

Empowering Women in Agrifood Systems Award

Agrifood systems are a major employer of women globally and constitute a more important source of livelihood for women than for men in many countries. The Status of Women in Agrifood Systems report, published by the [Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations \(FAO\)](#) in 2023, notes that 66 percent of women's employment in sub-Saharan Africa is in agrifood systems, compared with 60 percent of men's. The gap is even larger in southern Asia, where women overwhelmingly work in agrifood systems (71 percent, versus 47 percent of men), although fewer women than men are in the labour force.

Despite this, women's roles in agrifood systems tend to be marginalized and their working conditions are likely to be worse than men's – irregular, informal, part-time, low-skilled, labour-intensive, and thus vulnerable. Women also have higher burdens of unpaid care, limiting their opportunities for education and employment.

Reducing the inequalities in livelihoods, access to resources and resilience in agrifood systems is a critical pathway towards women's empowerment and towards more just and sustainable agrifood systems. To address the massive global challenges of food insecurity and access to healthy diets while mitigating the impact of the climate crisis and a growing number of conflicts, we need all hands-on deck – and we must ensure that women are able to effectively participate and lead in creating these solutions.

This Award aims to identify, elevate and nurture global, innovative solutions led by startups that are increasing access for women to land, inputs, services, finance and digital technology to drive positive agrifood systems transformation, particularly in the Global South.

Two (2) finalists will receive travel allowance to pitch their company live on stage during the World Food Forum (WFF) flagship event in 14-18 October 2024 at FAO Headquarters in Rome, Italy.

Startups must be able to demonstrate their impact on empowering women either by providing economic opportunities, improving access to resources, or promoting gender equality. Women-led startups are highly encouraged to apply.

The startups may send their applications until the **8th of June 2024** to be eligible for this Award.

Finalists and winners will receive:

- Travel allowance for 2 startup finalists to attend the Finals at the WFF flagship in Rome, Italy on 14-18 October 2024
- Up to USD 15 000 cash prize for the Award winner
- Virtual communication boot camp for the Final pitches at the WFF flagship event
- Access to a global audience of young leaders and organizations from the public and private sectors, including FAO and the United Nations network
- Branding and promotion through the WFF, FAO communication platforms