harvesting and irrigation under agro - wells and pump irrigation
- However, in all cases transport to market and marketing is handled by males
- Women generally receive 10-20% less in wages as compared to their male counterparts

Causes of Inequality and Inequity - literature reviews

- A combination of stereotypes, patriarchal cultural norms, and lack of skills, relegate women to informal tasks
- Their work is lower on the value chain and upward mobility is hindered by customary laws and traditional social norms which have been prejudiced in favour of men
- Different land ownership laws (Tesawalami, Muslim Law, Roman Dutch Law) and lack of a common civil code make land use assessment difficult
- These constitute a barrier to women's impartial access to resources and limits their control over assets
- To date women's role in agricultural production has not been widely explored and their role is often neglected
- Women workers are not protected by labour laws and the National maternity protection legislation, in many places, excludes agricultural workers as they are considered more or less as informal workers and as a result have little or no protection
- Gender role stereo types imbedded in the perceptions of a patriarchal society, have also conditioned policymakers, administrators and employers with regards to their attitudes towards women workers in this sector
- Women have been disadvantaged by perceptions of men as bread earners, producers and community leaders

- Resulting in women being relegated to their reproductive role of dependency and subordination and seen as housewives
- Their contribution to subsistence production is counted as unpaid family work. It is estimated that over 56% of women's work is considered as unpaid family work
- Further, women agricultural workers are at risk of verbal, psychological, and physical abuse that exists in the workplace due to unequal power relations between men and women
- Vocational training programmes are also influenced by assumptions of gender appropriate tasks even within the agriculture sector
- Women enrolled in agricultural courses in the limited opportunities in the formal extension training programmes, and in programmes organized by non-governmental institutions, are mainly limited to training in home gardening activities
- The traditional agro-based industries are also demarcated on gender lines reflecting the gender division in the labour market
- Another factor that affects women in this sector is mechanization, which usurps women's traditional roles in agricultural production and impacts on post-harvest activities such as crop drying, milling etc. that were traditionally important activities handled by them.
- This situation has resulted in Sri Lankan Women Ag. Workers moving out to other sectors of employment
- Examples: when the Free Trade Zones were set up many moved to the garment industries
- Often, women from rural areas move out as temporary migrants as domestic workers overseas, mainly to Middle Eastern countries as housemaids
- Many plantation especially tea plantation, women take up Domestic work in Urban upper and middle class Homes

Recommendations

- Improve agriculture policy, legal and regulatory frameworks based on research and evidence in an open and transparent manner to overcome these inadequacies.
- Need for gender mainstreaming in agriculture as well
- Decision makers should improve gender trainings – collection of data on the engagement of women in agriculture
- Safety precautions for women - nature of agricultural activities carried out by women involves long periods of standing, stooping, bending etc. Need research in these areas
- Policy maker should keep in mind that Policy should recognize that 'women' are not a homogeneous group and that Age, Ethnicity, Caste considerations and local contexts matter.
- 30 years of internal conflict in Sri Lanka - war affected women need support to build up agricultural livelihoods- Many women and men in North have lost their agricultural lands
- Empower women by scaling up value chain development

Ms. Khushi Kabir, Nijera Kori, Bangladesh - 'Mobilizing women in agriculture in Bangladesh'

- Bangladesh has closed the gender gap than other South Asian countries, UN data
- Agriculture - unpaid work is not calculated in GDP specially women's work load
- Need to organize people to assert their rights and entitlements as citizens
- Most of the people in Bangladesh live in rural areas. Agriculture plays an important role
- Issues with the rural women - under value the women work or role, lack of access to resources, mind set of religion/ culture in South Asia women are not supposed to control over resources

- Access to land and resources and access to seeds and market
- Gender related policies do not consider innovation practices in agriculture for the development of women
- Despite the presence of inheritance laws and policies that women should have control over resources, social norms and culture hinder women's access to control over resources
- Violence: Domestic or outside violence and insecurities are faced by women
- Climate change: Need to look at all kind of policies that exist
- The biggest problem is of changing mind sets and the question of patriarchy
- Introduction of new liberal market system policies also affected the rural women
- Issue of religion - increasing use of religion as tool to control women, exploitation as subordination
- Need to continue working with men as well as women
- Wages in agriculture – gap still exists for men and women although gap is closing from 50 % to 75 %
- Need to have control over land
- Changes also happening, for example, in dispute resolution women are now playing a role
- Women's achievement in communities – how do these become sustainable in the society
- Policy makers should address the issue and start listening to the voices of rural women
- Scale up organization - should be considered/networking at grass roots level

Dr. Rukmini Rao, MAKAAM, India- 'Establishing a forum for women farmers'

Mahila Kisan Adhikaar Manch (Makaam) is a journey of collective work

Women Farmers: Those dependent on land, water, forests and livestock, for their livelihoods. Majority of women farmers do not own land. There is a wide range of identity choices such as landowning women cultivators; landless women cultivators working on family-owned land; landless tenant/sharecropping women cultivators; landless agricultural workers; forest-dependent women farmers; livestock-rearing women farmers; and fisheries-dependent women farmers.

Status of women

- Women are doing everything in agriculture - farming, using tractors, sowing etc.
- In India, labour force participation of women is declining - including rural women. It is a strange kind of paradox
- Duality of declining LFP and increasing time poverty: women do 6 times more unpaid work
- In India, more than three hundred thousand farmers have committed suicides because agriculture is unviable
- Rural women do more than 60 % of all work in agriculture
- Agriculture workers and farmers are almost the same but not really because women have no access to land such as dalit, tribal indigenous people, marginalized communities across remote areas

Why do we need a separate forum?

Lack of identity of women farmers in all their diversity

- Definition under the national policy not operationalized
- Policies and programmes are targeted only to landowners

Lack of voice and representation

- Within women's movements
- In unions
- In cooperatives
- In development organizations

Makaam Milestones

- Starting with 20 women in 2014 when MAKAAAM organized its first meeting, it systematically identified active groups in the fields. It worked with women farmers, single women agricultural laborers etc. to bring the voices together
- Strategy was to bring people to gather and provide platform to raise their voices
- Reaching out the unions across the countries - trying to locate the active groups

Guiding principles for forum

- Feminist values, social justice and sustainability
- Voices and experiences of women farmers from marginalized communities central to shaping the agenda
- Field research and data to form the basis of identifying issues and 'solutions'
- Feminist engagement with other campaigns
- Sharing of learning and support provided across regions and states
- Feminist values, social justice and sustainability
- Launched right to food, right to information campaigns etc.
- Tools for organizing women: identity, citizenship and rights - need to work with women workers and put them forward

Key enablers

- On-ground presence
- Agriculture is state subject – need local consultation to research, analysis and bring forwards demands
- Individual champions inside and outside of MAKAAAM
- Strategic partnerships with a range of stakeholders: NCW, UN Women, national and some state governments, Community Forest Rights-Learning and Advocacy (CFR-LA), All India Kisan Coordination Committee (AIKSCC), and Right to Food campaign

Key achievements

- Formative years (2014-17) focused on building visibility, identity and recognition for women farmers; On-ground coverage of around 100,000 women farmers
- Particular focus to 'leave no one behind'
- Informed and influenced on-going political and policy spaces, around sustainable and ecological agriculture, land rights, forest rights, food security and social protection such as: growing confidence of women farmers across India in their own identity as 'farmers' in a patriarchal world
- Visibility of women farmers at all the platforms

Challenges

- Women are unorganized except in some pockets
- Rural urban continuum/migration and of lack of services not recognized

- Millions of people work in forests (majority of women) - Forest workers linked to International markets, but exploited through sub-contractor extraction
- Non implementation of existing laws

Way forward

- Need of the forum like this to address the most marginalized agricultural workers are women workers keeps the global economy going by their labours

Ms. Benazir Jatoi, Legal expert on women and human rights issues, Pakistan - 'Activism and the law'

Role of activism in changing law

- Good news: Activist and researchers have pushed for local and global treaties such as GSP plus treaties, ILO convention and CEDAW
- Overarching body is constitution. Pakistan is proactive in making laws both at federal and provincial levels. Reality is that we are stuck in optical illusion. Laws do not work in isolation, in fact they work within systems and environment
- We must recognize legal instruments, the protection of gender system and environment where laws work and direct action comes in
- Rights: acclaiming or denial - women should be provided with the understanding that they have certain rights in laws, and that their rights are linked to the laws
- De facto understanding of change
- Women's political empowerment: Research shows that it is not necessary that politically empowered women work for women. In fact, social movements by women, often called feminist mobilization, can also bring about change
- Need social movements to redress rights
- Public interest litigation – and role that researchers can play - important to address rights
- Social and economic right can be addressed through international agreement but time poverty and dual burden of women's work is often not addressed in law but through activism it can be addressed
- Need access to resources, access to the formal justice system and agencies – agency over one's body, agency over making decision can be addressed through collective activism

Session 3b: notes not needed; draft joint statement to be used

Session 4: Panel Discussion with Policy Makers

Chair: Khushi Kabir

Dr. Nafisa Shah, Member National Assembly, Pakistan - 'National initiatives and opportunities'

"Recognition of women agricultural workers' rights is a wonderful idea and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) has always pledged commitments for the working class. The PPP was formed in 1970s with slogans of socialism, social welfare state and rights of workers." Dr. Nafisa spoke of why she is particularly interested in working to promote rights of women agricultural workers. First, as a representative of her party which is a socialist party and has been working to protect rights of the working classes, she is keen to take the agenda forward as it aligns with her party's vision. Second, after being elected on a general seat with majority of the votes generated from female voters in the overall voter turnout in her constituency, Dr. Nafisa is keen to serve her voters who are primarily women.

- General unanimity of recognition of women agricultural workers is one of the key takeaways from this forum
- There exists plenty of legal structures available for policy makers to move on and recognize women agricultural workers. For example, Constitution of Pakistan states that there are fundamental rights where state guarantees equality and rejects discrimination on the basis of sex; state prohibits all forms of exploitations including forced labour and slavery; and state promotes freedom of association.
- In the recent past, rural women have received entitlements directly from the state. Historically all entitlements were filtered through the male head of the household and given to women
- A revolutionary step taken by the government through Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) with over 5 million of women recipients of cash transfers. It is the only programme that gives entitlements to women directly without filtering it through a male member.
- In order to qualify as a beneficiary, one of the requirements is to have a National Identity Card. The BISP has, therefore, led to a significant increase in registration of women CNIC cardholders. Prior to the BISP about 60-70 percent of women had CNICs but now it has increased up to 90percent – largely for rural women
- BISP serves as an important tool for the government to roll out other programmes. For example, the Government of Sindh has built houses for the landless poor through public private partnership in which only BISP (poverty) cardholders are eligible
- Sindh government has also passed a policy through which women have received land transfers
- The PPP is the only party in Pakistan which has pledged to recognize women agricultural worker through system of programs and entitlements in its 2018 election manifesto.

Moving forward - challenges and gaps

- Women agricultural workers' voices are still missing in research. There is a need for more qualitative research. This will provide policymakers an opportunity to listen to the voices of women agricultural workers
- Unionization of women agricultural workers should be promoted
- Absence of delivery system for women's access to healthcare, education, and economic resources
- We should also address status and class divisions. There are many male small farmers who are vulnerable and marginalized. Exclusionary part of research - men farmers should be addressed since they are equally exploited in the sector
- Prior to legal recognition of women agricultural workers, we need to increase their political recognition, political voice and increase women's agency and unionization
- Political commitments are needed from politicians who should discuss the issues of women agricultural workers

Mr. Ismail Rahoo, Minister for Agriculture, Supply & Prices Department, Government of Sindh –

'Policies and plans to support women in agriculture'

(Representing Pakistan People's Party)

- PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari is interested in promoting the rights of women. He focused on the rights of women and women agricultural workers in the 2018 election campaign
- Women workers are the most deprived segment of our society. They are always exploited in any sector they work in - agriculture and industry
- Agricultural workers are the most deprived. They live in vast scattered areas and don't have union or organization, and don't communicate with each other
- Lack of unionization has made them vulnerable to exploitation

- PPP has raised voices of the poor and the working class from the day of its conception. PPP is committed to empowering women which has also been the vision of Benazir Bhutto
- It is usually observed that women empowerment is not possible without economic empowerment. We need financial incentives for women that ensure provision of equal rights and opportunities
- Sindh government introduced Land grants policy in 2008 in favour of women according to Benazir Bhutto's vision. Women were empowered through provision of land grants – available state land in Sindh was transferred to households in the name of women. It was the first time in the history that ownerships rights were given in the names of women
- The BISP is a national programme for women that provides cash transfers. The BISP gives recognizes women through their registration with government institutions
- BISP has empowered women - Financial incentives such as the BISP have promoted women empowerment.
- Sindh government recently started relief operation in drought areas - women are provided gunny bags of wheat- Every married women is considered a family
- Difficult to target women workers especially in agriculture - Sindh government is going to promulgate new laws for agricultural workers according to direction of Chairman of PPP
- Civil society shall force government to introduce new legislation for women workers and also implementation of the laws

In addition to the above points, Mr. Ismail Rahoo spoke of his father Shaheed Fazil Rahoo who initiated a movement for the rights of landless *haris/* farmers. Mr Fazil Rahoo also launched a campaign for freedom of expression, restoration of democracy, voter lists in native language. He formed the first women organization "Sindiyan Tehreek" along with with Rasool Bux Plejo.

Dr. Lalitha Kumaramangalam, Former Chair, National Commission for Women, India and Director, India Foundation - 'Initiatives and policies in place and challenges in implementation'

- The Indian government had recently organized a one day meeting with women Farmers - Mahila Kisan Diwas on 15 October - two groups discussed the issues and constraints faced by agriculture farm workers and women working in agriculture with animals
- About a year ago, when she was chair of the NCW, a two day conference had been convened with UN Women and MAKAAAM on issues of women farmers
- The Minister of Women and Child Development of Madhya Pradesh, Dr. Archana Chitnis had participated and talked of linkages between agriculture and nutrition
- Women are farmers – productive farmers
- Government of India has initiated a National Nutrition Mission – PM has directed to take nutrition issue forward by linking agriculture to nutrition.
- Linking nutrition programme with local women farmers such as Anganwadi targeted for children from 0-6 years of age
- Subsidies are provided in two states to procure from local farmers - wheat, rice and millet etc.
- Provision of land titles to women was also a key area of discussion in the Mahila Kissan Diwas event

Major Challenges that were discussed in one day Mahila Kissan Diwas event

- Access to adequate tools and technology
- Women have lack of access to market

- Women have limited mobility all over the world- also limited mobility in India due to patriarchy etc.
- Government has acknowledged that government extension scheme did not target women appropriately
- Access to single window to address women's issues – customize technology package for women to remove drudgery in the fields as well as at home
- Huge number of schemes have been made available for women in India from last 3-4 years to finance. One focuses on improving poor women's access to finance and other focuses on increasing women's access to cooking gas in order to save their time in collecting firewood etc.

Initiatives have been taken by the state as well as central government

- Need to boost organic farming to add value of women's work; realignment of extension system where women will be extension workers
- Increase allocation of 50% for women from 30% in ministries such as food, agriculture and rural development
- Need gender sensitive approach for women who are engaged in farming

Challenges

- Improving the quality of data field information
- improving access to services and inputs – developing the livestock value chains
- Improving access to technology - skill development and training
- Technology to reduce drudgery and institutional support
- Brown revolution

Policy focus areas

- Focus to develop indigenous breeds and conserve biodiversity
- Budgetary allocation for livestock
- Policy status of community animal health workers for large scale service delivery
- Single window system for entertainment of women farmers for equal remuneration of equal work
- National budget of India this year has a separate section devoted to farmers' producers organizations
- Gender problem in India are highlighted both by civil society and bureaucracy – at the policy level it has been acknowledged that women's rights should be focused upon
- India have 1500,000 women in *Panchayat* - 52 % of total – Women are also *Panchayat* leaders - trying to push trainings of selected *Panchayat* leaders – younger breeds of leaders understand the powers which they have been given by law and it can be enhanced when they move into the community from which they got votes

Annex

List of Participants

List	Name	Organization	Country
	Researchers, CSOs, NGOs, Networks		
1	Benazir Jatoi	Independent Lawyer	Pakistan
2	Hussain Bux Mallah	Research Associate CSSR, LANSAs Pakistan team	Pakistan
3	Damayanthi Sujatha	Chairperson, NGO Management Development Centre	Sri Lanka

	Wijetilleke		
4	Haris Gazdar	Senior Researcher and Director CSSR, LANSA Pakistan team lead	Pakistan
5	Rafia Gul	Sindh Hariyani Union, Sanghar, Sindh	Pakistan
6	Khushi Kabir	Coordinator, Nijera Kori	Bangladesh
7	Lalitha Kumaramangalam	Director, India Foundation & Former Chair, National Commission for Women, India	India
8	Rashid Mehmood	Research Officer CSSR, LANSA Pakistan team	Pakistan
9	Nitya Rao	Professor, Gender & Devp, University of East Anglia & LANSA Gender Cross-cut Lead	India
10	R V Bhavani	Director (i/c) Food Security Programme, MSSRF and Programme Manager, LANSA	India
12	Saba Aslam	Research Assistant CSSR, LANSA Pakistan team	Pakistan
13	Saloni Singh	Executive Chair, Didi Bahini	Nepal
14	Sudha Narayanan	Assoc Professor, Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research	India
15	Suneetha Kashyap	Umang Farmer Producer Co	India
16	Varsha Ganguly	Member, Working Group on Women and Land Ownership (WGWLO)	India
17	Vijay Rukmini Rao	Executive Director, Gramya Resource Centre for Women and Member, MAKAAAM National Facilitation Team	India
18	Dr. Yasmin Zaidi	Director, Center of Gender and Policy Studies (CGaPS)	Pakistan
	Policy Makers		
19	Dr. Nafisa Shah	Member National Assembly, National Assembly, Pakistan	Pakistan
20	Ismail Rahoo	Minister for Agriculture, Supply & Prices Department, Government of Sindh, Pakistan	Pakistan
21	Khawar Mumtaz	Chairperson National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW)	Pakistan
	UN Agencies and SAARC		
22	Mohd Younus Ali	Senior Technical Officer, SAARC Agriculture Centre	Bangladesh
23	Marianna Bicchieri	Land tenure Officer, FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific	Bangkok
24	Sanya Seth	Programme Analyst, UN Women MCO for India, Bhutan, Maldives and Sri Lanka	India
25	Yasmin Jaswal	Programme Officer, WLSR, UN Women	Pakistan
26	Sarah Schattmann	Joint Programme Management Associate, UN Women	Afghanistan
27	Sally Barber	Programme Coordinator, Migration. UN Women Regional Office	Bangkok
28	Camilla Wedenstam	Migration & Women's Economic Empowerment Intern, UN Women Regional Office	Bangkok
29	Somjai Noohuang	Programme Assistant, UN Women Regional Office	Bangkok
30	Maria Guimaraes	Strategic Partnerships Specialist, UN Women Regional Office	Bangkok
30	Sukanya Thongthumrong	Officer-in-charge, Regional Migration and Women's Economic Empowerment, UN Women Regional Office	Bangkok

Agenda

Recognizing the Rights of Women Agricultural Workers in South Asia: Roundtable on Policy, Politics and Impact

Ayudhaya, 8th Floor, Amari Watergate Hotel, Bangkok
Thursday, 25 October 2018

Time	Agenda
8.00–8.30	Registration
8.30–8.50	Welcome and opening remarks

Objective: To establish the purpose of the Roundtable and welcome participants.

Speakers:

*Ms. Maria Guimaraes, Strategic Partnerships Specialist, UN Women
Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific*

Dr. R V Bhavani, Programme Manager, LANSA, MSSRF

8.50–9.00	Introduction of participants
9.00 – 9.45	Session 1: Sharing of Research Findings and their Policy Implications

Objective: Provide an overview of the opportunities and challenges for women agricultural workers in South Asia. Identify overall trends with regards to women's work, their health and well-being.

Modality: Presentations (30 minutes) followed by questions and answers (15 minutes).

Chair: *Ms. Maria Guimaraes, Strategic Partnerships Specialist, UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific*

Speakers:

Dr. Nitya Rao, Professor, Gender and Development, University of East Anglia & LANSA Gender Crosscut Lead – ‘Women’s work in agriculture and its impact on their nutrition status and that of their children– insights from LANSA research in India and Pakistan’ (15 minutes)

Dr. Sudha Narayanan, Associate Professor, Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research – ‘Insights on women in agriculture and nutritional empowerment – insights from research in India’ (15 minutes)

9.45 – 10.00	Tea break
10.00 – 11.15	<p>Session 2: The Rights and Status of Women – Regional Perspectives and National Initiative</p> <p>Objective: Introduce and discuss international and regional frameworks to promote the rights and status of women agricultural workers- How can we use regional processes and collaboration to affect change and set priorities for national and regional action to recognize rights of women agricultural workers?</p> <p>Modality: Presentations (40 minutes) followed by moderated discussion (30 minutes).</p> <p>Chair: <i>Ms. Sally Barber, Regional Programme Coordinator – Migration, UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific</i></p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Ms. Marianna Bicchieri, Land Tenure Officer, FAO– ‘Challenges and opportunities towards the realization of women’s rights in agriculture’ (10 minutes)</i> <i>Dr. Younis Ali, Senior Technical Officer, SAARC Agriculture Centre–‘Enabling policies for women’s empowerment for agriculture development in South Asia (recommendations from regional expert consultation in Bhubaneswar, Sept 2018)’ (10 minutes)</i> <i>Dr. Yasmin Zaidi, Director, Centre of Gender and Policy Studies and Dr. Khawar Mumtaz, Chair, National Commission on Status of Women, Pakistan– ‘Rural Women in Pakistan – Status Report 2018’ (10 minutes)</i> <i>Ms. Sanya Seth, Programme Analyst, UN Women India Multi-Country Office – ‘Status of women farmers in India and efforts made for recognition of their rights’ (10 minutes)</i>
11.15 – 13.00	<p>Session 3a: Challenges and Strategies for Effective Advocacy and Organizing at Grassroots, National and Regional levels</p> <p>Objective: Activists who have been working on raising the issue at the grassroots share information on effective strategies, and significant challenges, for realizing the rights of women agricultural workers.</p> <p>Modality: Presentations (60 minutes) followed by moderated discussion (45 minutes).</p> <p>Chair: <i>Mr. Haris Gazdar, Director & Senior Researcher, Collective for Social Science Research, Karachi</i></p>

Speakers:

Ms. Rafia Gulani, Sindh Hariyani Union, Pakistan – ‘Challenges and practical problems that arise when you try to organize a union/network of women agricultural workers union in a situation where the broader legal and administrative context is ambivalent or hostile’(10 minutes)

Ms. Suneetha Kashyap, Mahila Umang Producers Company, India– ‘Organising women farmers and getting our voice heard – issues and challenges’(10 minutes)

Ms. Saloni Singh, Didi Bahini, Nepal – ‘Efforts made to improve the lives of women in agriculture’(10 minutes)

Dr. Sujatha Wijetilleke, NGO Management Development Centre, Sri Lanka – ‘Status of women agricultural workers in Sri Lanka’(10 minutes)

Ms. Khushi Kabir, Nijera Kori, Bangladesh – ‘Mobilising women in agriculture in Bangladesh’(10 minutes)

Dr. Rukmini Rao, Makaam, India – ‘Establishing a forum for women farmers’(10 minutes)

13.00–14.00

Lunch break

14.00 – 15.30

Session 3b: Setting the Regional Agenda: Establishing Priorities and Action Plan

Objective: Activists, academics, policymakers and practitioners come together to identify a) shared priority issues; b) shared strategies; c) tactics for increased regional organizing and solidarity.

Modality: Participants divide into three groups and respond to set questions pertaining to the objectives of the workshop (60 minutes). Each group reports back to plenary (30 minutes; 10 minutes per group).

Facilitators:

Dr. Nitya Rao, Professor, Gender and Development, University of East Anglia & LANSA Gender Crosscut Lead

Dr. R V Bhavani, Programme Manager, LANSA, MSSRF

Mr. Haris Gazdar, Director & Senior Researcher, Collective for Social Science Research, Karachi (LANSA Partner)

15.30–15.45

Tea Break

15.45 – 16.30

Session 4: Panel Discussion with Policy Makers

Objective: Policy-makers share information on existing and emerging opportunities to realize the rights of women agricultural workers.

Modality: Presentations (30 minutes) followed by moderated discussion (15 minutes).

Chair: Dr. Khawar Mumtaz, Chairperson, National Commission on Status of Women, Pakistan

Speakers:

Dr. Nafisa Shah, Member, National Assembly, Pakistan – ‘National initiatives and opportunities’(10 minutes)

Mr. Ismail Rahoo, Minister for Agriculture, Supply & Prices Department, Government of Sindh, Pakistan – ‘Policies and plans to support women in agriculture’ (10 minutes)

Dr. Lalitha Kumaramangalam, Former Chair, National Commission for Women, India – ‘Initiatives and policies in place and challenges in implementation’ (10 minutes)

16.30 – 17.30

Session 5: Way Forward

Objective: To present the draft joint statement and set an action plan.

Modality: Presentation of draft statement/action plan (15 minutes) followed by a moderated discussion to set the action plan (45 minutes).

Chair: UN Women and LANSa

17.30

Closing