

SIDE EVENT CONCEPT NOTE

Event title

Women in Sustainable Food Systems and Climate Action

Background and Rationale

“We must create food systems that feed the planet without wrecking the planet. That means aligning climate action and food systems transformation to help secure sustainable development, good livelihoods, and healthy people on a healthy planet.” These were the words of the UN Secretary General in front of the Security Council on February 13.

While the ECA region is mostly on track to achieve hunger and food security targets, serious challenges, such as the COVID-10 pandemic, the war in Ukraine and regional conflicts, the earthquake in Türkiye alongside adverse weather events stemming from climate change led to higher food prices and increased the vulnerability of the disadvantaged groups, notably lower-income women and children. These challenges underscore the urgent necessity for an inclusive and sustainable transformation of food systems.

Women contribute significantly to the food security and nutrition both as food producers and often sole caretakers of household members’ nutrition needs. Yet their work remains often unpaid, undervalued, and unrecognized. In the region, women tend to have less financial stability and are often excluded from climate change decision-making processes. Women, who typically cultivate smaller areas of land with restricted access to agricultural inputs face significant challenges in adapting to the detrimental effects of climate change.

The side event seeks to explore the critical role of women’s empowerment (SDG 5) in building sustainable food systems, a key to realize the ambition of SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and propelling climate action (SDG 13) forward. The side-event aims to highlight and reiterate the fundamental importance of gender equality and women’s empowerment as a proven a cornerstone to sustainable transformations. Perspectives of diverse rural women and policymakers from the Western Balkans, Caucasus and Central Asia will guide the interactive session, showcasing their experiences and identifying potentials for replicating good practices.

Session objectives and expected outcomes

The side event is expected to provide participants with good practices of empowering women in the ECE region for fostering food security (SDG 2) and climate Action (SDG 13). Evidence on intersections of SDGs 2, 5 and 13 and experiences from integrated approaches will be shared by panellists during the discussion.

Outcomes will serve as input for UN Women’s and FAO’s preparations for COP29, taking place in the region.



Organizers

Lead organizers: UN Women Europe and Central Asia; FAO Europe and Central Asia

Contributors: Georgia, (TBC) UN Women and FAO.

Agenda and Structure

Welcome/Opening Remarks (10 Minutes)

- UN Women Regional Director
- FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia, Regional Program Leader / FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia, Senior Policy Officer (tbc)
- Georgia Representative

Facilitated Panel Discussion (50 Minutes)

- See panellists below

Facilitated Open Discussion (25 Minutes)

Concluding Remarks (5 Minutes)

List of Panellists

Moderator: tbd

Representatives of the governmental bodies of Serbia, Uzbekistan, civil society representatives of Moldova, EU and South Caucasus will contribute to the discussion.

Sign-up / Registration Link

Registration Link:

https://unwomen.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJlpdeysqD4jHdV2BSV2hO3yR2vfAkBF4w_K