




GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON WOMEN IN AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS (GCWAS-2026)

DRIVING PROGRESS,
ATTAINING NEW HEIGHTS



Delhi Declaration

 12-14 March 2026

 Bharat Ratna C. Subramaniam Hall, ICAR Convention Centre,
National Agricultural Science Complex (NASC),
Pusa Campus, New Delhi-110012, India

www.gcwas.taas.in



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Preamble

We, the leaders, innovators, farmers, scientists, entrepreneurs, policymakers, development partners from around the world, and students, gathered in New Delhi from 12–14 March 2026 for the Global Conference on Women in Agri-Food Systems (GCWAS 2026), convened by the Trust for Advancement of Agricultural Sciences (TAAS) and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), in partnership with Consultative Group on Agricultural Research (CGIAR), Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers Rights Authority (PPV&FRA), and other national and international organizations, representing approximately 850 participants from over 18 countries, have unanimously affirmed a shared conviction that the future of agri-food systems will depend substantially on the leadership, innovation, and empowerment of women.

As the United Nations has declared 2026 as the 'International Year of Women Farmers' recognizing their vital role in agriculture, we stand at a defining moment. Women are the backbone of global agriculture. They sow, cultivate, harvest, conserve biodiversity, nurture livestock, manage

households, sustain communities, trade and safeguard our food and nutrition security. Yet too often, their contributions remain invisible, undervalued, and unrecognized.

Empowering women in agri-food systems is not merely a matter of equity — it is a strategic imperative for sustainable development, economic prosperity, and global stability. The year 2026 must mark the turning point when the global community transitions decisively from rhetoric to results. Action, accountability, and collaboration must replace promises and debates

We, affirm that this must change is accomplished—decisively and permanently.

The reimagining of agri-food systems

This cannot be achieved without transforming gender inequalities within them. Women must not only participate — they must lead. They must have equal access to land, finance, technology, markets, digital tools, education, and decision-making platforms. They must shape the policies, drive innovation, and guide the future investments determining sustainable and inclusive growth.





Discussions at GCWAS 2026 reaffirmed that closing the gender gap is not just a moral imperative— it is an economic and social necessity, and a climate imperative. Evidence shows that when women have equal access to resources and opportunities, productivity rises by 20-30 per cent, incomes grow, household nutrition improves, and communities become more resilient, inclusive and progressive. Empowering women is, therefore, essential for sustainable development and a thriving future for all.

We recognize the structural barriers that persist: unequal land rights, limited access to credit, restricted mobility, inadequate extension services, and under-representation in leadership roles. These are not isolated challenges — they are systemic inequities that demand urgent and coordinated reforms.

We recall, the 'First Global Conference on Women in Agriculture' held in New Delhi in 2012 resolved for enduring global partnership. Fourteen years after, we reaffirm to accelerate that vision with renewed urgency and measurable actions and outcomes.

Building on this shared commitment, we now move collectively toward a concrete framework for action.

From Promise to Power: A Global Call to Action

Today, in New Delhi, we commit to move beyond dialogue to delivery. We resolve to establish a bold and inclusive global platform called: *Global Alliance on Women in Agri-Food Systems (GAWAS)*

GAWAS will serve as a dynamic, action-driven global coalition bringing together governments, international organizations, research institutions, private sector leaders, civil society, farmer organizations, and youth networks. It seeks to institutionalize gender equity and ensure positioning women as central architects of agri-food transformation.

A Turning Point for Global Agri-Food Systems

- ❖ We believe that empowering women in agriculture is not an act of charity — it is a strategic investment in our shared future.
- ❖ When women thrive, farms flourish.
- ❖ When farms flourish, food systems strengthen.
- ❖ When food systems strengthen, nations prosper.

Through GAWAS, we commit to:

- * Champion gender-responsive policies and institutional reforms that embed equality across agri-food value chains.
- * Strengthen enabling environments that secure women's rights to land, finance, technology, markets, and digital innovation.
- * Promote leadership development and entrepreneurship among women farmers, scientists, and agri-business leaders.
- * Ensure gender-responsive budgeting and systematic collection of gender-disaggregated data.
- * Establish robust accountability mechanisms, including periodic gender audits and transparent progress reporting.
- * Foster global exchange of scalable solutions, disruptive technologies, and successful models of women-led transformation.

Way Forward


We commit to advancing this agenda through sustained collaboration, measurable targets, and shared accountability through Global Alliance on Women in Agri-Food Systems (GAWAS). GAWAS shall convene every four years in different regions of the world to assess and review the progress, refine strategies, and adopt action plans for the subsequent cycle. Together, we will ensure that women's leadership becomes a defining force in shaping resilient, inclusive, and sustainable agri-food systems worldwide.

Organizers and Co-Organizers







Organizers

 <p>भारत सरकार ICAR</p> <p>Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)</p>	 <p>Progress Through Science</p> <p>Trust for Advancement of Agricultural Sciences (TAAS)</p>	 <p>SCIENCE FOR A FOOD-SECURE FUTURE</p> <p>Consultative Group of International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)</p>	 <p>PPVFRA</p> <p>Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority (PPV&FRA)</p>
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Co-Organizers

 <p>International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT)</p>	 <p>Borlaug Institute for South Asia (BISA)</p>	 <p>Science for resilient livelihoods in dry areas</p> <p>International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA)</p>	 <p>Alliance of Bioversity International and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT)</p>	 <p>https://tci.cornell.edu/about/</p> <p>Tata Cornell Institute (TCI)</p>	 <p>International Water Management Institute</p>	
 <p>INTERNATIONAL FOOD POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTE (IFPRI)</p> <p>International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)</p>	 <p>Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR)</p>	 <p>Center for International Forestry Research and World Agroforestry (CIFOR-ICRAF)</p>	 <p>SM Sehgal Foundation (SMSF)</p>	 <p>CGIAR GENDER Equality and Inclusion (CGIAR GENDER)</p>	 <p>भारत कृषक समाज Bharat Krishak Samaj (BKS)</p>	 <p>Indian Society of Plant Genetic Resources (ISPGR)</p>

Knowledge Partners

 <p>Science for Sustainable Development</p> <p>M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF)</p>	 <p>MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY</p> <p>Michigan State University</p>	 <p>International Rice Research Institute (IRRI)</p>	 <p>NATIONAL ACADEMY OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES (NAAS)</p>	 <p>INTERNATIONAL CROPS RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR THE SEMI-ARID TROPICS</p> <p>International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT)</p>	 <p>CGIAR</p> <p>Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)</p>
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