

COMMISSION *on the* STATUS OF WOMEN



CSW68 (2024): 11 to 22 March

Caring for Change: Social Protection's Role in Gender-Equitable Care for Nutrition and Zero Hunger

Side Event Proposal

SUMMARY

The proposed side event, hosted by the Government of Timor-Leste, in collaboration with the Government of Chile, the co-chair of the Global Task Force on Social Protection for Nutrition, Human Capital and Local Economic Development, aims to explore the contributions of social protection programmes to improving the quality and increasing the quantity of gender-equitable care practices. This is critical to ensuring nutrition and human capital outcomes are met in the context of the 'crisis of care' and the relentless global burden of malnutrition. With the support of the g7+ and the World Food Programme (WFP), the side event will delve deeper into the challenges of post- and conflict-affected countries and least developed and fragile countries, where gender inequalities are a driver and exacerbating factor of hunger and malnutrition, impeding the realization of SDG2.

The side event directly addresses the priority theme of CSW68, "accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective." Additionally, it aligns with the review theme of "social protection systems," offering valuable insights into optimizing social protection programmes and nationally-led systems to address gender-specific challenges in the context of food security and nutrition.

This side event provides a unique opportunity for collaboration and knowledge exchange, contributing to the overarching goals of CSW68 and advancing the global agenda for gender equality and women's empowerment, particularly in the context of developing, fragile, and least-developed countries.

BACKGROUND

The crisis of care is the result of an increased demand for care coupled with a simultaneous reduction in its supply (Chopra & Krishnan, 2022). Demographic changes, economic crises, and changing social norms are driving the increase in demand but the limited resources allocated to care work place strain on those responsible (Chopra & Zambelli, 2018). The role of care typically falls on women and girls, especially in the case of developing, fragile, and least-developed countries. With the g7+, this session will explore the specific challenges and circumstances faced by governments to tackle these inequalities and achieve SDG target 5.4 (Chopra & Krishnan, 2022).

The disproportionate burden of reproductive and unpaid domestic work on women and girls becomes a repetitive cycle with an intergenerational transfer of care responsibilities and further implications for health and nutrition outcomes. Oftentimes, these responsibilities fall to women marginalized by society, because of identity markers such as age, race, class, social status and ethnicity. Care-integral approaches have not been adequately incorporated into policymaking and development discourse, particularly around social protection policy and programming. In 2013, Chopra et al found that out of 153 policies and programmes only 3 mentioned or made any provision around care. The failure to support more gender equitable care practices, a determinant of malnutrition, hinders progress to attaining Zero Hunger goal (Chopra & Zambelli, 2018).

Food insecurity and associated forms of malnutrition are inherently linked with gender inequality as restrictive gender roles, especially as they relate to nutrition and care work, impact women's food security (WFP Gender Policy, 2022). Food insecurity is more prevalent among adult women than men in every region of the world, although the gap narrowed considerably at the global level from 2021 to 2022. In 2022, 27.8 percent of adult women experienced moderate to severe food insecurity, in contrast to 25.4 percent of men. Additionally, the percentage of women encountering severe food insecurity stood at 10.6 percent, slightly higher than the 9.5 percent reported for men. The gender gap diminished notably in Asia and in Latin America and the Caribbean, but widened in Africa and in Northern America and Europe (FAO & WFP, 2023). Despite the recognition of care as an 'intermediate determinant' of nutrition in the *UNICEF Conceptual Framework on Maternal and Child Nutrition* (UNICEF, 2021), the role of women and girls in providing care is a relatively unexplored component to achieving nutrition objectives. Similarly, the relationship between social protection programmes and care practices has not been extensively investigated (de Groot et al., 2017; Cookson et al., 2023). The significance of social and food aid measures in acknowledging and appreciating unpaid caregiving, as well as redistributing caregiving responsibilities within households and families, also remains overlooked. Encouraging men and boys to play a more involved role in caregiving and enhancing feeding practices are potential strategies to address malnutrition and attain Zero Hunger.

Efforts to achieve SDGs 2 for Zero Hunger and 5 for Gender Equality, must include a multi-dimensional approach, including social protection, to increase access to nutrition and improve livelihoods. To account for the crisis of care, social protection programmes must be care-integral and gender-differentiated. They must also offer specific measures and innovative solutions applicable at the local level to effectively contribute to these goals.

The focus of this side event will be on the adoption of a care-sensitive and gender-differentiated approach to address the disproportionate burden of care and its effects on the food security and nutrition of vulnerable populations, especially but not limited to women and children. This event provides a platform for stakeholders to discuss strategies and share experiences in designing social protection programmes that consider the care needs of individuals and acknowledge gender differences to achieve better outcomes in food security and nutrition.

OBJECTIVES

1. Increase awareness among CSW68 participants about the critical linkages between the crisis of care, gender-sensitive social protection programmes, and their impact on attaining Zero hunger and malnutrition.
2. Discuss the evidence on and the meaning of gender-sensitive and gender-differentiated social protection programmes and systems, and how they contribute to nutrition and food security outcomes.
3. Enhance understanding of the challenges faced by fragile countries in addressing these issues and the potential benefits of adopting care-sensitive and gender-differentiated approaches within social protection systems.
4. Facilitate discussions that encourage the sharing of best practices, lessons learned, and innovative approaches in designing and implementing care-sensitive and gender-differentiated social protection programmes.

ORGANIZERS

Host: The event will be hosted by the Timor-Leste government.

Co-organizers: Chilean government, g7+ Intergovernmental Body, Institute of Development Studies (IDS), and the World Food Programme (WFP).

Member States/Partners: Governments of Pakistan and Uganda, FHI360, the Gates Foundation and the Swedish International Development Cooperation (Sida).

FORMAT

The format of the side event will be hybrid, ensuring the physical participation of attendees. The event will be engaging and interactive, potentially including panel discussions, presentations, and possibly Q&A sessions to facilitate meaningful exchanges of ideas.

Agenda

Time	Section	Speaker
5 minutes	Welcome address by the Government of Timor-Leste. Presentation of the rationale for and the objectives of the side event.	H.E. Ambassador Dionísio da Costa Babo Soares
5 minutes	Video statement by the Government of Timor-Leste.	H.E. President and Nobel Peace Laureate Jose Ramos-Horta
10 minutes	The increased relevance of social protection for improving care as means to achieve zero hunger and boost human capital development	H.E. Ambassador Paula Narvaez Ojeda
10 minutes	Evidence on social protection contributions to improved and gender-equitable care practices for nutrition.	Prof. Deepta Chopra, Institute of Development Studies (IDS)
20 minutes	Country experiences and perspectives with short video screenings (2 minutes each). Uganda: Nutri-Cash Programme challenging inequitable gender norms and care practices in social protection programmes for Zero Hunger. Pakistan: Benazir Nashonuma Conditional Cash Transfer Programme to reduce stunting and address maternal and early child health and nutrition.	Uganda: Mr. James Ebitu, Director of Social Protection, Ministry of Gender Labor and Social Development Pakistan: Dr. Amer Ali Ahmad. Secretary of the Benazir Income Support Programme.
10 minutes	Key lessons, way forward, and policy options for tackling gender inequalities as a cause and exacerbating factor of malnutrition in fragile contexts.	H.E. Ms. Rabab Fatima Under Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States. Mr. Habib Ur Mayar, g7+ Deputy Secretary,
25 minutes	Questions and Answers.	Moderated by H.E.

		Ambassador Paula Narvaez Ojeda
5 minutes	Closing Remarks	H.E. Ambassador Dionísio da Costa Babo Soares

Speakers

- **Timor-Leste:** H.E. President and Nobel Peace Laureate, Jose Ramos-Horta (Video Address) and H.E. Ambassador Dionísio da Costa Babo Soares
- **Chile:** H.E. Ambassador Paula Narvaez Ojeda
- **Uganda:** Mr. James Ebitu, Director of Social Protection, Ministry of Gender Labor and Social Development
- **Pakistan:** Dr. Amer Ali Ahmad. Secretary of the Benazir Income Support Programme.
- **Academic:** Prof. Deepa Chopra, Institute of Development Studies
- **Intergovernmental body:** g7+ Deputy Secretary, Habib Ur Mayar