

Annex 14 – FAO's work in Region Africa and gender issues

1. Introduction

1. The FAO Regional Office for Africa (RAF) is located in Accra, Ghana and covers 48 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. In the region FAO also has four Sub-Regional offices, one in Accra itself for West Africa (SFL), one in Libreville, Gabon for Central Africa (SFC), one in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia for Eastern Africa (SFE) and one in Harare, Zimbabwe for Southern Africa (SFS).

2. In the Africa region, the Evaluation visited seven countries: Republic of Congo, Ghana, Kenya, Niger, Somaliland, Uganda, and Zambia. In those countries, the mission included interviews and meetings with more than 150 people including FAOR staff, project consultants and technical staff, officials from government and from UN agencies, local authorities and project beneficiaries.

3. In total, the Evaluation assessed 44 projects in Africa, including national, regional and global initiatives that were assessed at the level of one African country. Further, the mission also assessed 10 Global Public Goods among those produced for the region, as well as the reports of FAO Regional Conferences from 2002 to 2010.

2. Resources

4. During the Evaluability Assessment, 219 projects in the region were identified as GAD for a total budget slightly above USD 280 million. These initiatives represented 30% of the total budget of FAO GAD projects in the period, and 37% in terms of project numbers. The great majority in terms of budget and numbers - 71% and 79% respectively - were technical cooperation projects across most FAO technical areas, whereas emergency initiatives represented 29% of the budget and 21% in terms of number of projects, the major part addressing complex emergencies.

5. RAF was LTU for 4 GAD projects, for a total budget of USD 1 million, which represented 3% of the RAF-led projects in the period.

6. In PWB 2010/11, RAF had 4 Gender Sensitive Products and Services linked to SO-K, while SFS had one and SFC had two. In total, the percentage of all GSPS for RAF, SFW, SFE, SFC and SFS was 26%, 21%, 23%, 25% and 39% respectively.

3. Relevance of FAO's work in gender to national policies and to the regional mandate of the Organization

7. The FAO Regional Strategic Framework for Africa, 2010-2015¹, stated that the RAF was committed to promoting gender equality as an important part of rural development, and noted the trend toward the feminization of agriculture. There was passing reference to including sex-disaggregated statistics within priority 1 of the Framework: to 'Increase agricultural productivity and diversification'. GAD was also mentioned as part of the expertise available under RAF's multidisciplinary team, and SO-K is referred to several times under RAF priorities and links to Regional Institutions. The drafting of this Framework had been a good initiative, but it had not penetrated to the other offices visited by the Evaluation.

1 <http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/am054e/am054e00.pdf>

8. Over the evaluation period the FAO Regional Conference for Africa had discussed the importance of gender mainstreaming in agriculture and related issues, but these were not close to the top of the agenda. In its 2002 session the conference recommended that FAO support governments to mainstream gender in all CAADP strategies and programmes. FAO was asked to report on its technical assistance to countries in the implementation of the SPFS and support to the NEPAD Secretariat and to African ministries to strengthen their capacities on addressing gender issues in agricultural development (2004).

9. At its 2006 session the Conference recommended that FAO support governments “*to elaborate and implement, through a participatory approach, land policies and legislation that focus on the security of land tenure of family holdings, on equitable access to land by all, especially the vulnerable social groups: women, the young, migrants, pastoralists....*”. In 2008 the Conference recommended that FAO “*set a clear mechanism for monitoring that guarantees women, youth and marginalized groups to have access, control and ownership of land, water and other natural and productive resources*”; and in 2010 that FAO “*reinforce gender concerns in both the CADP Compact and post-Compact processes*”. Several of the reports over the period mentioned the importance of sex-disaggregated data and capacity building for mainstreaming gender. One of the themes approved for the Conference's 27th session in 2012 was: ‘Gender mainstreaming in food security initiatives at national and regional level’. This latter decision shows promise for raising gender higher on the agenda of the Africa Regional Conference.

10. One Vision document prepared by SFE was published in 2010. The document not only made no mention of gender or women, but also deleted SO-K from the list of Strategic Objectives in the annex. In the region, the Evaluation found that the major priority areas identified were: sustainable land and water management; market access, rural infrastructure and trade related capacities; increasing agricultural productivity and food security for reducing hunger; good governance and human security; and knowledge, agricultural research and technology. Gender concerns were referred to, but not as a priority.

11. In fact, gender issues had not been considered a priority in most of the FAO offices visited. In some countries, FAO had developed National Medium Term Priority Frameworks (NMTPF) that mentioned SO-K. In Kenya, the NMTPF 2009-2013 mentioned gender, but not as a priority area. In Zambia the NMTPF 2009 -13 had been formulated along the lines of the Fifth National Development Plan (FNDP) 2006-11 and the National Agriculture Policy (NAP). It mentioned gender in several of its priority activities, often presented as “gender needs and market linkages”. Zambia also had a National Gender Policy and gender concepts in general, but policy implementation had not been monitored, nor had gender events attracted any senior decision makers. Likewise, sex-disaggregated reporting was limited in Zambia, and supporting institutional mechanisms were still weak.

12. The FAO Country Support Strategic Framework for 2010-2014 in Uganda included a section on gender in the situation analysis and gender-related issues among planned interventions for two out of ten outcomes. No gender-sensitive targets or indicators were included in the Framework, however, despite the fact that Uganda has had a national gender strategy since 1995. A new gender strategy had been approved in 2007 that reflected the country's policies, the Poverty Action Plan and the administrative decentralization process. FAO did not provide any support to the elaboration of the Gender Strategy of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAIFF), despite the availability of guidelines issued by the Gender Officer in RAF. This appeared to be a lost opportunity.

13. In most of the countries visited, FAO had provided inputs into the formulation of the national agricultural and food security policies and programmes, and was leading the UN country team thematic groups on food and nutrition security. However, FAO often did not

support the governments in implementing their gender in agriculture policies, despite the fact that all the countries visited by the Evaluation had some national policy or strategy related to gender.

14. For example, the Republic of Congo had a National Policy on Gender formulated in 2008 that focused on capacity building and economic empowerment of women, including young women, through small enterprises and microfinance programmes. The national gender policy in Niger, formulated in 2007, had created a Ministry of Population, Promotion of Women and Child's Protection. In Somaliland gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment had been highlighted as part of the United Nations Somali Assistance Strategy (UNSAS) 2011-15, which provided a five-year framework for the UN's development work as well as humanitarian, transitional and recovery assistance.

15. One exception was Ghana, where the Government had developed a Gender and Agricultural Development Strategy (GADS) for the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA), with FAO support in 2001, in the follow-up to the Beijing Conference. However, the Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy (FASDEP II) declared in 2007 that “*there has been a rather slow implementation of strategies in the GADS by MoFA Directorates and stakeholders.*”

16. Overall, although FAO had assisted in the elaboration of national agricultural policies and programmes, the technical assistance recommended by the Regional Conferences in terms of gender mainstreaming was not implemented. Aside from the RAF Office, the representations did not have the technical and gender expertise required to respond to the demands of the Member States regarding gender-sensitive agricultural policies and interventions. Most of the representations had few staff, most of whom had not been trained by FAO on gender, and therefore were not able to support gender mainstreaming in agricultural and food security projects at the country level.

17. The elaboration and implementation of land policies and legislation that focused on the security of land tenure of family holdings and on equitable access to land by all, including women, as recommended by both the 24th and 25th Regional Conferences, had not been visible in countries visited during the evaluation, and women still had very limited access to land.

4. Effectiveness, impact and sustainability of projects

18. Of the 43 projects assessed directly in the region across all sectors, 24 had been identified as GAD and 20 were on-going non-GAD projects analyzed for purposes of comparison. The revised qualifiers are shown in Box 1.

Box 1. Gender - sensitive assessment of projects in Africa: revised gender qualifiers

Evaluation qualifiers	GAD	WID	Missed Opportunity	Non GAD	Total
FAO qualifiers					
<i>Identified as GAD/WID</i>	21	3	0	0	24
<i>Not identified as GAD/WID</i>	13	1	5	1	20
Total	34	4	5	1	44
<i>Percentage within total</i>	77%	9%	11%	2%	

Source: Evaluation team

19. Almost all the GAD and 13 non-GAD projects were confirmed as GAD. Thus, the great majority of the projects had indeed integrated gender in their design or implementation.

Only one non-GAD project was confirmed as such and five non-GAD projects were found to be Missed Opportunities.

20. The effectiveness in gender mainstreaming of FAO's projects in the countries visited varied to some extent. In some countries, e.g., Niger, Somaliland and Uganda, gender specialists had been involved in some projects and had provided specialized inputs. In these cases, projects had developed leadership and empowerment skills for women.

21. In Niger for example, the FAO-Belgium Partnership Programme on Knowledge Management and Gender has two projects mainstreaming gender systematically into its activities: "Good practices capitalization in support of agricultural production and food security[2]" with the case for the Inventory Credit component and "Dimitra" with the rural community-based listening clubs. To some extent, those projects had challenged the socio-cultural landscapes in areas where the projects had been implemented. Unlike in the past, women beneficiaries of the projects could now speak in public; they were making money with the Inventory Credit (warrantage), and were developing decision-making power within their households. These projects have developed methodologies for "Communicating Gender for development" and for "Mainstreaming gender into a developmental action."

22. In Uganda, projects implemented within the emergency assistance umbrella had contributed to reducing gender violence within some households. In short, the projects had contributed to building self-confidence, visibility and respect for women.

23. In the country visits it was found that activities were labour intensive, and that women provided a large proportion of the labour force, for many of the cropping practices. For instance in Kenya, although the Initiative on Soaring Food Prices (ISFP) project-TCP/KEN/3201 in Ahero district showed very good practices and outcomes in terms of women's economic and social empowerment, the labour provided by women in the project was really intensive, due to the lack of mechanized rice production. In Niger where the gender differentials were seen as strong by field workers, the WID approach seemed to be the most relevant approach (as an entry point to gender mainstreaming) to work within local socio-cultural practices and avoid clashes with religious and traditional leaders.

24. Some of FAO emergency interventions were largely focused on distribution of inputs, including for livestock, which had led to some improvement in their livelihoods. The sustainability of the outcomes of these interventions remained an issue. In the Farmer Field and Life Schools (FFLS) and the Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS) in Zambia, for example, the extension officers were not able to provide the required follow up for the projects during and after implementation, due to the lack of financial support from the government and from FAO. In addition, when the projects had ended, beneficiaries had not been provided with any extension services to sustain the outcomes of the projects. At the same time, when the interventions were in the context of complex emergencies, as in the case of Uganda, the sequence of different projects albeit short-lived, allowed setting the basis for more sustainable development.

25. By the time of the Evaluation (early 2011), activities in line with the two Unit Results under SO-K were not being actively implemented. Six of the seven countries visited by the Evaluation team had formulated a national gender policy to reduce gender imbalances and inequalities; the policies provided an enabling environment to consider and integrate gender issues into agricultural and rural development. However, it was observed that FAO had not contributed to those gender policies.

26. Regarding working with the UN Country Teams and the UNDAF, while FAO led UNDAF thematic groups on food and nutrition security, it did not seem to be actively involved in UN Country Team working groups on gender, due to lack of staff and/or interest.

5. Portfolio and assessment of GPGs

27. The Evaluability Assessment had identified 38 GAD/WID Global Public Goods (GPGs) focused on the Africa region, most of these being policy-oriented research studies. Of these, 20 were assessed in detail. The average scoring is reported here below.

Box 2. *Assessment of FAO Global Public Goods for Africa: average scoring*

Criteria Type of products	Relevance of GAD to the topic (1-6)	Technical quality of GAD contents (1-6)	Innovativeness on GAD (1-6)	Potential impact as advocacy tool (1-6)	Potential impact as capacity development tool (1-6)	Links between GAD and social inclusion (1-6)	Number products
<i>Average scoring GAD GPG</i>	6.0	5.7	4.5	5.3	5.6	5.0	20

Source: Evaluation team

28. Out of 10 GAD GPGs assessed, nine had been produced in partnership with national and international research institutions. The 10 GPGs all scored 6 for relevance for GAD, and the technical quality of the GAD contents was very high, ranking an average of 5.7 out of 6. GAD issues were mainstreamed and integrated holistically, with reference to GAD theory. Where innovativeness on GAD was concerned, the average score was 4.5, showing an adequate to good contribution in introducing new thinking on GAD issues, i.e., some were more WID than GAD.

29. There were two good examples of an innovative approach. The first, 'Disease, vulnerability and livelihoods on the Tanzania-Uganda interface ecosystem to the west of lake Victoria', presented the connections between human, animal, and plant diseases and the impacts on food security from a gender perspective. The second, 'Agri-gender database', was a statistical toolkit for the production of sex-disaggregated data to create national gender profiles of agricultural households. This was instrumental in demonstrating the impact of interventions from a gender perspective. These two GPGs were well written with clear arguments, well-chosen case studies and awareness of target audience. In addition, those and all the GPGs examined presented material that could be used as advocacy or capacity development tools. The GPGs examined rated an average of 5.3 on advocacy and 5.6 (good to excellent). Regarding links between GAD and social inclusion, the average score was 5.0 indicating that the linkages were examined in some detail.

30. The Evaluation found that there had been very little follow-up to dissemination of GPGs, including tools that were relevant to boosting agricultural production and promoting rural development in Africa. In countries visited for the evaluation, most of the staff of the ministries of agriculture, including extension workers and agricultural policy makers, had not been trained in using FAO's gender-sensitive tools such as the SEAGA, which were very good capacity development tools, while some people were not aware of them at all.

6. GAD awareness and staff competence

31. As planned in PWB 2010/11, RAF established as one of its Organizational Results that staff in the regional and four sub-regional offices of Africa would be able to demonstrate commitment and capacity to address gender issues in their work in Sub-Saharan Africa at the end of the current biennium.

32. In this context, FAO staff in the Representations, including the FAO Representatives, appeared to be well aware and acquainted with the importance of including women in development activities. However, the understanding, meaning and implications of gender mainstreaming were variable among the staff. Confusion between women-focused activities and gender mainstreaming still existed: women were defined as 'better in weeding' and the importance of making gender issues explicit seemed not to be well understood. An indicator of gaps in gender awareness in the FAO Representations was the lack of sex-disaggregated data, particularly in Congo-Brazzaville, Kenya, Niger and Zambia, and the overall absence of gender-sensitive indicators in the Country Programming Frameworks.

33. There was limited expertise in the FAO Representations in the region during the period under evaluation. ESW gender specialists assigned to the Africa region consisted of: one senior officer in the RAF office in Accra throughout the period (promoted to P-5 in 2008); an APO based at RAF in Accra; and other APO gender specialists based at FAORs in Malawi, Mozambique, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia for different time periods.

34. In terms of staffing, men were dominant in the FAO Representations. Gender focal points had limited authority and competence on gender issues, and lacked a clear role and mandate for tasks to perform. Among the FAO programme and technical staff, there was knowledge of some of FAO's gender products (SEAGA was mentioned), but nobody had been trained on how to use them effectively, nor were there any active users of ESW (or other FAO) gender materials. The staff that had been appointed as gender focal points in Congo-Brazzaville and Zambia had had no training on gender. There were also gender specialists working on projects in Niger, Somalia and Uganda.

35. Among the staff who knew about the SEAGA, they reported that they had not been trained in using it; therefore they were unable to take full advantage of the tools in their agricultural development activities. Moreover, the lack of knowledge and use of GPGs and FAO gender products in the countries indicated the lack of connections between ESW and the FAO representations.

7. Relations with ESW and GFP's work

36. Overall, there seemed to have been little, if any, direct contacts between ESW and national FAO staff, gender focal points in particular. The findings of the Evaluation were that most of the FAO Representations never received technical support from ESW in terms of gender mainstreaming, and may never have asked for it. In Congo-Brazzaville, the FAO representative proposed a change of approach by ESW, starting by involving the country office staff before going to the field. He suggested that within FAO country offices, capacity on gender mainstreaming should be built for all staff so that the office did not depend on ESW, or on one individual called the gender focal point who would surely be overwhelmed by work. In Uganda a staff member at FAOR noted that ESW had been working directly with the university on land tenure studies without going through or informing the FAOR.

37. There was an exception to this for FAO-Somalia, where two of the six respondents had used the ESW Web site or materials; one had had direct contact with ESW staff. The gender specialists in the Emergency Coordination Unit had direct contacts mainly with TCE, above all, the TCE Gender Focal Point, and to a lesser extent, with ESW. National staff in Somaliland made no use of ESW GPGs, nor had they had contact with ESW staff.

8. Overall visibility and knowledge about FAO working in GAD among partners, including governments

38. In countries visited, FAO Representations did not actively participate in the UNDAF gender working groups, composed of government officers, donors and NGOs. Most national agencies, particularly officers from the ministries of agriculture and related departments and departments dealing with gender and women's issues, were unaware of FAO's policies on gender. This was also the case with international agencies, including UN agencies and donors. Therefore, among the UN agencies, FAO appeared to be far from being active on gender issues. UNFPA, UNICEF and UNIFEM/UN Women were considered the gender champions, as they worked more on gender related initiatives.

39. Many UN agencies and government ministries noted that FAO, as the UN lead agency for agriculture and rural development, had a clear comparative advantage in addressing gender issues in rural areas and in the context of agriculture. In Kenya, the Evaluation found that, although FAO participated in forums such as Kenya Food Security Steering Group, it did not participate in others such as the Gender Sector Coordination Group, composed of 22 representatives/bilateral and multilateral institutions including the World Bank. Even more, the Representation did not seem to have any connection with the Gender Specialist of the World Bank, who was willing to work in joint programmes on gender initiatives. Also, very few among FAO's partners knew about FAO's publications on gender and or gender-related tools or guidelines.

40. Overall, it was found that most respondents preferred to see FAO as a technical agency with a gender competence, but without a bias in favour of gender-relevant projects. Thus, there seemed to be an implicit understanding between FAO and its partner ministries that gender was a lesser concern.

9. Conclusions

41. Women are the vast majority of the food producers in Africa, although they own a very small percentage of privately-owned land, and they account for 60% of the adults who suffer from hunger. At the same time, they remain shackled by discriminatory cultural, traditional, social and economic structures that hinder them from access, control and ownership of land/natural and productive resources, making them increasingly vulnerable to food insecurity.

42. Although the FAO Regional Conferences for Africa reiterated that women must be at the centre of an inclusive, appropriate and participatory agrarian reform and rural development, FAO had not been able to implement those recommendations, as adequate financial and human resources were never available to follow up on the Organization's commitment to provide technical support to the Member States to challenge hunger and poverty in the region from a gender perspective.

43. The FAO Representations lacked sufficient resources to assist with gender mainstreaming in most countries. They had few staff, with almost no background on gender issues; the gender focal points had limited authority, competence and lacked a clear role and mandate; and staff were unavailable to attend gender forums' meetings.

44. ESW did not adequately disseminate FAO's GPGs and gender tools; there was no continuity for some gender-sensitive projects, such as the JFFLS projects, due to lack of technical support from the representations. Furthermore, in countries visited, the Evaluation was unable to find any clear mechanism for monitoring that would guarantee women, youth

and marginalized groups access, control and ownership of land, water and other natural and productive resources.

45. All recommendations stemming from the discussion above formed the basis for the Evaluation's recommendations.