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Gender Perspectives in Social Protection for Rural and Agriculture-dependent Communities

Observer paper prepared by*:

Maja Gavrilovic

Elizabeth Koechlein

Susan Kaaria

Natalia Winder-Rossi

(With review and contributions from Mari Kangasniemi)

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

* The views expressed in this paper are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations.

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1. Background: Poverty, Vulnerability and Gender in Rural Areas

Three quarters of those in poverty and the chronically undernourished live in rural areas. Often, their livelihoods are characterized by informality and a lack of access to social protection and services, exacerbated by inadequate infrastructure. Multidimensional poverty and a reliance on natural resources exposes rural populations and communities dependent on agriculture, forestry or fisheries to the effects of climate change and other hazards. Small family farms in particular face barriers in access to resources, public services, functioning markets and local institutions. Despite these challenges, rural populations are critical to ensuring food security and nutrition (FSN) and sustainable natural resource management (FAO, 2017).

Sixty per cent of employed women work in the agricultural sector, and many more contribute –formally uncounted- to the work of family farms. Poor rural women and girls are particularly vital to FSN yet are more likely than men and boys to be vulnerable to multidimensional forms of poverty and food insecurity (UN Women, 2015; FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO, 2017). This is due to systemic discrimination and the socially constructed roles for women and men that determine the distribution of power and resources in society. Although these roles vary by context, power relationships between men and women tend to disadvantage women across all societies in terms of their access to productive resources and services, voice and influence in decision-making, and knowledge and entitlements. These inequalities are often exacerbated by important intersectionalities that influence opportunities and constraints such as age, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation and other factors.

The gap in rural women’s access to productive services, opportunities and information is a major driver behind the under-performance of agriculture in many developing countries (FAO, 2017). Gender equality and rural women’s empowerment are therefore foundational to rural development and global FSN (FAO, 2011). More importantly, the provision of gender sensitive social protection systems, services and infrastructure is imperative to the fulfilment of human rights.

Underpinning rural productivity and the realization of rights for rural women and girls are:

1. A sustainable social protection system that reduces rural poverty, mitigates the effects of shocks and seeks to transform gender-informed power relations to reduce the marginalization of rural women and girls;
2. Gender-sensitive social services that facilitate redistribution and revaluation of care and domestic work; and
3. Gender-sensitive infrastructure that enables rural inclusive mobility, facilitates access to markets and digital inclusion,¹ and reduces time poverty.

This short note is a contribution to the background documents informing the 2018 Expert Group Meeting (EGM) for the 2019 Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), “Social Protection Systems, Access to Public Services and Sustainable Infrastructure for Gender Equality” for which FAO was an observer. This note focuses primarily on identifying challenges for rural women in accessing and benefitting from social protection, particularly cash transfers (CTs) and public works programmes (PWPs). CTs and PWPs are non-contributory social protection instruments that are often vital lifelines in many rural areas and should be

¹ Mobile-broadband networks (3G or above) reach 84% of the global population but only 67% of the rural population (ITU, 2016).

considered one facet of a coherent social protection system that can contribute to rural poverty reduction and consumption smoothing in the path to progressive realization of universal social protection. When designed with gender in mind, CTs and PWPs may even have transformative impacts on discriminatory gender norms.

Section 2 of this note introduces the role of social protection in gender equality and rural women's economic empowerment. Section 3 presents the rationale for gender-sensitive social protection, including men's and women's different experiences with vulnerability, barriers that women face in accessing social protection and that neglecting gender issues in social protection can exacerbate gender inequality. Section 4 draws from the forthcoming (2018) FAO Technical Guides on designing and implementing gender-sensitive social protection to provide gender considerations in SP programming. Finally, Annex I is a brief checklist for ensuring gender-sensitive CTs and PWPs.

2. The Role of Social Protection in Gender Equality and Rural Women's Economic Empowerment

As of 2015, more than two billion people in developing countries received some form of social protection. However, more than 70 per cent of the population remains without adequate access to social protection, the majority of whom live in rural areas (FAO, 2018a). Adult women are disproportionately represented among the beneficiaries and/or recipients of social transfers due to labour constraints and the relative vulnerability of women-headed households (FAO, 2015), yet many, particularly in rural areas, lack sufficient coverage.

In FAO's 2017 social protection framework, social protection comprises a set of policies and programmes that addresses economic, environmental and social vulnerabilities to food insecurity and poverty by protecting and promoting livelihoods. Social protection is critical for poverty reduction, resilience building and inclusive growth (FAO, 2017) through four functions. It **protects** people from the experience of deprivation and chronic and extreme poverty; **prevents** vulnerable individuals and groups from falling into poverty; **promotes** incomes and consumption through livelihood enhancement and other measures; and **transforms** social relations through support for social justice and equity by addressing the structural causes of poverty and vulnerability (Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler, 2004).

Social inclusion and gender equality are among the cross-cutting principles of FAO's vision of social protection. For this reason, FAO:

- Supports countries to adopt measures that would contribute to equality between women and men in access to social protection to promote more sustainable pathways to food security and poverty reduction.
- Seeks to bolster connections between social protection and women's economic empowerment by reinforcing the coherence between social protection and livelihood interventions and services for rural women.
- Supports the rural institutions and organizations in gender-sensitive design and implementation of social protection.

Gender equality is a critical moral issue. It also has important instrumental value: it can yield meaningful development payoffs for improved human capital and productivity, social cohesion and inclusive economic growth. Across the world, women's social and economic advancement has led to increased investment in children's nutrition, schooling and health, reducing poverty for future generations (FAO, 2011). Evidence from Latin America, Asia and sub-Saharan Africa shows that social protection

programmes not only contribute to human capital accumulation and food security, but also enhance the economic and productive capacity of beneficiaries, including rural women. However, the instrumentalization of women's empowerment as critical to wider development outcomes, particularly outcomes for children, has led to many programmes, such as conditional cash transfers, reinforcing discriminatory gender roles and placing undue burden on women with negative implications for their dignity and wellbeing.

When well-designed from a rights-based approach, social protection has the potential to promote socio-economic empowerment among poor rural women while reducing gender inequalities, particularly when a gender lens is employed systematically in programme design and implementation. When accounting for gender in their design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation evidence suggests that:

- CT programmes may contribute to rural women's economic advancement, power and agency. By making women the main recipients, women access resources and increase their role as decision-makers. Additionally, asset transfers contribute to rural women's economic advancement when they take into account women's needs and when the schemes ensure that women have control over the transfers made as well as control over the income generated by them.
- PWPs may enhance women's economic advancement through access to employment and income when appropriate work and childcare are provided. Furthermore, the assets developed through PWPs may be specifically chosen to reduce rural women's time poverty and enhance gender-sensitive rural infrastructure.
- Micro-insurance mechanisms may enable women's economic advancement through financial inclusion and access to resources that prevent them from losing their asset base and livelihoods, or from engaging in riskier income-generating activities as a result of shocks.
- Subsidies on their own may not work towards women's economic empowerment. However, when subsidy schemes are designed to address the gender gap in education and extension, or encourage saving groups, they may lead to increases in women's access to labour markets, investments in education and assets, and autonomy (de la O Campos, 2015).

FAO SP Vision

People and communities living in rural areas, as well as those whose livelihoods depend on natural resources, are supported by SP systems that contribute to:

- ensuring their food security and improved nutrition;
- protecting them before, during and after shocks and stresses;
- promoting resilient livelihoods and sustainable management of ecosystems; and
- stimulating pro-poor growth and inclusive rural development.

From FAO, 2017

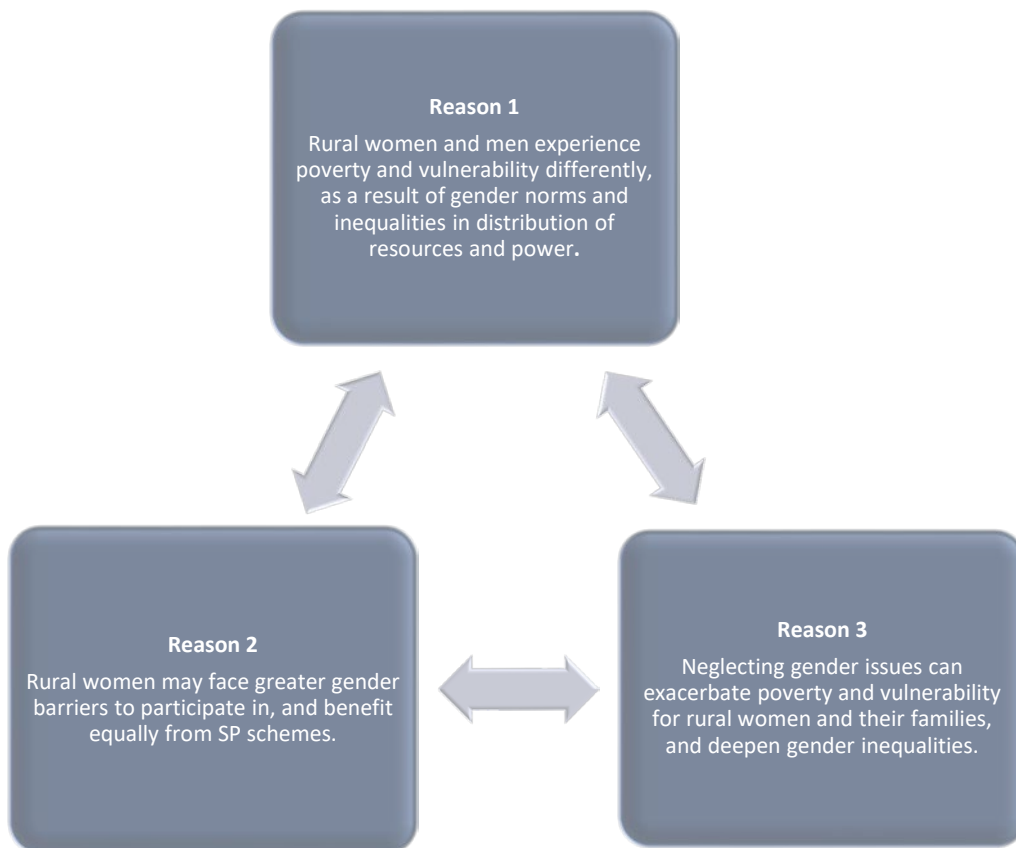
3. Why Gender-sensitive Social Protection?

Rural poverty and vulnerability are gender specific and require a tailored response. Despite prominent contributions to agriculture and food security, rural women typically face greater challenges in constructing secure livelihoods, accumulating assets and developing capacity to manage risks effectively (Holmes and Jones, 2010; de la O Campos, 2015). Secondly, *women may face greater barriers to participation in social protection*. Discriminatory socio-cultural norms, rules and practices may lead to gender-based bias in entitlements and participation in social and political institutions and networks (FAO, 2011).

Gender-blind programmes can exacerbate poverty and vulnerability, especially for rural women. Social protection programmes that do not pay attention to gender dynamics can exacerbate gendered

dimensions of poverty and vulnerability, while disempowering rural women as well as men, boys and girls (Luttrell and Moser, 2004). Conversely, gender equality and rural women’s socio-economic empowerment can enhance core social protection outcomes. Investments in gender equality and empowerment of rural women can boost the efficiency of social protection in reducing poverty and hunger.

Figure 1. Rationale for gender-sensitive social protection



From: FAO, 2018 (forthcoming)

Reason 1. Rural poverty and vulnerability are gender specific

Rural poverty is gendered. Men and women, girls and boys face multiple vulnerabilities across the lifecycle, many of which are gender specific. Gender-specific risks across the lifecycle include pregnancy, maternal health shocks, and widowhood. During their peak productive and reproductive years- between the ages of 25 and 34- women are more likely to live in poor households than men of the same age group. This reflects the pressure for women to replace paid employment with unpaid care and domestic work as well as the impact of discrimination in the labor market. Similarly, early widowhood and divorce may affect women more negatively than men, though both men and women are negatively impacted by divorce and the death of a spouse (Munoz Boudet, et al., 2018). Gendered lifecycle vulnerabilities also include exposure to gender-based violence and early marriage.

Rural women's **assets** tend to have positive effects beyond their immediate resilience in the form of human capital formation and food security (Behrman, 2014). However, given lower access to financial and other productive resources as well as discrimination in customary and statutory law, women often have fewer assets and savings than men. Land rights can increase women's intra-household bargaining power and improve access to rural advisory services and credit. However, discrimination in customary norms and statutory law can serve to limit women's land rights and constrain their ownership (Kenny and de la o Campos, 2016).

Education and skills training are vital to close the gender gap in agriculture and enhance resilient livelihoods. Rural women are more likely to be illiterate than their male counterparts and may be less likely than men to speak a national or official language, limiting their access to **information and services**. Furthermore, rural women may have different information needs due to their agricultural and reproductive roles which are often not sufficiently met through formal information sources, or they may lack access to appropriately tailored rural advisory services and information (Petrics et al., 2015; Kristjanson, et al., 2017).

Both men and women that rely on natural resources and agriculture for their livelihoods are increasingly adversely affected in their ability to plan and prepare for the effects of natural hazards and effects of climate change as manifested by the declining predictability of natural phenomena, such as seasonal floods (Cannon, 2002). Rural women often face pressure to act as "shock absorbers" within the household, reducing their consumption or engaging in negative coping strategies to ensure the FSN of their households (Quisumbing, Kumar and Behrman, 2018).

Rural women often bear a **triple burden**: paid work, reproductive and care work, including domestic work, and community work. Care work tends to be inequitably distributed both within and among families, falling primarily on the women and girls within the household, and is vastly undervalued despite its fundamental contribution to wellbeing. This is related to socially-prescribed stereotypes that prioritize men as 'breadwinners' and women as care-givers. The gender gap in the time spent on care grows wider in rural areas, where care services are acutely missing (ILO, 2018). This constrains the time available for rural women and girls to dedicate to paid work or education and skills training (Dillon and Quinones, 2011). The need to perform care responsibilities may also push women into flexible or informal work. In rural areas, women's domestic burdens are often compounded by poor infrastructure that increases the amount of time required to meet responsibilities and a lack of provision of care services by the state or private entities.

Women often lack the opportunity to shape the policies and decisions that determine their resilience, wellbeing and the wellbeing of their communities. Within the household, women may have less **decision-making power** than men to determine how best to structure livelihood strategies. Rural women also face more constraints than men in participating in rural organizations and often are not represented in community institutions (FAO, 2011). Women's lack of access to assets, their time poverty and mobility constraints can **hinder their participation in public life and in local collective action** (Behrman, et al., 2014).

Reason 2. Gender-based barriers to participation in social protection

Rural women face practical and sociocultural barriers to social protection in many forms. Around the world, women are less likely to have economic security- access to sufficient, robust and diverse livelihood

strategies and assets. Economic security is derived from employment, diverse and secure income sources, labor mobility, and access to productive assets such as land, marketable job skills, education, training and, importantly, SP (Doss, et al., 2018).

Social norms have a strong impact on the roles played by men and women as producers and consumers. These norms pattern men and women's work and can systematically disadvantage women in the labor market and lead to different and unequal livelihood strategies. Rural women are more likely than rural men to work in the informal sector and have less access to decent work, they may also face discrimination in access to wage labor and other types of formal employment. This can leave rural women with precarious income sources and often in dangerous working conditions.

Due to the nature of women's work in informal and irregular jobs and their interrupted employment histories, women are less able than men to contribute to social security benefits such as pensions, maternity leave and unemployment insurance. This gap can be compounded by geographic inequality that disadvantages rural populations in terms of social protection coverage, social services and infrastructure.

Compared to their male counterparts, rural women face barriers to participation in contributory and noncontributory social protection even when such programmes are available in rural areas. Rural women may also be less likely than rural men to have access to adequate crop insurance and protection from the impact of climate-related disasters. Insurers may be likely to cover for the loss of crops grown predominantly by men such as cash crops, rather than those grown by women. In some places, women may pool risk with other women in villages rather than within the household or through more formal means (Quisumbing, et al., 2017).

Further barriers to women's access to and use of social protection include illiteracy and limited access to information which may mean that women who are eligible for programs may be unaware of these programmes or how to access or enroll in them. Furthermore, many rural women face constraints in mobility and time due to child care and other responsibilities which may hinder their ability to participate in programmes with time commitments, such as PWPs or conditional CTs. The inability to travel to a distribution point due to safety or other mobility constraints such as social norms and childcare may further limit participation. Rural women in particular may be prevented from accessing social protection to which they are entitled by a lack of identity documents.

Even if poor rural women participate in social protection programmes, they may not necessarily use and benefit equally from social transfers, especially those directed to entire households. Weak bargaining power within the household, limited confidence, and lack of financial and functional literacy may restrict their control over benefits.

Reason 3. Gender-blind programmes can exacerbate poverty and vulnerability

Gender blind social protection programmes, or those that do not take into account gender in their design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation (M&E), can have negative unintended consequences and can further disempower already marginalized groups.

For example, PWPs may aim to include women at the outset, however, it may prove difficult to achieve an appropriate proportion of women participants in PWPs if their constraints are not taken into account. Poor women are likely to face significant time poverty in the form of care and domestic responsibilities at times of the day that men do not, preventing them from participating. If PWPs do not provide flexible

working schedules, work that is appropriate for women, and child care facilities, women's participation may be severely limited despite gender-equitable intentions. PWP's can contribute to gender equality by focusing on improving infrastructure that benefits women through increased safety or time saved, such as improved roads or wells.

Conversely, women are often targeted as the beneficiaries of CTs programmes based on evidence that they tend to invest more on the wellbeing of the household with positive effects on educational and health outcomes of children. However, some programmes may reinforce gender stereotypes about women's and men's roles by emphasizing women's roles as caregivers. For example, CT programmes may have conditionalities that contribute to increasing women's work burden and time poverty, particularly when the fulfilment of these conditions is made even more difficult by lack of adequate services such as quality health care and education or infrastructure (FAO, forthcoming, 2018).

Cash transfers can reduce intra-household stress related to meeting household needs, particularly between husbands and wives (Berg et al., 2013; Brady, 2011; Slater and Mphale, 2008 in Bailey and Harvey, 2015). Evidence suggests that CTs are associated with reductions in intimate partner violence (IPV). However, when men and boys are not sensitized to the rationale for targeting women, this may increase household tension and the possibility of domestic violence.

4. Design, Implementation and M&E for Gender-Sensitive Social Protection²

The overarching goal of gender-sensitive social protection is to integrate gender throughout the planning, formulation, delivery, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) stages of social protection programming to contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment. The key components of the gender-sensitive approach are:

- a) Undertaking a Gender-Sensitive Poverty and Vulnerability Analysis (GSPVA)
 - b) Designing gender-sensitive social protection programmes (CTs and PWPs)
 - (i) Integrating gender considerations into the design of CTs
 - (ii) Integrating gender considerations into the design of PWPs
 - c) Implementing gender-sensitive social protection programmes
 - d) Gender sensitive M&E and learning
-
- a. Undertaking a Gender-Sensitive Poverty and Vulnerability Analysis (GSPVA)

The GSPVA is a starting point for developing gender-sensitive social protection programmes that are context-appropriate. Before programme objectives and design features are formulated, it is key to establish a comprehensive understanding of gender dynamics and their links to rural poverty in a given context. Conducting a GSPVA allows social protection programme designers to understand how poverty and vulnerability affect women and men differently across their life cycle and the differences between poor rural women's needs relative to men's. This information can help to identify gender equality goals and objectives and design programmes in a manner that is sensitive to and reflects these gender differences in needs and priorities. A GSPVA asks several questions:

² The information provided in this section is directly extracted from the forthcoming (2018) FAO Technical Guidance Toolkit on Gender-Sensitive SP Programmes to Combat Rural Poverty and Hunger.

- What are the specific risks and vulnerabilities that rural women and men face?
- How do gender norms and inequalities affect rural women's vulnerability and poverty outcomes relative to men's?
- What are the potential gender-related constraints to rural women and men's participation in the programme, and their access to and control over benefits?
- What are the programme's likely gender impacts on beneficiaries, both positive and negative, and how are different stakeholders likely to affect or be affected by the programme activities and outcomes?
- What are the potential opportunities and challenges for the SP programme to promote gender equality and rural women's economic empowerment?

The GSPVA, as the umbrella assessment, consists of the following five analytical components:

i. Gender-sensitive context and livelihoods analysis: The gender-sensitive context and livelihoods analysis can be used to map key gender issues and explore gender differences in: (i) livelihoods roles, responsibilities, and time-use in economic and care activities; (ii) access to, ownership and control over productive resources, services and information; and (iii) involvement in, and influence over decision-making processes. It can also be used to assess the underlying causes of these gender differences, such as sociocultural norms, practices, rules and policies, and how they contribute to unequal gender outcomes in wellbeing, livelihood security and poverty. Finally, the analysis can identify the potential barriers, such as access to information, time availability, mobility, and opportunity costs that may affect rural women and men's participation and benefits from the programme. Based on this information, programme designers can start to map women and men's needs for support and identify programme features and activities for effectively reaching and benefiting both rural women and men.

ii. Vulnerability analysis: The vulnerability analysis assesses the main sources of vulnerabilities faced by rural women and men at community, household and individual levels, their gender-specific manifestations and implications for livelihood security and poverty. It explores the differences between women and men's capacity to cope and withstand risks, and the strategies they have access to and can adopt to manage shocks and stresses. Such data can be used to identify programming options for strengthening resilience of women and men to effectively respond to risks, including opportunities to accumulate human, productive, financial and social assets, and the role of social protection in this process.

iii. Poverty analysis: A gender lens to poverty analysis focuses on the identification of gender differences in all phases of the poverty cycle, including: the root causes and factors which push women and men into poverty (building on the vulnerability assessment); the ways in which poverty is experienced by women and men and its outcomes; and their options for escaping poverty. The critical dimension of this approach is its examination of intrahousehold poverty dynamics and outcomes. The intrahousehold poverty analysis explores how different gender roles, responsibilities, and access to opportunities and entitlements within the household individually affect men, women, boys and girls.

iv. Stakeholder analysis: Community members and institutions often have different priorities, interests and needs related to SP, poverty reduction and gender equality. Conflicts of interest are common, particularly concerning culturally sensitive issues such as changes to gender roles and power relations or promotion of women's empowerment. Stakeholder analysis can be used to: (i) identify different types of stakeholders, (ii) their relative stake in a given SP programme and influence over programme objectives and outcomes, (iii) their potential level of support for or resistance to the proposed initiative, and (iv) the likely impact of the programme on stakeholders and community relations. Potential stakeholders include intended beneficiaries; government agencies at national, regional and local levels; donors; front-line

government workers and service providers; and community members. Programme planners can use the data to identify strategies to promote collaboration between stakeholders in order to reach consensus, build commitments towards gender equality goals, and manage potential risks.

v. Programme review: This aims to assess the level of gender integration within the programme formulation phase, while sharpening the programme's gender focus and relevance. The programme review examines how gender differences and priorities of rural women and men as identified by the GSPVA, can be (or have been) considered in key aspects of the programme design, implementation and M&E to ensure that women and men benefit equally from the intervention. An important component of the programme review includes an institutional assessment of the government capacities to mainstream gender within social protection programmes (e.g. Ministry of Social Protection, gender focal points, etc.).

b. Integrating Gender Considerations into the Design of Cash Transfers

Mainstreaming gender into the core design features of CT programmes, can be done by focusing on four core design features:

i. Programme objectives: One of the key tasks of gender-sensitive programme design is to define clear and explicit gender objectives. Well-defined programme objectives set the intended direction of the programme by helping to clarify the expected outcomes and specific activities needed to achieve those objectives. Likewise, clearly stated objectives allow staff to track and measure progress on gender equality and women's empowerment through M&E. This section discusses the extent to which the existing CT programmes promote gender equality and women's empowerment in their objectives, and offers advice for improving gender sensitivity in this crucial design aspect.

ii. Targeting of beneficiaries: Direct targeting can ensure that poor and particularly disadvantaged rural women and men have access to CT programmes. However, targeting by itself will not automatically yield positive gender outcomes (Bonilla et al., 2017; FAO expert consultations, 2016).

Where programmes aim to deliberately target rural women as beneficiaries, it is important for programme staff to carefully assess the implications and conditions under which women (and girls) should be preferentially targeted by cash transfers. Selection of female beneficiaries should be based on evidence and data generated through GSPVA, rather than basing selection on common and implicit assumptions that women are always poorer and more disadvantaged than men. Such an approach should also be validated through community consultations to ensure their support when targeting poor rural women.

Where programmes target women as transfer recipients within poor households, the programme staff can establish a solid understanding of the pathways and mechanisms through which targeting of transfers can meaningfully contribute to women's and men's empowerment. It is important to incorporate measures that empower women economically and socially (beyond increasing direct access to cash). For example, opening individual bank accounts to enable women to receive cash, providing financial and literacy classes; and promoting women's engagement in social networks (e.g. village savings and loans schemes, farmer cooperatives) can help to improve their financial inclusion, social status, and financial autonomy.

Where programmes target households as a 'unit', the programme staff can provide individual benefit entitlements, which can help redress gender inequality in household resource allocation and spending

patterns. Individual entitlements enable women and men to be recognized as rights holders, claiming entitlements as citizens and individuals rather than solely as caregivers or dependents.

iii. Transfer size and payment predictability: Setting benefits at the right levels and ensuring CTs are delivered regularly and predictably is critical for the achievement of programme objectives. There has been limited research on the correlation between cash transfer size and gender-related programme outcomes. However there is some indication that the size of transfers can affect rural women's wellbeing and gender dynamics in several ways (Samson, van Niekerk and Mac Quene, 2010). An adequate transfer size can help poor rural women to meet their practical daily needs for food and other essential expenditures. Generous transfers also help families to better manage risks and avoid adopting negative coping strategies to safeguard family consumption and welfare (practices that often disproportionately affect rural women and girls) (Barca et al., 2015). A larger transfer size may also positively impact women's influence in household decision-making, provided they already have some control over resources. At the same time, a relatively large transfer carries with it the risk of men (e.g. husbands and older sons) appropriating the cash, which in turn can exacerbate household conflict (Bastagli et al., 2016). This issue, however, warrants further research. Overall, decisions regarding transfer size depend on the intervention's goals, government and donor's fiscal capacity, and the potential policy trade-offs between increasing the level of the transfer and expanding the number of programme beneficiaries (Davis, 2014).

Predictable and regular transfers are critical for smoothing household consumption and improving planning for income-generating activities (Davis, et al., 2016). These are especially important concerns for highly vulnerable female-headed households, who often live in precarious circumstances. Delays in payments and irregular transfers have been found to discourage female beneficiaries from taking part in programmes (Pavanello et al., 2016).

iv. Programme conditionalities: Cash benefits are sometimes made conditional on fulfilling requirements related to school enrolment, health check-ups, or training classes in nutrition. In many instances, women – either as mothers/primary carers – are responsible for fulfilling the programme conditionalities. Conditionalities have played a role in reducing rural gender gaps in access to health, nutrition and schooling in situations where they are properly designed and enforced, and where beneficiaries have adequate access to quality services (Arnold, Conway and Greenslade, 2011). For example, conditionalities improved girls' participation and retention in school, as well as contributed to reduced rates of early marriage and adolescent pregnancy in Malawi's Zomba CT programme (Baird, McIntosh, and Ozler, 2010). For adult women, "light" requirements related to attendance in rights awareness sessions can increase women's knowledge, broaden their contacts and social networks, and enhance their confidence and self-esteem. Requirements such as obtaining identification cards can improve their access to social services and SP (Newton, 2016).

At the same time, conditionalities can disempower rural women violating their rights and harming their welfare. Evidence suggests that particularly heavy conditionalities can exacerbate the burden of women's unpaid care work and time poverty, which already disproportionately affect very poor rural women (as compared with urban women) due to their time-consuming responsibilities in agriculture, food and fuel production, and child care (Holmes and Jones, 2010; Molyneux and Thomson, 2012; Newton, 2016). The imposition of conditionalities may also overlook the inability of many rural women to comply due to the distance of social services, high transport costs, lack of authority to travel, and potential exposure to gender-based and sexual violence. Finally, conditionalities may perpetuate conventional expectations about women's primary role as caregivers while marginalizing men from care responsibilities (Molyneux, 2017).

c. Integrating Gender Considerations into the Design of PWP

PWPs are a popular means for offering temporary access to employment and income to a large swath of poor or shock-affected rural populations including vulnerable women who may otherwise face systematic disadvantage in rural labor markets (Tanzarn and Gutierrez, 2015). The participation of poor rural women in the PWPs may be hindered by various cultural and practical constraints. PWPs should be systematically designed in a gender-sensitive way to ensure that rural women can participate in decent jobs and derive benefits from their work. Gender considerations can be mainstreamed into different core design aspects of PWPs:

i. Targeting beneficiaries: Programmes may deliberately target women through job quotas: Many PWPs specifically include vulnerable women in their targeting criteria, especially female heads of households, as a response to their higher levels of unemployment and labor participation constraints (Bardasi et al., 2014; Tanzarn and Gutierrez, 2015; UN Women, 2015).

Using affirmative action to target women is important for maximizing their opportunities to engage in work. However, job quotas alone are not able to address the limitations rural women face in accessing employment. Sociocultural norms around women's right to work, mobility constraints, and care burden, among others, also affect their access to employment. For example, in Rwanda, some eligible female-headed households – in particular households with dependents requiring care – were excluding themselves from the Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme (VUP) public works, because they could not balance hard work with their care responsibilities (Pavanello et al., 2016). Where programmes use job quotas for women, programmes should also include complementary measures such as flexible and decent work conditions and child care services, to encourage registration and participation of rural women.

Some programmes adopt the “full family” targeting where the head of poor household is targeted, but all adult household members determine who actually works on sites and can rotate participation. This approach is potentially ‘female-friendly’, as it provides women with legitimate access to employment, even though they are not directly targeted through affirmative action (Holmes and Jones, 2010). Even where rural women are the primary laborers in public works sites, they may not be able to control their own wages if payments are deposited into husbands’ bank accounts.

ii. Type of transfer: PWPs can deliver wages to participants in both cash and in-kind forms, including food and farm inputs. Paying wages in cash is seen as more empowering and effective than in-kind transfers (Samson, van Niekerk and Mac Quene, 2010). Provided that women have access to benefits and equal influence over their allocation, cash can address various practical and strategic needs of women, including improving their access to food and basic services, boost in investments, and greater intrahousehold bargaining power. Providing farm inputs to female farmers in exchange for their services can promote women's productive capacity and livelihood diversification while directly reducing gender gaps in access to productive resources (UN Women, 2015).

In some contexts, however, payments of wages in food can be more gender-sensitive because women may have greater control over its distribution in the household as compared with cash (which is more likely to be under male control) (Gentilini, 2016; Subbarao et al., 2010). In times of heightened food costs, rural women may prefer food assistance rather than cash, as it directly eases their responsibility over household food security and nutrition (Gentilini, 2016).

Predictable payment of wages and job availability guarantees are also critically important for ultra-poor women. Irregular employment and late payment of benefits disproportionately affects poor female-headed households, as they rely more heavily on immediate income to ensure family survival. Setting below-market rates of pay for PWP is often used as a means to allow beneficiaries to self-select, with the assumption that below-market wages will discourage participation by those who may have access to other forms of employment. However, it may be worth revisiting these assumptions, particularly when PWPs are employed in areas with limited options for decent work, and when women's participation is encouraged as a means to transform gendered assumptions about the value of women's work.

iii. Working conditions: Women must have access to fair, equal and flexible work conditions that respond to and meet their specific needs and priorities. Providing a flexible work schedule, in terms of work days and hours, appropriate distance to work sites and child care facilities can enable rural women to better manage the competing work responsibilities. It is vital that programmes establish decent work conditions such as flexible working hours, work locations close to beneficiary homes, provision of drinking water and shade, separate toilet facilities, and zero tolerance for sexual harassment/violence at work. Additionally, the design of programmes should recognize and understand how traditional gender norms regarding work may restrict rural women's participation in public employment.

Programme staff should consider life-cycle vulnerabilities and labor constraints in families and adjust work conditions accordingly. For example, provide direct support (or light jobs) to pregnant and lactating women and to elderly women who cannot engage in productive work activities. Finally, the commitment to pay women and men equal wages for similar tasks is critical.

iv. Selection of assets and type of work: PWPs can prioritize the development of assets that reduce women's burdens and increase their agricultural productivity, and/or build their resilience in the face of risks related to the environment and climate-change, and food insecurity. For example, PWPs can develop community assets that provide access to social services for women and girls, such as schools and health care facilities, and reduce their work burdens through the creation of community water and fuel sources. This then frees up their time for greater participation in social, paid and/or educational tasks.

PWPs generally involve demanding physical and low-skilled labor, typically in infrastructure and rural development (Holmes and Jones, 2010). This tends to exclude some adult women (particularly around childbirth), elderly women, disabled women and households headed by single adults. To address this problem, some PWPs can broaden the scope of their work categories, to include care and social work, in order to attract more women as beneficiaries (Tebaldi, 2016). It is vital that care and social work not be undervalued due to its traditional provision by women and girls.

v. Enhancing impacts of social transfers through complementary support: Neither CTs nor PWPs on their own are able to tackle all multi-dimensional aspects of poverty and vulnerability in rural settings. Social protection instruments such as CTs and PWPs should be embedded within a coherent social protection system. Additionally, basic income support can be matched with complementary programmes and services to address rural women's various needs and bolster their prospects for empowerment and a sustainable exit from poverty (FAO, 2016a).

Complementary benefits can take many forms: (i) Transfers can be linked with skills training, job placements, and child care support to improve women's employability and diversify their income. Incentives can be provided to enroll women in social security schemes to reduce their life-cycle

vulnerabilities that may threaten their income security. Access to credit schemes and economic literacy trainings can assist women with running small enterprises and managing household budgets. (ii) Social transfers can be linked to services that promote women's agricultural production, accumulation of assets and income generation. These may include rural advisory services, improved farm inputs, credit and savings, and markets and health and crop insurance. Access to climate-smart techniques tailored to women's needs may also help mitigate risks associated with farming under extreme weather conditions.

(iii) Transfers can be combined with in-kind inputs, such as quality seeds, fertilizers and skills training to help beneficiaries establish home gardens to improve dietary diversity. Access to labor-saving technologies for productive activities (water conservation, mulching, etc.) and domestic tasks (water and fuel supply, food processing) can alleviate the risk of rural women's workloads and time poverty, while simultaneously improving food security and nutrition outcomes. (iv) Women can be trained on rights and entitlements, legal and political literacy and leadership skills. Linking core transfers with broader equity and social inclusion measures – such as anti-discrimination legislation regarding inheritance and property ownership, and protection from harmful traditional gender customs and practices including gender-based violence can protect women from social vulnerabilities and promote gender equality more broadly.

b. Implementing gender-sensitive social protection programmes

In order to deliver on gender design commitments effectively, social protection programmes require adequate capacity and efficient systems for implementation. Evidence suggests that failure to deliver on gender equality goals typically occurs during programme implementation (FAO expert consultation, 2016). This happens in part due to limited gender awareness and insufficient skills among staff to address gender issues, as well as inadequate funding and a lack of clear guidelines on how to implement gender-related design provisions. When staff are not effectively sensitized about the importance of gender or do not have enough resources on hand, addressing gender equality can be perceived as an 'add-on' to primary objectives, and therefore not given the importance it requires.

Other factors which may constrain programme delivery involve limited political commitments regarding gender equality as well as cultural resistance to embrace and promote gender equality and women's empowerment at the field level (Holmes and Jones, 2010; FAO expert consultation, 2016). Limited participation by rural women and men in programme delivery and governance can also contribute to this situation.

i. Gender-sensitive payment arrangements: In a majority of social protection programmes, cash is physically distributed to beneficiaries at a fixed time at certain pay points such as government offices, village committees and post offices (Cirillo and Tebaldi, 2016). This method may promote the inclusion of rural women by building links between women and officials at disbursement points and increasing their visibility in the community. However, having to travel long distances and to queue for long hours to collect the cash is a substantial barrier for rural women, especially elderly women, disabled women or those who are pregnant or nursing. Likewise, mobility constraints due to limited infrastructure and time poverty may prevent rural women from accessing disbursement points, particularly if they live in very remote, conflict-affected areas that are unsafe. Physical distribution of cash can be modified to become more gender-sensitive through providing collection services close to women's homes and allowing flexibility in payment intervals and locations to accommodate rural women's time schedules.

Electronic payments have several advantages for rural women. They have the potential to reduce travel and waiting times at pay points and transportation costs. Recipients can choose when to collect their cash payment, which improves security and allows them more discretion over how the money is used. This is particularly important for rural women who often lack access to and control over household incomes. Adapting e-payment administrative procedures to the financial and technical literacy levels of rural women, and providing women with training support to ensure their effective use of new technologies such as mobile phones, biometric devices and smartcards. In some cases, programmes can provide women with free mobile phones to ease technological and cost-related constraints. E-payments require an understanding of how gender impacts the use of ICTs, particularly within the household, as well as sufficient infrastructure such as reliable electricity and internet.

Allowing more flexibility in requirements for official documents such as birth and marriage certificates required to open bank accounts. Social protection schemes can link beneficiaries to complementary registration programmes and/or subsidize the costs of obtaining documents.

ii. Staff capacity to deliver on gender provisions: It is important that programme staff have capacity (e.g. technical skills and knowledge) on gender mainstreaming and that financial resources are set aside for delivery on these commitments. In reality, gender courses for social protection staff are often quite limited. Investments in capacity building for gender mainstreaming for all government levels are important to deliver gender-sensitive social protection programmes. Field staff should have clear, practical guidelines and tools for integrating gender into programmes, as well as monitoring and evaluating gender-related programme results. Hiring gender specialists to provide technical support and mentoring to programme staff is crucial.

iii. Gender-sensitive institutional structures and governance arrangements: Promoting active participation of rural women and men in programme management and governance structures is another important strategy to ensure effective implementation of gender-sensitive provisions. First, women can be represented systematically across all institutional bodies in the programme. A commitment to gender balance within programme staffing itself, from steering committees to frontline staff is a key implementation instrument for increasing women's participation in the programmes. Second, ensuring the active participation of rural women and men in the programme governance mechanism, such as grievance systems, ensures greater accountability for delivering stated SP and gender goals. For example, safe and transparent access to appeals processes can enable women and men to raise the concerns and challenges they face in accessing and benefiting from the programme.

iv. Addressing discriminatory socio-cultural norms and promoting progressive change:

The sociocultural context in which programmes operate, and the political economy issues at stake, may strongly affect the programme's implementation and ultimately its success (Holmes and Jones, 2010). The traditional norms, beliefs and attitudes related to gender equality may affect the commitment to, and behavior of actors responsible for designing and implementing SP activities. It is important to engage men and boys in sensitization and awareness-raising events for ensuring their buy-in and commitment for the promotion of gender equality. This also provides the opportunity to gauge men's views on how gender affects their experiences of poverty and vulnerability, their access to SP programmes and ultimately their well-being. Such approaches have been promoted within the Juntos programme in Peru as well as Bolsa Familia and Promundo in Brazil.

c. Establishing Gender-sensitive Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

Monitoring, evaluation and learning systems track progress, assess a range of gender impacts, and ensure opportunities for incorporating assessment results into the redesign of programmes and their implementation. Gender-sensitive indicators and the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data can be used to monitor rural women's and men's access to and participation in SP programmes. Particular efforts are needed to develop innovative methodologies and indicators that can assess gender-related changes related to women's empowerment, productive capacity, access to paid work, and intrahousehold roles and dynamics (including decision-making and agency, work burdens, etc.) beyond sex-disaggregated data; and assess if programmes (including participation in multiple interventions) negatively affect rural women and men's welfare or exacerbate gender inequalities and risks in any way.

Many social protection programmes aim to mainstream gender into their design, but few track gender-related effects through a systematic M&E process. Even the collection of basic sex-disaggregated data is generally weak in M&E of social protection interventions, except for tracking women beneficiaries (Bardasi et al., 2014). Yet social protection programmes are likely to affect individual men and women members of the household differently, and influence existing gender dynamics. Effective integration of gender into M&E frameworks is thus critical for assessing the differential impacts of programmes on rural women and men, and then readjusting programmes accordingly.

More specifically, M&E helps:

i. To learn from and modify existing programmes: Programmes can assess the extent to which they are meeting their gender-equality objectives, and identify any necessary adjustments in programme activities to improve performance and outcomes. M&E can also help to: (i) assess gender-related changes in status, roles and capacities of women and men affected by the programme over time; (ii) measure the economic and social impacts – both positive and negative – of programmes on rural women and men; and (iii) assess how specific programme design and implementation processes promote (or impede) gender equality and women's empowerment, and identify good practices that drive positive results.

ii. To inform the design of new programmes: Evaluation evidence can be used to inform initial programme design. Pilot projects can be established explicitly as a means of testing an intervention's design options before the final design is determined or the project is scaled up.

iii. To inform policy dialogue on gender mainstreaming: Gender-sensitive indicators and data are important policy tools that can be used to advocate for gender equality and gender-sensitive SP programming. Organizations such as UNICEF, FAO and ODI over the years have developed important methodologies and evidence concerning the gender-related impacts of social protection programmes. Their research has been instrumental in influencing policy and programming debates around the role of CTs and PWPs in empowering rural women in countries such as Rwanda, Zambia and Ethiopia. For example, the findings of FAO research in Rwanda into unintended effects of the VUP's public work component on rural women's time use and workloads resulted in a government commitment to redesign the original VUP to more effectively meet the needs of labor-constrained households (Pavanello, et al., 2016).

5. Recommendations

In many countries, social protection targets rural women on the basis of their greater vulnerability and poverty, with the aim to strengthen their food production and nutrition roles within the household (FAO, 2015). Regular and well-designed social protection schemes can reduce gender gaps in access to health, food and education, and enable women's accumulation of productive assets with positive outcomes on their income-generation capacity (Warring and de la O Campos, 2015). Social protection's potential to empower rural women is enhanced when single schemes are complemented with broader livelihood support, infrastructure and social services, and when gender-based assumptions and stereotypes about women's roles and responsibilities are addressed at the individual and community levels.

Rural women's participation in non-contributory social assistance schemes, such as CTs and PWPs are particularly important source of income security in rural contexts where women may be working in the informal sector and their access to contributory social security benefits may be acutely lacking. Social protection is also fundamental to ensuring women's social rights: transfers have been found to boost rural women's self-esteem and intra-household decision-making, and promote participation in social networks with positive outcomes for household welfare (de la O Campos, 2015). Rolling back social protection programmes in response to fiscal concerns threatens progress toward gender equality.

a. Principles

- Prioritize rights-based approaches, and approaches to social protection that ensure the dignity and wellbeing of beneficiaries.
- Social protection programming should contribute to the reduction of fragmentation and gaps in service, with progressive realization towards a sustainable, universal social protection system. Ultimately, targeting in social protection should happen within the context of universal access to social protection floors as a means to address particular vulnerabilities, poverty or marginalization.
- Support policy coherence between relevant ministries such as Ministries of Agriculture³, Transportation, Social Welfare and others by developing a set of shared values with regard to gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Gender-sensitive social protection, social services and infrastructure for rural populations should be understood as investments in addition to social rights, and scaled up in contexts of austerity and fiscal concerns.
- Social mobilization and civil society are vital for amplifying women's voices and ensuring the substantive participation of women in programmes that are designed to benefit them. Women's producer organizations and cooperatives are particularly important for rural women.
- Resource mobilization for social protection, services and infrastructure should be based on progressive policies that do not contradict the aims of social protection programming.
- Social protection should ultimately seek to redistribute in more equitable ways the burden of unpaid work borne by women between men, women and the state, while valuing the type of unpaid work- particularly care - that women tend to perform.
- Social protection systems, particularly shock-responsive social protection systems, that aim to reduce the impact of exogenous or covariate shocks (such as natural disasters or conflict), should

³ In many low-income countries, agriculture has a greater impact on reducing poverty than other sectors, as it allows rural people to benefit from their main assets, land and labour (FAO, 2016b). It is vital that Agricultural Ministries and Ministries of Social Welfare seek policy coherence.

recognize and account for the different ways in which such crises affect men, women, boys and girls in terms of preparedness, immediate impact and coping strategies.

b. Key Actions to Strengthen the Gender Focus of CTs and PWP

- The design and implementation of gender-sensitive SP programmes must be based on a gender poverty and vulnerability analysis to understand the different needs and priorities of women and men for social protection support.
- Combine quantitative and qualitative methods to obtain more accurate sex-disaggregated data of the situation. Employ data triangulation, which entails the use of different data collection methods and the comparison of data from different sources as well as the collection of data relevant to women's empowerment and gender equality, including in social protection programmes that do not have these as stated aims.
- Mixed methods M&E strategies should be used to understand the gendered outcomes and impacts of transfers and assessment evidence incorporated into the re-design of programmes and their implementation to improve programme efficacy.
- Deliver information and awareness campaigns to provide adequate and clear information to potential beneficiaries about programme admission criteria and the application process. This is critical for women who often face barriers to accessing information. Special beneficiary outreach efforts (i.e. door-to-door campaigns, radio and other media) may be required to reach those who are most in need of assistance but least able to access information through traditional channels (e.g. female farm workers, young married women and indigenous women).
- Ensure that the language in all publications about social protection programmes is gender-sensitive, non-discriminatory and sensitive to cultural norms of indigenous and minority groups.
- Simplify and streamline SP programme application procedures and translate application forms and project documents into the local language. Provide free technical support to assist rural women and men in completing application forms and registering in programmes, including support in obtaining identification documents where these are required by the programme.
- Staff must be trained to carry out targeting processes in a gender-sensitive way and in contexts where it is challenging for women to interact with male staff, female staff must be recruited in order to execute the registration and enrolment phases.
- Grievance mechanisms must be accessible to all, including difficult to reach groups such as very poor, elderly, disabled and illiterate women with limited mobility. Programme implementers must provide dedicated guidance to such women, and clearly explain the nature, purpose and process of complaint mechanisms.
- 'Social Protection Plus' programmes in which transfers are combined with livelihood and financial services, training and nutrition information may help women to improve their livelihoods sustainably, and may also support resilience when it addresses rural women's capacity to prepare for and mitigate the effects of natural disasters and climate change and build resilient livelihoods.
- Link social transfers to services that promote women's agricultural production, accumulation of assets and income generation. These may include rural advisory services, improved farm inputs, credit and savings, and markets and health and crop insurance. Access to climate-smart techniques tailored to women's needs may also help mitigate risks associated with farming under extreme weather conditions. Programmes can encourage women to set up self-groups for knowledge sharing, and for savings and credit.
- Combine transfers with in-kind inputs, such as quality seeds, organic fertilisers and skills training to help beneficiaries establish home gardens to improve dietary diversity. Access to labour-saving

technologies for productive activities (water conservation, mulching, etc.) and domestic tasks (water and fuel supply, food processing) can alleviate the risk of rural women's workloads and time poverty, while simultaneously improving food security and nutrition outcomes.

- Well-designed PWPs can provide women with the opportunity to earn income, challenge gender roles in the labour market and enhance leadership capacity. To facilitate women's participation, PWPs should employ job quotas, equal wages for women and men, flexible work conditions and access to child care. Through skills development, PWPs can facilitate women's transition into the rural labour market once the programme ends.
- PWPs can adopt a broader definition of what constitutes a public work assignment, and appropriate types of jobs can be provided in accordance with men's and women's skill sets and work experience. For example, jobs for rural women may need to be less physically demanding, although it is important not to reinforce gender stereotypes about women as a weaker sex.
- PWPs can provide on-the-job skills development and training to increase the future employability of rural women workers in "higher-value" agriculture and non-traditional, non-farm work in sectors where women already have some skill. PWPs can train women participants in management and supervisory roles within public works, which can build functional and professional skills while improving their confidence, leadership capacity and social status.
- Avoid conditionality in transfers. Transfers targeted to women that utilize conditionality (often to ensure nutrition or educational outcomes for children) should not impose undue time burden on rural women or reinforce negative gender stereotypes.
- Staff capacity should be continuously strengthened and institutional arrangements and budget provisions put in place to ensure that gender-sensitive design can be implemented effectively.

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Annex I. Table of selected recommendations for gender-sensitive cash transfers and public works programmes

Cash Transfers

Design Feature	Strategy for Ensuring Gender Sensitivity
<p>Programme objectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screen programme objectives to avoid violation of women's and men's rights. • Where programmes aim to reduce gender inequalities, they must clearly and explicitly define gender-sensitive objectives and expected outcomes. • Where programmes primarily aim to promote children's welfare, but also use transfers as a vehicle to promote women's empowerment, they should include explicitly defined goals for women's empowerment. • Define specific dimensions of women's empowerment to focus on, and the pathways and mechanisms required to achieve this through cash transfers. • Include awareness-raising events to sensitize beneficiaries and the community about gender-related programme goals and objectives. • Raise awareness among women and girls about their social, economic and political rights as citizens.
<p>Programme targeting: criteria, methods and procedures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the GSPVA to assess whether women (and girls) should be preferentially targeted by CT and under what conditions. • Pay careful attention to enrolment of particularly vulnerable and excluded groups of rural women/men. • Complement targeting with other measures, such as sensitization, access to additional services and support to maximize impacts. • Deliver local communication campaigns to ensure community support for targeting women as beneficiaries. Programme messaging can be employed to diffuse potential intrahousehold tensions arising from the allocation of benefits to only one member. • Where households are targeted as individual units, put strategies in place to ensure all household members have equal access to and control over benefits. • Monitor the effects of targeting women as transfer recipients, including assessment of mothers' time poverty and labour supply, direct and indirect costs imposed by the transfer, and potential backlash from men and non-beneficiaries. • Review targeting methods and procedural arrangements for their potential gender impacts, and adjust them accordingly. • Provide potential beneficiaries with clear information about programme admission criteria and application processes.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide access to grievance mechanisms tailored to women’s needs.
Transfer size and predictability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where feasible, adjust the transfer size to address specific gender vulnerabilities. • If possible, adjust the transfer size in order to enable both risk management and productive development functions to be realized. • Explore the possibility of complementing regular CT with a one-off lump sum payment, and/or asset grant with complementary support to enhance productive and livelihoods impacts. • Monitor the transfer size and its impacts on gender, particularly gender differences in spending patterns and gender relations.
Programme conditionalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider pros and cons of conditionalities in terms of welfare of rural women and girls. • Assess existing constraints faced by rural women in complying with programme conditionalities. • Explore whether the programme could achieve its intended objectives through positive messaging as opposed to strict conditionalities. • Where possible design conditionalities that explicitly to support positive changes in gender roles and address vulnerabilities faced by women and girls. • Promote co-responsibility for fulfilment of programme conditionalities between parents. • Ensure that women responsible for fulfilling conditionalities receive respectful and dignified treatment. • Provide culturally appropriate information on programme conditionalities and access to grievance mechanisms. • Monitor the effects of conditionalities on those responsible for complying with them. • Ensure easier access and better outreach of services to reduce the burden of conditionalities on rural women.

Public Works Programmes

Design Feature	Strategy for Ensuring Gender Sensitivity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use quotas or reserve spots for women to ensure their participation.

Programme Targeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include measures to encourage female heads of households to register and participate. • Closely monitor the implementation of quotas to ensure that barriers to women assuming jobs are acknowledged, well understood, and removed. • Organize awareness-raising events to ensure community buy-in for gender-sensitive employment quotas. • Targeting modalities should ensure that women in male-headed households (including extended and polygamous households) have rights and access to employment. “Full family” targeting could be considered, whereby all members of eligible households are listed as clients. • Encourage the opening of separate bank accounts for each worker to ensure that women have access to wages. • Where polygamous households are prevalent, they can be treated as separate households eligible for transfers, with provisions to allow second or third wives to claim their own access-to-work schemes as a separate family unit. • Ensure services and information about targeting are accessible
Type of Benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess differences in preference between men and women with regard to types of benefit types. • Encourage male and female beneficiaries to participate actively in consultations and provide input in order to select the best type of benefit. • Raise awareness among programme staff regarding the differences in preference for various transfers among men and women.
Working Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide regular employment and payment of wages, and ensure that workers are adequately informed about their rights and entitlements. • Provide mandatory, on-site child care and/or community-based care support. • Design gender-sensitive working conditions (e.g. flexible working hours, reduced work times, work locations close to beneficiary homes, provision of drinking water and shade, and separate toilet facilities) to attract more women to the programme. • Women-only projects or components of larger projects can help to overcome sociocultural barriers. • Commit to paying equal wages between men and women performing similar tasks and sensitize staff and beneficiaries of the importance of this design feature; and monitor implementation.
Types of assets and jobs/projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The selection of assets must be informed by gender-sensitive criteria in order to benefit both women and men.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize asset development that reduces women’s work burden and promotes their agricultural productivity and/or resilience in the face of environmental and climate-change risks. • Ensure participation of women in programme planning, and the selection of assets and job types to be implemented within PWPs. • Participating communities can be provided with a monetary incentive (through reduced contributions) when they prioritize infrastructure projects that address the priorities of women’s groups. • Explore the feasibility of adopting a broader definition of what constitutes a public work assignment, and provide appropriate jobs in accordance with men’s and women’s skill sets and work experience. • Compensate for household labor shortages, which are characteristic of female-headed households, by utilizing public works labor to support agricultural work on farms cultivated by female-headed households, and/or provide village crèches, support for the elderly, etc. • Consider providing direct support (or light jobs) to pregnant and lactating women and to elderly women who cannot engage in productive work activities. • Provide on-the-job skills development and training to increase the future employability of rural female workers. Establish local community spaces to enhance women’s participation in social networks and public life.
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Source: FAO. Forthcoming, 2018a. Technical Guidance Toolkit on Gender-Sensitive SP Programmes to Combat Rural Poverty and Hunger. Rome, FAO.