

MEDIA RELEASE

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NO FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION WITHOUT SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION - Progress on Gender is Crucial

Despite some advancements, unhealthy diets and all forms of malnutrition still affect billions of people worldwide, with an added burden on women and girls. A range of approaches now exist to measure and highlight how gender affects food system transformation in different regions and countries. We also know how evidence-based solutions can mitigate the impact of deep-seated structural inequalities. However, more transformative actions and policies are needed to accelerate equitable progress on food security and nutrition.

These are key messages of **Dr Purnima Menon**, Senior Director for Food and Nutrition Policy at the renowned think-tank, the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), in her overview address at Australia's key food security event. The Crawford Fund annual conference, *Progress and Prospects for Climate-Resilient Agrifood Systems: Actionable Recommendations for Policymakers and Practitioner* is to be held in Parliament House, Canberra on 11-12 August.

Speakers from around the globe and Australia will offer their solutions for transforming agrifood systems in response to climate change, addressing the trade-offs between food production and net-zero targets, pursuing sustainable intensification, and promoting inclusivity and equity.

"We now have broad agreement that we need food system transformation - a comprehensive change in how food is produced, processed, distributed, and consumed - for more sustainable, equitable, and healthy outcomes in the face of climate change impacts," said Dr Menon, a nutrition expert who has extensive experience in evaluating large-scale programs in nutrition, health systems, agriculture, gender, technology, and food systems for better nutrition.

"The condition of girls and women – their nutrition, health and social status - is a significant, if indirect, cause of food insecurity and malnutrition. Such gender dynamics illustrate deep-seated structural inequalities that impede progress toward improving climate resilience, food security and nutrition."

"We know we can build resilience to climate change impacts through equity, inclusion and community participation. We must further deploy a variety of existing evidence-based solutions such as cash transfers, community-based initiatives, and gender-sensitive financial inclusion in agriculture."

"Transformative laws, national programs, and policy frameworks play a critical role in reinforcing and scaling proven community-driven efforts. We can achieve the needed social transformation for food system transformation through measurement, targeted solutions, and policy innovation to advance global food system goals," she concluded.

