



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS



EMPOWERING RURAL WOMEN, POWERING AGRICULTURE

FAO's work on Gender

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Cover photo: NEPAL. Chandra Kala Thapa and her husband, Bir Bahadur Thapa, in front of their house in Chatiune Village in Sindhuli District, Nepal. ©N. Shrestha



MONGOLIA

Farmers who benefitted from FAO early action intervention showing off a newborn lamb.
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KEY MESSAGES

1. Gender equality is essential for attaining food security, nutrition and achieving all the Sustainable Development Goals.
2. The agriculture sector is underperforming in many developing countries, and one reason is that women do not have equal access to the resources and opportunities they need to be more productive.
3. Nearly 821 million people (2017) are undernourished; if we are to end hunger by 2030, we must address the inequalities between women and men in agriculture.
4. The gender gap imposes high costs on the agriculture sector, the broader economy and society, as well as on women themselves.
5. Women are critical agents of change in the fight against rural poverty, hunger and malnutrition; they comprise near to or even more than 50 percent of the agricultural workforce in developing countries.
6. If women had the same access as men to productive resources, they could increase yields on their farms significantly, which could in turn reduce the number of hungry people in the world.
7. FAO's work in gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls contributes to each of the 17 SDGs and is in line with the pledge of the 2030 Agenda to "leave no one behind."

There is an urgent need to address the widespread barriers that women face in rural labour markets, so that they are no longer trapped in informal, low-status, low-skilled and poorly paid jobs, without legal or social protection. By providing equal provision of rural services and infrastructure it is possible to facilitate women's access to education, productive resources, and build on their knowledge, skills and abilities.

More efforts are needed to increase women's representation in local institutions and governance mechanisms and include them in decision-making within their households and communities. Increased attention is also required to overcome their work burden, recognizing their important contributions and ensuring equal pay and working conditions and benefits. This requires overcoming the marginalization of poor rural women that stems from gender-biased socio-cultural norms and practices, and better addressing gender issues in policies, programmes and investments in agriculture and food systems.

INTRODUCTION

"Leaving no one behind" requires closing the gender gap in food and agriculture.

Women form about half of the agricultural workforce and are agents of change and resilience builders. Yet the gender gap in food and agriculture remains extensive. As consumers, women are more likely to be food insecure than men in every region of the world; and as producers, rural women face even greater constraints than their male counterparts in accessing essential productive resources and services, technology, market information and financial assets.

The principle of “leaving no one behind” guides the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and FAO’s Policy on Gender Equality. The Policy prioritizes the equal participation and decision-making of women and men in rural institutions and in shaping laws, policies and programmes; the equal access to and control over productive resources, services, income, markets and decent employment; and the reduction of women’s work burden. ■

KYRGYZSTAN

Farmers harvesting corn.

©FAO/Sergey Kozmin



THE GLOBAL RESPONSE AND FAO'S APPROACHES



FAO uses multifaceted approaches to achieve its objective of gender equality across food systems at all levels.

FAO adopts integrated and gender-transformative approaches at global, regional, national, community, and household levels. Major contributions towards its gender equality goal require:

➤ Generating evidence for policy planning, through the analysis of sex- and age-disaggregated data. It is crucial that policies, programmes, legislation and investment plans for food security and nutrition fully capture women's and youth's roles and contributions and respond to their specific needs and challenges;

➤ Enhancing the national capacities to design and implement food and agriculture policies and programmes that fully take into account the capacities, needs and aspirations of rural women;

➤ Promoting responsible governance and management of productive and natural resources that reflect the perspectives and priorities of both men and women, and are grounded in equitable and efficient local institutions; while increasing women's participation in local institutions as possible entry points for service delivery;

➤ Ensuring equal access of female and male farmers to productive resources and services, climate-smart and labour-saving technologies and practices, and investment in rural infrastructure;

➤ Developing gender-sensitive value chains to enhance the full productive potential of women and youth in agri-food systems, while increasing their access to higher-value, more remunerative markets and decent employment opportunities; and

➤ Supporting the formulation of gender-responsive policies to prepare for and respond to shocks and crises such as risk-informed and shock-responsive social protection; ensuring diverse livelihoods and asset accumulation; and protection for the most vulnerable men and women. ■

EMPOWERING RURAL WOMEN FOR ZERO HUNGER

FAO supports governments to develop the policy frameworks and enhance the capacities needed to sustainably promote gender equality and women's empowerment as an integral part of their efforts to eradicate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition.

At global level, the Organization advocates integrating these issues in global standard-setting documents and high-level policy dialogues on food security and nutrition.

➡ Through the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), FAO collaborates with governments, development agencies, academia, civil society and the private sector to include gender equality considerations in agreed principles and international standards for food security and nutrition.

➡ FAO sharpens the focus of food security and nutrition (FSN) policies through high-level events to ensure they consider gender and women's empowerment issues.

➡ FAO develops and supports the adoption of gender-sensitive indicators and data collection systems related to FSN.

➡ FAO played a key role

in developing General Recommendation 34 on the Rights of Rural Women of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). The recommendation clarifies state obligations to recognize, protect and promote the rights of rural women in the field of food and agriculture.

At regional level, FAO works with its partners to promote regional policy dialogues and support regional organizations with the implementation of regional gender strategies, such as:

➡ FAO assisted the Special Women's Group of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) with the preparation of the Brasilia Declaration of the Conference on Rural Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, which recognizes rural women's role in FSN, and calls for governments to develop and implement legislation and policies that promote equality between men and women in access to natural resources, financial and technical services, markets and decent work. FAO supported the development

and the implementation of the Gender Strategy of the CELAC Plan for Food Security, Nutrition and Hunger Eradication 2025.

➡ FAO contributed to the development of the African Union gender strategy 2017–2027 which emphasizes a transformative approach to empower women economically and build their resilience, fostering an inclusive policy environment and reinforcing women's voice, leadership, and visibility.

➡ FAO, the Commission of the

DIETARY DIVERSITY GUIDE FOR WOMEN

FAO and USAID developed a guide titled "Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women: A Guide to Measurement". The indicator, which helps measure micronutrient adequacy in the diet of women of reproductive age is being used in 26 countries to promote diet quality of women and track the change in their dietary diversity across time.



MEXICO

Emilia Felipe Jose and her husband, Nicolas Gomez Domingo, working in their greenhouse as part of an FAO project supporting Guatemalan refugees in Mexico.

©Alex Webb/Magnum Photos for FAO

PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY FOR IMPROVED FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION IN GUATEMALA

FAO, with other UN agencies supported the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food of Guatemala to develop its first institutional policy on gender equality. The policy, ratified in 2015, guarantees that voices of women and men in rural development processes are heard and that they have equal access to agricultural technical assistance and other productive resources. FAO supported a multi-stakeholder consultation process with the Government and civil society to develop the policy and support its implementation. A gender equality approach has been incorporated into the national Programme to Strengthen Family Farming (PAFFEC) which will enable collaboration and coordination with relevant decision-making units of the Ministry for further integration of gender equality in their work. To promote greater accountability for achieving gender equality, FAO supported the setting up of a gender-sensitive monitoring framework for PAFFEC and training of extension agents on gender-focused planning and monitoring. The policy and its implementation constitutes a milestone in the national implementation of CEDAW.

Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) in partnership elaborated gender and agriculture action plans to inform the second generation of Regional and National Agricultural Investment Plans to better respond to women's needs and priorities.

At country level

- ➔ FAO facilitates cross-sectoral collaboration with national partners to integrate gender equality considerations in FSN policy dialogues by advocating for rural women's rights to natural resources, productive services and economic opportunities.
- ➔ FAO combines its advocacy work with technical support to ensure the formulation of gender-equitable food security and

nutrition policies, backed by strong political commitment and sound regulatory frameworks. It also helps strengthen the national capacities of agriculture and rural development ministries.

- ➔ FAO works with 15 countries to fulfil their political commitments to improve the status of rural women by facilitating reporting on CEDAW and the implementation of recommendations to integrate gender equality and women's empowerment issues in national FSN policies, legislation and investment strategies.
- ➔ Through the FAO-EU Policy Facility on Food and Nutrition Security Impact, Resilience, Sustainability and Transformation (FIRST), FAO is promoting the integration of gender equality issues in FSN policies and strategies in 25 countries. ■

ENSURING EQUAL ACCESS TO NATURAL RESOURCES AND SERVICES

FAO ADVOCATES EQUITABLE WATER GOVERNANCE AND GREATER CONTROL OVER WATER RESOURCES FOR FEMALE FARMERS

PROMOTING INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE OF LAND AND WATER RESOURCES

FAO has formulated a set of gender-sensitive indicators related to water for agricultural uses under the UN World Water Assessment Programme. These serve to analyse the access of men and women to irrigation, paid and unpaid labour in agriculture and irrigation, as well as intra-household decision-making.

Gender-sensitive indicators have been systematically integrated into FAO's Global water database (AQUASTAT) in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, and FAO is advocating for equitable water governance in existing programmes and policy frameworks. Multidisciplinary assessments of groundwater governance have been carried out in Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia to analyse and address female farmers' constraints in gaining access to and control over water resources.

FAO's *Gender and Land Rights Database* analyses the extent to which national policy and

Equal access to natural and productive resources creates greater opportunities for women.

legal frameworks support gender-equitable land tenure. It includes over 90 country profiles, more than 25 country assessments based on the Legal Assessment Tool (LAT) for gender-equitable land tenure, and gender-sensitive land-related statistics for about 100 countries.

FACILITATING WOMEN'S ACCESS TO LABOUR-SAVING TECHNOLOGIES TO OVERCOME PRODUCTION CONSTRAINTS

FAO supports labour-saving technologies and practices to reduce women's work in all agriculture sub-sectors, including improved crop management practices, fish drying and smoking ovens, woodlots to reduce fuelwood fetching time, fuel-efficient stoves, milk collection points, and roof water harvesting. See: TECA platform (www.fao.org/teca)

INDIA: WOMEN AS AGENTS OF CHANGE TOWARD SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE, HEALTH AND NUTRITION

To improve agricultural productivity and water-use efficiency, FAO collaborates with the Uttar Pradesh Department of Agriculture to strengthen the institutional and policy framework for integrated water resources management. A Farmer Water School (FWS) organized training to enhance the capacity of farmers and improve farming practices related to water management, soil nutrients and pests, and make informed decisions at crucial stages of the crop production cycle. To change existing gender dynamics, women are involved in decision-making as equal partners in agricultural and post-production services, thereby increasing overall agricultural productivity and farmers' incomes.

Exclusive FWS were also established for women to enable them to talk openly and discuss issues pertaining to sustainable agriculture and natural resource management. A total of 6 720 women were trained to take on leadership roles in future FWS exclusive for women.



PROMOTING GENDER-RESPONSIVE CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE APPROACHES

Women are more exposed to climate risks than men, as they rely more on natural resources for their livelihood, have fewer endowments and entitlements required to absorb shocks, and may not equally benefit from climate-smart agriculture (CSA) technologies and practices. Empowering women and assuring their equal access to services and productive resources, including

climate-smart and labour-saving technologies, is at the core of FAO's approach to enhance the sustainability of agriculture and food systems. Gender-responsive climate finance mechanisms, such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF), are crucial to achieve sustainable agriculture and rural development and have corporate gender equality policies and action plans calling for "projects that produce economic, social and gender development" ►



co-benefits”. As an implementing agency, FAO is committed to designing programmes with distinct social and gender development co-benefits.

FAO’s comparative advantage:

- ➔ Integrating gender equality into climate-related planning processes, including National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and in the implementation of their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement.
- ➔ Enhancing the knowledge and evidence base through various work streams on Gender in Climate Change Research and Gender in Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA).
- ➔ Promoting socially and environmentally sound

technologies and practices and gender-sensitive capacity development approaches in a vast portfolio of projects.

STRENGTHENING FARMERS’ CAPACITIES FOR EFFICIENT AND SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION

Farmer Field Schools (FFS) aim to reinforce the technical and functional capacity of farmers, while simultaneously contributing to gender equality and rural women’s socio-economic empowerment. By addressing the needs and vulnerabilities of male and female farmers, and by building trust within the community, the FFS support positive changes in attitudes, behaviours and practices, thereby transforming gender relations. ■

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Farmers weeding early in the morning in a groundnut field near Bossangoa.
©FAO/A. Masciarelli

FARMER FIELD SCHOOLS ADDRESS THE NEEDS AND VULNERABILITIES OF MALE AND FEMALE FARMERS AND HELP TRANSFORM GENDER RELATIONS

EMPOWERING RURAL WOMEN AND MEN FOR POVERTY REDUCTION

FAO uses an integrated approach to rural women's economic empowerment that simultaneously addresses the multiple factors that underpin rural women's disadvantaged position.

Recognizing that rural poverty is multidimensional, FAO uses an integrated approach to rural women's economic empowerment that simultaneously addresses the multiple factors that underpin rural women's disadvantaged position as agricultural producers, entrepreneurs, value chain actors, and agents of change. The approach ensures that measures to advance rural women's access to productive resources, services and market opportunities are complemented with interventions to advance their agency, self-confidence and voice in decision-making processes, as well as corresponding actions to create an enabling environment at the institutional and policy levels.

STRENGTHENING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP IN RURAL ORGANIZATIONS

Dimitra Clubs encourage informal self-help groups of rural men and

women to improve their livelihood systems and be the driving force of their own development. These clubs efficiently promote the participation and influence of the most vulnerable women and youth in community life and local decision-making. They also have an outstanding impact in sustaining peace and tackling the root causes of gender-based discrimination and violence. ►

THE EXPANSION OF DIMITRA CLUBS

There are 3 500 Dimitra Clubs in rural communities in Burundi, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, Niger, Ghana, and Senegal, accounting for 105 000 members (two-thirds are women). It is estimated that 2.5 million rural people are positively impacted by the clubs. Today, 30 FAO-executed programmes/projects in sub-Saharan Africa use the approach. "Together with the Dimitra Clubs come ownership and self-help. The communities have understood they need to take their future into their hands. They need to take over their own development." (François Bassay – District Inspector of Agriculture in DRC)

EMPOWERING RURAL WOMEN AND MEN FOR POVERTY REDUCTION

JOINT UN INITIATIVE TO IMPROVE RURAL WOMEN'S LIVELIHOODS

FAO, IFAD, WFP and UN Women are implementing the UN Joint Programme Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women (JP RWEE) which aims to achieve lasting improvements in rural women's livelihoods in seven countries: Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal, Niger and Rwanda. Implemented since 2014, the JP RWEE uses an integrated approach, in which the same group of female farmers is targeted with a comprehensive package of capacity development and technical support interventions, complemented by measures to promote gender-responsive rural institutions and policies. By the end of 2017, the JP RWEE reached over 50 000 beneficiaries (40 227 women and 10 953 men) and approximately 261 000 members of their households. Women participating in the JP RWEE have increased their agricultural productivity and the nutrition of their families. They have accessed credit and started their own businesses, thereby improving their incomes. The JP RWEE is also supporting governments in developing and implementing agricultural gender strategies.

FOSTERING GENDER-SENSITIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION

FAO's Toolkit *Promoting Gender-Sensitive Social Protection Programmes to Combat Rural Poverty and Hunger* is designed to enhance technical capacity of social protection practitioners to integrate gender issues in the design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of social protection programmes in rural areas.

PROMOTING GENDER-SENSITIVE RURAL ADVISORY SERVICES

FAO's *Gender and Rural Advisory Services Assessment Tool* (GRAST) supports providers of rural advisory services in developing gender-sensitive programmes. By undertaking a gender assessment at policy, organizational and individual levels, the GRAST provides entry points for improving the gender-responsiveness of the design and delivery of advisory services in a truly transformative manner. FAO applied the GRAST in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, India and Peru. The good practices found in these countries are now being incorporated into capacity development materials, so that other service providers can adapt them to local contexts.

BOOSTING RURAL WOMEN'S ACCESS TO DECENT EMPLOYMENT

FAO has developed tools to support the formulation of gender-sensitive rural employment interventions such as the *e-learning Module on Women and Decent Work* to improve stakeholders' understanding of gender disparities in rural labour markets and strengthen their skills to enhance rural women's access to decent jobs, as a pathway out of poverty.

PROMOTING GENDER-SENSITIVE AGRICULTURAL INVESTMENT

Sufficient investment is often the missing link between political commitments for empowering women in agri-food systems and their effective implementation. FAO has conducted case studies to expand evidence on gender implications of investments in agriculture in the Philippines, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Ghana, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Malawi. The findings have been included in FAO's 2018 report *Gender Opportunities and Constraints in Land-related Agricultural Investments*, to stimulate collaboration and exchange of good practices among investors, rural cooperatives and other stakeholders. ■



FACILITATING HIGH-LEVEL POLICY DIALOGUES FOR RURAL WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

- The *Step It Up Together With Rural Women to End Hunger and Poverty* event (FAO headquarters, December 2016) provided a multi-stakeholder platform to examine the structural causes and consequences of gender inequality in rural areas, as well as to identify collaborative actions to unleash the economic potential of rural women. More than 400 participants attended the event, including representatives of FAO member countries, UN partners, international experts, and the media. See: www.fao.org/about/meetings/rural-women-end-hunger

- Jointly organized with the African Union Commission (AUC), an

Africa-wide consultative meeting on *Gender and Agenda 2063* (Accra, October 2017) gathered 70 leaders of rural women's organizations and networks. Outcomes of the consultation informed preparations of the African Union Strategy for Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment 2017–2027, which the AU adopted in 2018. See:

<http://www.fao.org/africa/news/detail-news/en/c/1051443/>

- A regional conference *Promoting Socially Inclusive Rural Development in Europe and Central Asia* (2017) helped share experiences, build networks and strengthen political commitment for reducing gender gaps in agriculture. The conference brought together high-level officials from more than 20 countries and resulted in Joint Call for Action, a unique framework for addressing rural gender issues in Europe and Central Asia. See: www.fao.org/europe/events/detail-events/en/c/461793/

- During the event *Leaving No one behind: Empowering Rural*

Women for Zero Hunger and Shared Prosperity at the margin of the UN General Assembly (New York, 2018), FAO and the AUC launched a publication to showcase ways in which multi-stakeholder collaboration can be mobilized and political attention galvanized for empowering women towards Zero Hunger and achievement of the Malabo commitments for improved rural livelihoods and shared prosperity. This publication built on 42 National Gender Profiles of agriculture and rural livelihood that FAO prepared in collaboration with regional economic communities to inform policies, programmes and investment plans. FAO and AUC will subsequently launch a joint publication "Regional Outlook on Gender and Agri-food Systems" in early 2019. It provides policy support to the AUC to strengthen gender into the biannual reporting process on the Malabo Declaration.

PROMOTING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN FOOD SYSTEMS

AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH: THE LESSOS GENDER-SENSITIVE BUSINESS SERVICE CENTRE

In Kenya, concrete results were achieved in promoting women's entrepreneurship in the dairy value chain by providing innovative and gender-responsive business development services. More than 600 farmers (half of whom women) were trained on business-oriented farming and value addition, and 40 women-led start-ups were supported by a newly established Business Service Centre, operating through a local dairy cooperative. Men have also become more aware of gender inequality and its implications on business performance and household well-being. Higher profits have translated into increased children's enrolment at school, greater household dietary diversity, more leisure time, and higher investments in business diversification.

From farm to market, FAO strives to improve the position of women in agricultural sectors and develop gender-sensitive value chains.

FAO promotes the development of inclusive and sustainable food systems as pathways out of poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition. FAO supports 24 countries to increase women's opportunities in 22 value chains, including sectors such as livestock, horticulture, fisheries, roots and tubers, crops and handcrafts. An integrated approach addresses the multiple factors underlying women's disadvantaged position, while strengthening the linkages between different value chain actors and applying multiple and mutually reinforcing strategies.

FAO has gained significant experience on gender-sensitive value chains and has developed a solid package of knowledge and capacity development material to support regional and national initiatives by:

➔ strengthening the technical and entrepreneurial skills of women

to improve their engagement in value chains;

➔ enhancing the capacity of public institutions and service providers, operating in selected value chains, to provide gender-sensitive services;

➔ developing analytical tools and capacity development material

KENYA

Farmer and beneficiary of FAO's Conservation Agriculture Programme Lucy Kathegu Kigunda and her husband feed their goats near Meru, Meru County.
©FAO/Luis Tato



to support policymaking and programme implementation.

➔ engaging the private sector and contributing to an enabling environment in support of rural women's entrepreneurship and creation of farm and non-farm decent employment opportunities.

ADDRESSING GENDER INEQUALITY TO REDUCE FOOD LOSS

FAO has been raising attention on the issue of food loss by participating in the global **Save Food** initiative in close partnership with the public and private sectors. To date, traditional food loss reduction strategies focus

more on technical solutions while disregarding the relevant social dimensions that create disparities in access to productive resources, services and technologies. Reducing existing gender inequalities will contribute significantly to improving the efficiency of the chain and cutting food losses. ■

BUILDING RESILIENT LIVELIHOODS FOR WOMEN AND MEN

FAO uses multiple frameworks and partnerships to embed gender equality in resilience-building efforts.

FAO's Corporate Framework to support sustainable peace addresses the impacts of conflict according to gender and age of affected populations, while addressing food insecurity. FAO has developed guidance materials for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in FSN in protracted crises and in disaster risk reduction (DRR).

FAO and the International Institute for Development Studies (IDS) have developed a framework and pathways to address gender equality and food security in sustainable peace building, identifying relevant lessons from past interventions.

REDUCING RISKS AND VULNERABILITY

FAO works to address the root causes of vulnerabilities

for men and women and their communities, build the capacities of local institutions to reduce impact of shocks and enable affected populations to become more resilient and recover faster. Special attention is given to protect men and women against gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse, investing in rural infrastructure and analysing gender issues in prevention and mitigation mechanisms, and assessing implications on women's work burden.

The Caisses de Résilience (CdR) approach was developed by FAO to strengthen the technical, social and financial capacities of vulnerable people to better manage risks and contribute to peace-building at the local level. FAO supports more than 45 000 households through 2 500 groups, of which 70 percent are women's groups. This approach has contributed to women's socio-economic empowerment and improved gender relations, while creating a nexus between humanitarian assistance and sustainable recovery and development.

GUATEMALA

Farm labourers
working on the land.
©FAO/Luis Sánchez
Díaz

The approach has been successfully implemented in Uganda to support agro-pastoral communities, in the Central African Republic in humanitarian response, in Central America's Dry Corridor to strengthen women's resilience and preparedness to climate change-related crises, and in Liberia to mitigate the impact of the Ebola crisis on livelihoods.

SOCIAL PROTECTION FOR RESILIENCE

FAO, UNICEF, WFP, World Bank and other partners, have identified "**Risk-informed and shock-responsive social protection**" as an innovative and scalable approach.



Social protection can reduce gender gaps in access to health and education, productive resources, and decision-making. A boost in women's social status and financial autonomy, through transfers, can enable accumulation of assets and enhance their resilience to risks.

Examples of FAO's achievements with social protection include:

- In Somalia, a Cash for Work (CFW) programme was implemented by FAO to provide vulnerable populations with temporary employment, while contributing to rebuilding infrastructure and livelihoods and reducing displacement.

Arrangements were made to accommodate the needs of pregnant and lactating women as cash recipients, without them participating in physically strenuous work. Flexibility in work schedule and decent work conditions were put in place to ensure that women's participation would not add to their work burden.

- In Iraq, FAO's provision of feeders to CFW beneficiaries has considerably improved women's status, through the development of backyard poultry farming for consumption and income generation.

- The Dry Corridor of eastern Guatemala is prone to

natural disasters and irregular precipitation that impacts food security for more than 100 000 households each year. These households generally lack access to formal systems of insurance and finance. FAO initiated Los Fondos Mutuos de Contingencia as part of its territorial intervention strategy to build the resilience of 1 680 households in four municipalities of Jalapa and Chiquimula. These contingency funds support productive investment, savings and sustainable agricultural practices, enhance women's financial literacy, and build their leadership skills and capacity to respond to extreme climatic conditions. ■

PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY IN EMERGENCY RESPONSE

FAO provides
real-time support
on gender equality
to countries
in emergency
situations.

FAO focuses on monitoring and assessing gender impacts in conflicts and disaster risk management and early warning. This involves analysing gender dimensions in needs assessments and collecting sex-disaggregated data for resilience and vulnerability analysis.

In Dominica, following Hurricane Maria in 2017, FAO supported women in the reconstruction of agriculture through the provision of seeds and other agricultural material to support the regrowth of green plants and fruits that generate food and income for rural households.

FAO gathered sex-disaggregated information in 2015 after the Myanmar flood, Nepal earthquake and El Niño event in the Sudan which demonstrated

that the livelihoods of female-headed households were the most affected.

A disaster risk reduction assessment of livelihood resilience in Jordan found that men and women had different perceptions of risks and priorities for resilience. Sex-disaggregated data collected showed that men prioritize inflation and unemployment, while women are more concerned with the increasing debt burdens and barriers to employment.

PROVIDING SAFE ACCESS TO FUEL AND ENERGY (SAFE)

Crisis-affected populations often have severely constrained access to fuel and energy for cooking, heating, lighting and power. Women and children usually bear the burden of collecting

**IN DOMINICA,
FAO SUPPORTED
WOMEN IN
REBUILDING
AGRICULTURE
FOLLOWING
HURRICANE
MARIA IN 2017**

PHILIPPINES

Women farmers in the Municipality of Midsayap, Cotabato Province, sift rice husks from their first harvest after a series of human-induced and natural disasters.
©FAO/Joseph Agcaoili



wood, increasing their workload and putting them at risk of gender-based violence.

Women spend on average 14 hours per week collecting wood in Cox's Bazar camps (Bangladesh) and 21 hours in the south of Chad. The SAFE approach decreases women's work burden, reduces household wood fuel consumption, and improves the local environment. In countries such as Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, the Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Uganda and Yemen, communities have benefitted from the FAO SAFE Programme, reaching

368 792 households. This work is conducted in partnership with WFP, IOM, UNDP, and UNHCR.

In the Sudan, FAO trained women refugees on the production and use of fuel-efficient stoves, seedlings management, tree planting and agroforestry practices.

In the Syrian Arab Republic, where communities are highly dependent on fuelwood, FAO supports the construction of household biogas digesters for cooking, while in Yemen, solar photovoltaic pumps are installed to ensure continuous water provision to rural households.

PROTECTION FROM GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)

GBV is a widespread and life-threatening problem exacerbated by poverty, natural hazards or conflicts. Through food security and agricultural interventions, FAO supports countries to protect vulnerable families and individuals from destitution. Furthermore, FAO supports governments to reform discriminatory legislation and practices and incorporate gender equality in projects and programmes. A 2018 guide addresses GBV in the food security and agriculture sector, asking "How can we protect men, women and children from gender-based violence?" ■

GENDER MAINSTREAMING AND THE UN-SWAP

The UN System-wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP)

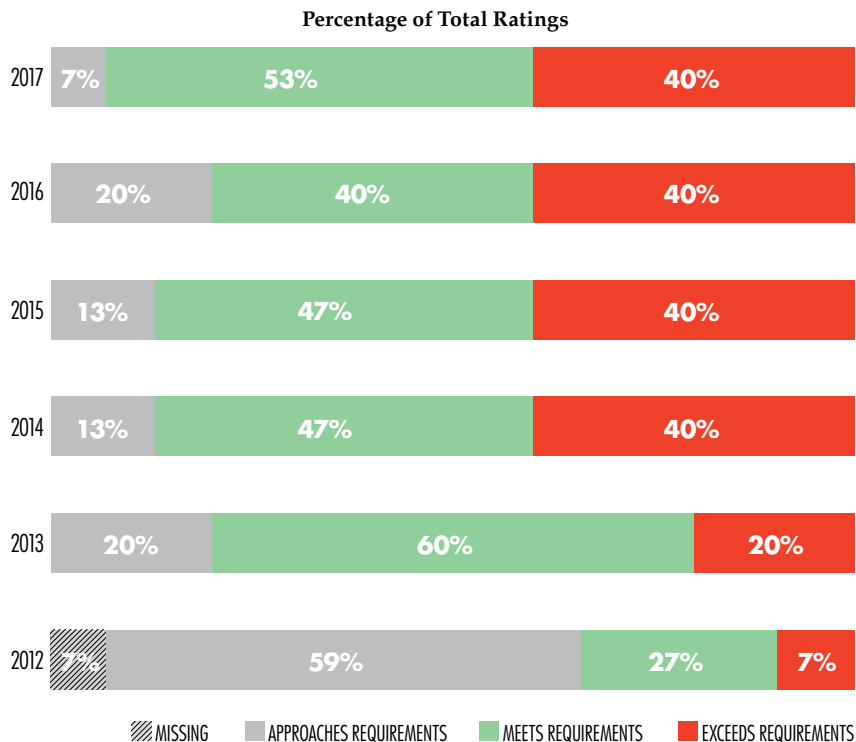
on gender equality and women's empowerment is an accountability framework to accelerate mainstreaming of gender equality and the empowerment of women (GEEW) in all institutional functions of the entities of the UN system.

**FAO "MET"
OR "EXCEEDED"
93 PERCENT
OF ALL UN-SWAP
PERFORMANCE
INDICATORS
IN 2017**

AGGREGATE PERFORMANCE IN "MEETS/EXCEEDS" RATINGS (2017)



FAO: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF RATINGS BY YEAR





TAJIKISTAN

Rural women working with support from an FAO-led project.
©FAO/Nosim Kalandarov

FAO's performance on gender equality places it in the vanguard of agencies within the United Nations system.

In 2012, FAO launched its Gender Equality Policy which serves as a guiding framework for the Organization and its Members to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment within its mandate of reducing rural poverty and promoting food security and nutrition.

The minimum standards set by the FAO Gender Equality Policy were designed to contribute to the standards of the UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP). It constitutes a response to ECOSOC Agreed Conclusions 1997/2 on *Mainstreaming*

a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system.

FAO recognizes the UN-SWAP as a driving force for gender equality and women's empowerment and has been providing annual progress reports since 2012. FAO "met" or "exceeded" 93 percent of all UN-SWAP performance indicators in 2017.

In recent years, the implementation of FAO Gender Equality Policy and the UN-SWAP has enabled the Organization-wide environment to become progressively more gender-responsive. The standards

PAKISTAN

Traditional
wheel-assisted
harvesting.

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INCREASING THE AVAILABILITY AND USE OF SEX-DISAGGREGATED DATA FOR MORE TARGETED POLICIES

Sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics are fundamental to elaborate gender-sensitive rural poverty and hunger reduction policies, programmes and strategies. Data are also important to understand rural women's role and contribution in agriculture. Yet information on women's roles in agriculture often remains scarce or incomplete. FAO's Statistical Programme of Work 2018–19 includes more than 30 statistical activities related to sex-disaggregated data or gender statistics, including seven databases disseminated through websites, yearbooks and flagship publications.

have also helped to put institutional mechanisms in place that support consistent and coherent delivery of gender work across the Organization.

FAO has made particular efforts to:

- Embrace a gender-focal point (GFP) network within the Organization. GFPs are appointed at headquarters and in decentralized offices and they contribute to promoting gender mainstreaming within their unit;
- Systematically incorporate gender perspectives in all FAO programmes and projects. The quality of project and programme design is screened in terms of gender responsiveness;
- Foster organizational culture that fully supports promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. Examples include a zero-tolerance policy on prevention

of sexual harassment and exploitation as well as measures for maternity leave, adoption and family-related emergency leave, and flexible working arrangements. Childcare facilities are also open at FAO; and

- Achieve gender parity among staff. As of December 2017, 43 percent of all professional posts were held by women – the highest representation of all time. FAO is conscious of the work that is still required to fully achieve the goals and FAO is finalizing a customized implementation plan informed by its specific context as a specialized agency. FAO's approach is aligned with the UN System-wide Strategy on gender parity launched in September 2017 by the UN Secretary-General António Guterres. ■



CONCLUSION

FAO's work on gender equality in food and agriculture brings us a step closer to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and a world where no one is left behind.

GENDER RESOURCES

GENDER AND FAO

www.fao.org/gender/background

LAND RIGHTS

www.fao.org/gender-landrights-database

DIMITRA CLUBS

www.fao.org/dimitra/home

GRAST

www.fao.org/3/i6194en/i6194EN.pdf

WOMEN AND DECENT WORK

www.fao.org/rural-employment/toolbox/module-5-women-and-decent-work

LAND-RELATED AGRICULTURAL INVESTMENTS

www.fao.org/3/ca0182en/CA0182EN.pdf

EQUALITY POLICY

www.fao.org/docrep/017/i3205e/i3205e.pdf

The 2030 Agenda recognizes gender equality as the basis for reaching a world which is just, prosperous, socially inclusive and sustainable.

The gender gap in food and agriculture is extensive. As consumers, women are more likely to be food insecure than men in every region of the world. As producers, rural women face even greater constraints than their male counterparts in accessing essential productive resources and services, technology, market information and financial assets. They are under-represented in local institutions and governance mechanisms and tend to have less decision-making power. In addition to these constraints, prevailing gender norms and

discrimination often mean that women face an excessive work burden, and that much of their labour remains unpaid and unrecognized.

FAO contributes to reducing gender inequalities through its work on norms and standards, data and information, policy dialogue, capacity development, knowledge and technologies, partnerships, and advocacy and communication. Every aspect of the Organization's work in gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls is aligned with the SDG international framework, and contributes to each of the 17 SDGs, in line with the pledge that lies at the heart of the 2030 Agenda: to leave no one behind. ■

EMPOWERING RURAL WOMEN, POWERING AGRICULTURE

FAO's
work on
Gender



This brochure presents FAO's sustained and consistent work towards gender equality and the empowerment of rural women, which are at the core of the Organization's efforts to end hunger, malnutrition and rural poverty. FAO recognizes the potential of rural women and men in achieving food security and improving nutrition and is committed to working with partners and strengthening its efforts to eliminate the gender inequalities that undermine the performance of the agriculture sector.

This document provides examples of FAO's work in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and other sectors in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. It shows that enabling rural women to have the same access as men to resources, services and opportunities, translates into economic and social gains for families, communities and nations at large. It also shows how FAO is contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and is fully committed to "leave no one behind".