



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

ISSN 2710-1622

# NATIONAL GENDER PROFILE OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL LIVELIHOODS

## Cambodia



**COUNTRY  
GENDER  
ASSESSMENT  
SERIES**

**ASIA AND  
THE PACIFIC**



# **NATIONAL GENDER PROFILE OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL LIVELIHOODS**

**COUNTRY GENDER ASSESSMENT SERIES**

**Cambodia**

Required citation:

FAO. 2024. *National gender profile of agriculture and rural livelihoods – Cambodia*. Country Gender Assessment Series. Phnom Penh. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc8398en>

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ISSN 2710-1622 [Print]  
ISSN 2710-1630 [Online]  
ISBN 978-92-5-138285-1

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# Acknowledgements

This Country Gender Assessment (CGA) was commissioned by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to promote gender equality through knowledge generation and to accelerate the implementation of the FAO Policy on Gender Equality and the Asia-Pacific Regional Gender Strategy and Action Plan 2022–2025.

The assessment was conducted under the overall supervision of Rebekah Bell, FAO Representative in Cambodia, the technical supervision of Kae Mihara, Regional Gender Officer of FAO Office for Asia and the Pacific (FAORAP), and the direct supervision and coordination of Kosal Oum, Assistant FAO Representative (Programme) and Gender Focal Point of FAO Cambodia, and Verdiana Biagioni Gazzoli, Programme Specialist of the Inclusive Rural Transformation and Gender Equality division (ESP), FAO headquarters.

The report was prepared by Sereyroth Lim, National Gender Specialist with inputs from relevant colleagues within the country office. The assessment benefited from technical inputs, editing and comments by Bettina Gatt, International Expert on Gender and Child Labour in Fisheries of FAO Cambodia, Ide Nomomi, Economist of ESP, FAO headquarters, and the Country UN Gender Thematic Group.

The CGA team would like to sincerely thank all representatives from government ministries, international and local non-governmental organizations, development partners, agricultural cooperatives, producers and farmers who were engaged in the interviewing, shared useful reports and documents, and provided their recommendations for working towards gender equality in Cambodia. The team would particularly like to thank FAO colleagues who provided support to facilitate and coordinate for meetings and interviews with all stakeholders. Finally, the team would like to specially thank the women and men who participated in focus group discussions as part of the fieldwork for this assessment.

# Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AIPP	Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact
CA	conservation agriculture
CARDI	Cambodian Agricultural Research and Development Institute
CAS	Cambodia Agriculture Survey
CDHS	Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey
CDRI	Cambodia Development Resource Institute
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CF	community forestry
CFi	community fishery
CPF	Country Programming Framework
CSES	Cambodia Social and Economic Survey
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FiA	Fishery Administration
FWUCs	Farmer Water User Committees
GMAG	Gender Mainstreaming Action Groups
GMPSFA	Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Strategic Framework in Agriculture
GRAISEA	Gender Transformative and Responsible Agribusiness Investment in South-East Asia
IFC	International Finance Corporation
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
MEF	Ministry of Economic and Finance
MLMUPC	Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction
MoWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
MoWRAM	Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology
MRD	Ministry of Rural Development
MSME	micro, small, and medium enterprises
NGO	non-governmental organization
NIS	National Institute of Statistics
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
RUA	Royal University of Agriculture
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SNV	Foundation of Netherlands Volunteers
TVET	technical and vocational education and training
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
WAT4CAM	Water Resource Management and Agro-ecological Transition for Cambodia
WFP	World Food Programme



# Executive summary

Gender equality is central to FAO's mandate in achieving the elimination of poverty, hunger and malnutrition and essential in achieving the SDGs and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

The Country Gender Assessment (CGA) of Agriculture and the Rural Sector is mandated in the FAO's Policy on Gender Equality 2020-2030 and is required by the Country Programming Guidelines. The CGA contributes to the formulation of the next Country Programming Framework (2024-2028), a framework which will be developed by FAO and the Royal Government of Cambodia to support in enhancing understanding women's and men's roles in agriculture and rural development. It also contributes to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment for food security, nutrition and poverty alleviation.

The CGA assessed men's and women's roles, gender division of labour and gender gaps, including women's needs and constraints in agriculture and rural development sectors. The study assessed policies and frameworks pertaining to gender equality in agricultural and rural development. Moreover, good practices have been collected through key informant interviews with FAO's project and programme staff, development partners, private and public counterparts relevant to both sectors.

Gender equality promotion and achievements to advance women's empowerment have been widely recognized in Cambodia through key policies, mechanisms, and initiatives in agricultural and rural sectors. The analysis found that girls and women farmers have been more recognized and given opportunities in Cambodian political and economic activities compared to the past two decades. However, gender inequalities remain. These include: entrenched unbending gender and social norms that place men and boys as superior to women and girls; women with the 'triple work burden' of multitasking, including unpaid jobs and social roles but with less recognition of women's roles, limited representation and opportunities in leadership tasks and roles; limited educational access to agricultural technique skills and related technologies, capacity

in resources management (including financial, business management skills, digital marketing, human resources, etc.) of women as compared to men. Women in the rural areas have limited access to and control of productive resources, natural resources, services, and to markets and other opportunities to scale up their businesses. Furthermore, there is still few women holding high-ranking positions at government level, with lower representation at decision-making positions as compared to men. Moreover, there is still a lack of sex-disaggregated and gender specific data and research in the sectors.

Key lessons taken from some selected initiatives from stakeholder's consultations, documents review, and key informant interviews are highlighted in the 'stakeholders' analysis' section of this report.

The following recommendations below are drawn from the gender findings and conclusion of the CGA in agriculture and rural sector at different levels: macro, meso, micro including for FAO country programme in Cambodia.

## Recommendations for macro (policy) level:

- Promote equal representation of women and men in decision-making and in the workforce of governmental institutions at all levels.
- Improving the investment and business environment by government ministries, including the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) to encourage the creation of agri-businesses for small-scale holders, including women-led micro, small and medium enterprises. Tax incentives, innovation matching grant funds and agri-business incubators can be considered to support the growth of innovative small and medium agri-business enterprises, especially among young women business entrepreneurs.
- Identify and work with gender champions within Cambodian and development partner institutions to advance efforts in making the trade and business environment more gender sensitive.



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- Enhance capacities of the government at the national and sub-national level, and communities to address gender challenges by enforcing related policies and the management of fisheries and farming resources, community forestry conservations, and land rights.
- Promote the integration of gender transformative approaches in agricultural and rural development programmes and applying at different levels to reduce gender norms and bias stereotypes at various policy, institutional community, and household level.

## Recommendations for meso (institutional and technical) level:

### Institutional level:

- Operation and management:
  - Improve gender integration and mainstreaming approaches, tools and the design, monitoring, and evaluation frameworks: in compliance to SDGs, institutional policy for gender equality, CEDAW and relevant frameworks of the RGC, the project's management framework.
  - Ensure that gender analysis and assessment is integrated into each project proposal and formulation, with inclusion of gender indicators and objectives. This includes gender data and information such as sex-disaggregated data and ensures that gender-differentiated impacts are embedded or enhanced across projects/programmes, including relevant research and studies related to agriculture and rural development.
  - Identify, assign, or recruit gender focal points within the institution and counterparts of line ministries and sub-sectors.
  - Encourage for gender equality compliance across institutional management frameworks. This includes reviewing the current practices and mainstreaming gender considerations in recruitment processes of the implementing institution and of partners.
  - Enhance technical skills and knowledge on gender equality, gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment within staff, counterparts and other key stakeholders at all levels. Ensure curriculum for an orientation and refresher training to all relevant staff on guideline for gender sensitization and awareness, and for mainstreaming gender into project cycles, any new developed tools.
- Promote the best practices and user guides of gender mainstreaming and producing more good practices and user guides with adequate resource and budget for development of case study and conducting research.

- Advocate for initiatives, research and studies for better evidence of gender gaps and women's needs, as well as practices that promote gender equality evidence which provide for a better-informed decision-making at policy and practitioner levels.
- Advocate for resources mobilisation efforts that contribute to closing gender gaps and promote gender equality in agriculture, food and nutrition, technology, and rural development, including women's economic empowerment and climate change issues.

### Technical level:

- Joint government and stakeholders' efforts in improving market information platforms, transport infrastructure, adoption of climate resilient agriculture technologies, digital skills where men and women farmers can access price information and marketplaces.
- Establish initiatives for better ecosystem services that enable agricultural-businesses, commercial viability, particularly for produces and products from start-ups, smallholder farmers, and disadvantaged groups such as minorities or indigenous groups.
- Efforts for better financing in agricultural value chains should be promoted at all levels. Initiatives and funds include investors, grants, value chain financing, or revolving funds that support farmers cooperatives or groups at production or post-harvest actors.
- Assist farming communities, fisheries-dependent communities, farmers' organizations, and other key stakeholders at the sub-national level to improve their adaptive capacity to climate change, and to be ready in responding to natural threats and related crises.
- Work in collaboration with the national councils, governmental institutions, civil society organizations, development partners and private sectors to encourage and support in applying new technologies that should be in support of women's processing, post-harvest and marketing activities, as well as their production activities.





**Recommendations for micro (community and household) level:**

- Increase more women trainers and provide more capacity activities on climate resilience agriculture techniques, administrative, financial literacy, and leadership skills to existing and new women smallholders, female members and leaders of farmer’s associations and community conservative groups.
- Enhance knowledge and skills for the community enterprise groups, associations, and women farmer on entrepreneurial skills, including business development concepts, financial literacy, loan and credit management, and related leadership skills.
- Promote voices and representation of women, poor and vulnerable groups in the farmer associations, community fisheries, forestry, customary land and climate change issues and establish special measures to address gender challenges.
- Support the community and multi-stakeholder to address gender issues/challenges in climate resilience and smart agriculture, fisheries, forestry, customary land, and climate change related risk and crisis.



# 1

## INTRODUCTION



## 1.1 Background

Gender equality is central to FAO's mandate in achieving the elimination of poverty, hunger and malnutrition and essential to achieve the SDGs and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

The FAO Policy on Gender Equality 2020-2030 aims to "achieving equality between women and men in sustainable agriculture and rural development for the elimination of hunger and poverty". This policy represents the main guiding framework for FAO's technical and normative work, and to support the establishment of institutional mechanisms for gender mainstreaming. The four-year regional gender strategy and action plan 2022-2025 for Asia and the Pacific were developed in line with the FAO Policy on Gender Equality 2020-2030 and the FAO Strategic Framework.

The Country Gender Assessment (CGA) of Agriculture and the Rural Sector is mandated in the FAO's Policy on Gender Equality and required by the corporate Country Programming Guidelines. The CGA contributes to the formulation of the next Country Programming Framework (2024-2028) that will be developed between the FAO and the Royal Government of Cambodia to support advancing gender equality and women's empowerment which are key for improved food security and nutrition. The CGA supports efforts to enhance understanding of women's and men's roles in agriculture and the rural economy in Cambodia.

The primary objectives of this assessment are 1) to provide information to the Royal Government of Cambodia to support the development and implementation of effective policies and plans to tackle gender inequalities and to empower rural women in all areas of life, 2) to inform FAO country level planning and programming in line with the national development priorities on promoting gender equality in agriculture and rural development in Cambodia, and 3) to facilitate FAO's support to UN inter-agency activities, including the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) and its contribution to the UN Country Team CEDAW report with up-to-date information of the situation of rural women and gender inequalities in rural Cambodia.

## 1.2 Scope and methodology

The assessment used methods as a combination of literature review, policy analysis and consultations with stakeholders. Data collection methods employed include:

**Desk review:** the desk review encompassed relevant existing national, regional, and global policies, frameworks, programmes, and projects to understand the context and to assess issues relevant to gender equality and opportunities for advancement of rural women in agriculture, food security and nutrition in the country. An online search was conducted to get updated relevant policies and frameworks.

**Key information interviews and consultations** were conducted from August to September 2022 to identify and understand the different roles, needs, obstacles, and opportunities of men and women engaging in agriculture and rural development, and to formulate concrete recommendations on the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment in agriculture and rural sector. The research team met around fifty women and men key relevant stakeholders, including FAO project staff and development partners/agencies through their work with farmers and the communities directly. They were asked to share gender case studies and context with relevant gender-relevant data and reports.

**Interviews with government agencies** were conducted through face-to-face and online meetings with key ministries and departments involved in agriculture and rural development including sub-agriculture sectors of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA), Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Rural Development (MRD), Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology (MoWRAM), Ministry of Economic and Finance (MEF), Cambodian Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI). International organizations, including UN Women, UNIDO, UNDP, WFP, and ADB in Cambodia were also consulted for this assessment. The guiding questions are included in Annex 1 and the list of organizations that were interviewed is in Annex 2.

**Interviews with civil society organizations and the private sector partners:** both face to face and online interviews and workshops were also conducted to gain their perspectives on key gender inequality issues and opportunities for supporting positive changes in the enabling environment for gender-inclusive practice.



The list of organizations that were interviewed is in Annex 2 and the guiding questions are included in Annex 1.

### 1.3 Limitations:

Limitations of the gender assessment are as follows:

- Lack of gender-disaggregated data given that gender statistics are often compiled from data sources developed for other purposes, the scope of the analysis is limited by data availability. This is exemplified by the lack of sex-disaggregated statistics on agricultural-related sectors such as land use, livestock, water management, climate impact, livelihood diversifications, etc. Thus, this assessment used existing data from the National Institute of Statistics (NIS)'s Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey (CSES), Cambodia Inter-Censal Agriculture Survey 2019 (CICAS), Cambodia Agricultural Survey 2020 (CAS), and Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey (CDHS).

- The researcher was not able to directly interview farmers in the field. Analysis was limited to available data and consultations with groups and networks that represent beneficiaries and secondary data of available projects and programmes. This was supplemented with qualitative data from interviews with key FAO's projects' focal points, stakeholders, and extended relevant studies and research, etc.

### 1.4 FAO's work in Cambodia

FAO Representation in Cambodia works closely with the Royal Government of Cambodia and in collaboration with development partners to achieve three key outcomes of the Country Programming Framework (CPF) 2019-2023 (FAO, 2019a).

This CGA assesses sub-sectors under the CPF framework as below:

**Table 1: Summary of country programming frameworks of FAO Cambodia (2019-2023)**

Key outcomes	Sub-Sectors and cross-cutting issues
1) Enhanced agricultural productivity, diversification and commercialization, and safe and nutrition-sensitive food systems for poverty reduction and food and nutrition security.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender roles and dynamics</li> <li>• Food security and nutrition</li> <li>• Livestock</li> <li>• Crops</li> <li>• Fisheries and aquaculture</li> <li>• Agricultural value chains/agri-food systems, infrastructure, markets and agro-food trade</li> <li>• Rural finance</li> </ul>
2) Equitable and sustainable management of natural resources, and increased capacity to monitor and report climate action.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Migration</li> <li>• Land</li> <li>• Water for agricultural use</li> <li>• Forestry</li> <li>• Participation in development planning and decision-making in the public sphere</li> </ul>
3) Reduction of vulnerability, and improved resilience to climate change and shocks at national, community and household level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agricultural and rural employment</li> <li>• Rural advisory services (agricultural extension services)</li> <li>• Climate change, disaster risk reduction and management</li> <li>• Technology</li> <li>• Social protection</li> <li>• Representation in rural organizations</li> </ul>

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

The CPF sets out three country priority areas to guide FAO in partnership with and in support of the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC), to promote innovative international best practices and global standards through the provision of national, regional and international expertise from 2019 to 2023.

The CPF was developed in line with the RGC's Rectangular Strategy Phase 4 (RS4) for Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency, and the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) 2019–2023. The RS4 provides the framework for policies and strategies addressing poverty reduction and promoting economic empowerment; and strengthening "gender equity" is one of the major focus areas in the first strategic rectangular of human resource development (RGC, 2018a). This has been further elaborated in the NSDP (2019–2023), which focuses on promoting the role of women in political and technical positions at the national and sub-national levels, mainstreaming gender in government initiatives and policies, and promoting women's economic empowerment, particularly through entrepreneurship and increased access to technical and vocational training for women (RGC, 2018b).

The FAO CPF is relevant to the following three key priorities of the RS4 on inclusive and sustainable development:

- 1) Promoting the agriculture sector and rural development:** RGC's goals are to strengthen the role of the agriculture sector in jobs generation, to ensure food security, reduce poverty, and to support rural areas. The focus aims at improving productivity, quality, and diversification, promoting agro-processing industry and market linkage, boosting vegetable production for import substitution, improving irrigation infrastructure, and at developing and implementing a number of regulations, strategies and action plans.
- 2) Sustainable management of natural resources and culture:** RGC's goal is to ensure a balance between development and conservation. Key priorities include ensuring sustainable management of forest, wildlife and fisheries resources and ecosystems; maintaining forest cover up to 60 percent, protection and conservation of biodiversity, wetland and coastal areas; promoting engagement of communities in the protection and management of natural resources, and restoration.

- 3) Ensuring environmental sustainability and readiness to respond to climate change:** RGC's goal is to minimize environmental impacts, to enhance the capacity to adapt to climate change, and to contribute to climate change mitigation for sustainable development. Key priorities including promoting sustainable consumption and production, climate-friendly technologies, carbon trading mechanisms, financing for climate change actions, clean and renewable energy, solid and liquid waste management, development and implementation of integrated water resource management plan, implementation of key national strategies and action plans.

## 1.5 Structure of the report

The report consists of six main sections. Section one is the introduction which includes the background of the assessment, scope, and methodology, including data collection, followed by a brief explanation of FAO's country programming framework in Cambodia. Section two describes the country context focusing on an overview of social and economic context, human development, and gender equality. Section three includes country's policy, legal and institutional arrangements, and mechanisms to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. Section four is devoted to gender analysis of the agriculture and rural sector with more focus on identifying challenges and gaps related to political and policy commitments and institutional context, gender inequalities, issues and constraints in agriculture, food security, and rural sector. Section five is a stakeholder analysis of key programmes and projects with some selected initiatives to promote gender equality in agriculture. Finally, section six summarizes the main findings of the report and the recommendations.



# 2

## CAMBODIA COUNTRY CONTEXT





## 2.1 National social and economic context

Cambodia's economy has been rapidly growing over the last decade, despite the impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic. The poverty rate has dropped significantly from 22.9 percent in 2009 to 13.5 percent in 2014 (World Bank, 2019). However, the National Social and Economic Survey (CSES) report revealed that the country's poverty rate increased to 17.8 percent (2020), largely due to impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic. Poverty is mainly concentrated in rural areas with 40 percent of the rural population living in multidimensional poverty, compared to 7 percent in urban settings (MoP and NIS, 2021).

About 30 percent of GDP was attributed to agriculture from 2010 to 2019. In 2019, the sector employed more than 4.5 million workers annually, of which 60 percent were rural and 52.2 percent were women (ADB, 2021).

Thus, the agriculture sector plays a crucial role in supporting economic growth, alleviating poverty through strengthening the rural economy and promoting sustainable development.

## 2.2 Human development and gender equality

### 2.2.1 Gender indexes in human development

Cambodia's gender-related indexes are ranked the lowest among the neighboring countries in the ASEAN region. Cambodia is ranked 117<sup>th</sup> out of 189 countries in the Gender Inequality Index (GII) (UNDP, 2020). GI is a measure reflecting inequality between women and men in three different dimensions: reproductive health (maternal mortality ratio and adolescent birth rate), empowerment (share of parliamentary seats held by women and share of the population with at least some secondary education), and labour market participation (labour force participation rate).

Cambodia is also ranked 98<sup>th</sup> out of 146 countries in the Global Gender Gap Report (2022) (WEF, 2022). This is an improvement from 103<sup>rd</sup> rank in 2021 with an overall performance in closing the gender gaps with a score of 0.69. The biggest gender gap in Cambodia (ranked 121<sup>st</sup>) is in political empowerment category, specifically with less women in ministerial positions and seats in parliament.

### 2.2.2 Employment and access to decent work

Women have significantly been engaging in economic activities in the country. In 2020, the women's labour participation rate in Cambodia was 84.1 percent compared to men's labour participation rate of 91 percent (MoP and NIS, 2021). The CESES showed that women aged 15 to 64 years were employed at 38 percent in the agriculture, forestry and fishing sectors while 24.2 percent were in industry sector and 27.8 percent in providing services (MoP and NIS, 2021).

However, only 41.2 percent of women in the labour market are salaried workers, while 58.8 percent are in vulnerable employment, with insecure working conditions, low pay, and no access to social protection (MoP and NIS, 2021). In the agriculture sector, the majority of women are represented in low-skilled and low-paid roles. Unpaid family work involved 25.7 percent of rural women, more than twice higher than rural men at 11.5 percent. Most female household member workers are not paid for their work contributing to agricultural households (MoP and NIS, 2021).

Moreover, women still earn an average of 19 percent less than men for equivalent work. This is tied to gender disparities in education (a higher share of no primary education, and lower tertiary enrolment), as well as labour market discrimination, gender-segregated occupations, and social norms associated with women's primary domestic role (UN Cambodia, 2022).

Although women accounted for 65 percent of all business owners in Cambodia, the majority of women's businesses are informal microenterprises including in agriculture sector. 51 percent of women entrepreneurs employ only one person, and 96 percent engage four or fewer persons. Women-owned businesses face several challenges, including limited access to resources to expand their business such as information on markets, financial inputs, new technologies and processes, communications, and limited access to professional and technical training (ADB, 2014).

Unequal caregiving and domestic loads are major structural barriers for women to take and stay in paid employment, undertake skills training, and pursue opportunities for career development. Childcare is available through a range of formal providers including government-managed public pre-schools

and a small number of NGO-led community-based models in rural areas. The UN reported that, as of 2018, there were only two enterprise-funded childcare centers in garment factories, the major employing industry of reproductive-aged women (UN Cambodia, 2022).

Moreover, limited social assistance for childcare is a barrier for women's access to paid employment. An International Finance Corporation (IFC)'s study in 2020 confirmed the limited number of onsite or

nearby childcare options for garment workers. It also noted the insufficient childcare allowance from employers, with 70 percent of companies providing less than USD 10 per child per month as a milk or formula allowance (My, 2021). The estimated average cost of childcare is USD 100 per month for one child. There is limited data on the informal provision of childcare by family members, although reports refer to grandparents but also children, primarily girls taking on care roles (IFC, 2020).

**Table 2: Summary of key data on women's employment and labour force**

Employment and labour force	Women (percent)	Men (percent)
Labour force participation	84.1	91.0
Employment	81.0	90.0
• Paid employee/employer	41.2	53.6
• Own account/self-employed worker	38.6	37.1
• Unpaid family worker	20.2	9.3
• Unpaid family worker in rural areas	25.7	11.5
• In Agriculture	38.0	33.0
• Industrial	24.2	27.9
• Service	37.8	39.1
Women's earning on average less than men – gender wage gap	19.0	
Women-led businesses (MSMEs)	65.0	

Source: Asian Development Bank. 2018. Detailed Gender Analysis. Cambodia: Climate-Friendly Agribusiness Value Chains Sector. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/linked-documents/48409-002-sd-06.pdf>  
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 United Nations Cambodia. 2022. Common country analysis – gender equality deep dive for Cambodia.

### 2.2.3 Literacy, education, and vocational training

In Cambodia, the adult literacy rate has been improving over the past decades, from 77.6 percent in 2008 to 87.7 percent in 2020 (World Bank, 2022). The adult literacy rate for rural population is lower than that for the urban population, at 83.3 percent compared to 93.3 percent. Women have a lower literacy rate as compared to men, at 86.2 percent versus 91.1 percent respectively (World Bank, 2022).

There has been significant progress in achieving gender parity in basic education of the country. Of the total of net enrolment students, net enrolment rate of girls is 49 percent at the primary school level and 53 percent at the secondary level (Ministry of Education Youth and Sports, 2022). On skillsets and tertiary education, even though the number of female students in tertiary education and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) has been increased, it is still a lower number, particularly for non-traditional areas of study,



such as science, technology, engineering, and math. For TVET, women often participated less in high-skilled and high-demand training programmes, where occupations are higher paid and more valued. Women also face further challenges, including lack of accommodations, financial barriers, lack of connection between vocational education and labour market demands, and limited part-time programmes. These challenges in both basic education and TVET explain the constraints on the participation of girls and women. A recent study also indicated that gender disparities in education and experience contribute to 6 percent and 14 percent respectively of the gross gender wage gap (UNDP, 2021).

Gender gaps in access to education are particularly evident among ethnic minorities and people with disabilities. Indigenous women in Cambodia have a higher illiteracy rate and fewer educational opportunities than their male counterparts (IWGIA, 2022). The drop-out rate for both Indigenous female and male adolescents aged 14-18 is of significant concern. Girls are more affected than boys due to a higher demand on girls to do extra household chores during COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in a widening educational disparity for people with disabilities and people living in poverty (UN Cambodia, 2022).

#### 2.2.4 Land rights and inheritance

In Cambodia, the 2001 Land Law establishes a system for the systematic titling of the land but does not explicitly provide for joint registration of common marital property. Beginning in 2002, the Government of Cambodia started efforts to systematically classify and register all land parcels according to the categories detailed in the 2001 Land Law. In 2008, there was a change in the land titling process to ensure the strengthening of women's access to land tenure. The change provided for the registration of the names of both spouses. Certificates of land title can be granted by the local Cadastral Administration Office, although the process of obtaining a land title is lengthy and often includes delays. Many women also struggle to get land registered in their name due to a lack of information about land rights and land title processes in the law (Cambodia Land Law, 2008).

A report by FAO (2022) indicated that, in Cambodia, women hold more than 18 percent of the land title and 63 percent of land title is conjugal (MoLMUPC, 2019). Even though progress has been made for gender equity in land tenure, women still face several challenges. Women in female-headed households and rural women in male-headed households face barriers in access to land titles including customary practices that undermine the principles of joint land ownership (Land Portal, 2022). Gender-biased norms often prevent women from exercising or

claiming their rights. Consequently, land titles are mostly registered in the name of men (MAFF, 2022). In addition, many rural women are facing the risk of losing their land in case of a divorce, widowhood or their husband's migration since many poor families in rural Cambodia lack vital registered records for identification of property ownership such as marriage certificates, separation certificates, spouse disappearance confirmation, etc.

### 2.2.5 Health, food security and nutrition

In the 2022 Global Hunger Index, Cambodia ranks 75<sup>th</sup> out of the 121 countries with a score of 17.1 indicating that Cambodia has a moderate level of hunger (Global Hunger Index, 2022). Although Cambodia has made significant progress in improving food security and nutrition and health services, these issues remain a challenge for young children, women and many rural people. Female-led households' share of moderate or severe food insecurity in 2022 was at 28.7 percent compared to 23.1 percent of male-led households (MOP and NIS, 2022). The preliminary finding of Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey (CDHS) 2021-2022 also shows that the prevalence of stunting (chronic malnutrition) in children under five was reduced from 32 percent in 2014 to 22 percent in 2022 while 10 percent of children under five still suffer wasting (acute malnutrition). This has remained unchanged in the past decade. The level is even higher in some provinces where the level of wasting exceeds the emergency level at over 15 percent. In contrast, childhood overweight and obesity levels have doubled in recent years. This issue of overweight and obesity is also increasingly high among women at reproductive age at 18 percent. Most women who are overweight are older women.

This malnutrition is a major concern contributing to mortality and decreased health and productivity, including the maternal and child mortality death rate. A recent report in July 2022 from the joint UN agencies pointed out Cambodia now faces new threats to food security and nutrition as local and global food prices have increased dramatically. This has been compounded with existing socio-economic vulnerabilities due to COVID-19 pandemic and multiple climate shocks. Due to the rise of local prices, especially on inputs supply, the prices of locally produced food, including widely consumed like duck eggs and morning glory and imported products for daily consumptions have also rapidly increased.

In 2017, one in five Cambodian people and in some parts of the country two in three people could not even afford the least expensive nutritious diet (CARD and WFP, 2017). Thus, children in Cambodia are not consuming adequate quantities of needed nutrients. After COVID-19, Cambodian households reported that they responded to reduced food access by switching to cheaper food, with more than half of households cutting the size of meals and reducing intake of foods with important nutrients. This affects more on women and girls due to their social norms and given priority to feeding and taking care of family members, especially men (considered as breadwinner of the family) and boys. Notably, the proportion of women meeting the standards for minimum dietary diversity dropped from 68 percent to 55 percent in 2021 (UNICEF and WFP, 2021).

Women play a crucial role in Cambodia's food system. They are involved in production, processing, transport and preparation of food. Cambodian women undertake diverse activities, from unpaid work, such as cooking food for their families on a daily basis, to generating livelihood through their work in the farming activities. Most of women are also involved in harvest and post-harvest activities and have roles in their community.

Moreover, women's fundamental role in providing food security and maintaining the role of caregiver, being responsible for most of the housework and raising children, is usually considered an expectation of their traditional gendered role. Women have limited access to needed resources and unequal decision-making powers at different levels, including at household and community levels (EU in Cambodia, 2021).

### 2.2.6 Women's participation in decision-making power, voice, and political representation

Women's participation in decision-making and leadership remains limited in both the public and private sectors. The proportion of women in the National Assembly is only 20.8 percent (26 out of 125 seats) and 16 percent in the Senate (10 out of 62 seats) (MoWA, 2019).

Although women accounted for 41 percent of civil servants, women's representation in government administration and decision-making is generally at the lowest levels of the hierarchy in all levels of government from the national to the local level. In 2020, women made up about 16 percent of senior government positions from Under-Secretary of State



to Deputy Prime Minister. One woman (10 percent) held the position of deputy prime minister, three women (10.3 percent) were ministers, 17 percent of secretaries of state, and undersecretaries of state or holders of equal ranks, were women. Women comprised less than 10 percent in the positions of general directors and deputy general directors as well as the directors of the department (MoWA, 2022).

At the subnational level, there was only one-woman governor (4 percent) at the provincial or capital level, and 7 women (3.5 percent) out of 197 municipality/district/khan governors. There were more female deputy governors, with women comprising 26 of 150 (17.3 percent) capital/provincial deputy governors, and 25.2 percent of municipality/district/khan deputy governors (MoWA, 2022). The proportion of women's representation in the commune/Sangkat council (CC) increased from 14 percent in 2017 to 22 percent in 2022. There is an increase in women as commune/Sangkat chiefs from 7.8 percent in 2017 to 10 percent in 2022 (NEC, 2022).

### 2.2.7 Gender-based violence and social norms

Numerous forms of gender-based violence (GBV), including rape, domestic violence (DV), and intimate partner violence (IPV), affect many men, women, boys, and girls in Cambodia, but reporting of incidents remains low. Poor access to services and justice for survivors are serious constraints.

However, there has been progress in addressing GBV. The National Action Plan on Violence Against Women 2019-2023, coordinated by the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA), has been developed to include contemporary issue and new initiatives to more effectively address violence against women. Based on secondary data analysis of the report of Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey 2014 on women's experience of domestic violence, both physical and sexual violence remain major concerns for adult women. One in five women aged 15-49 have experienced physical violence at least once in their lifetime and 6 percent of them had been exposed to sexual violence at least once since they were born. 85 percent of ever-married women who experienced sexual violence also experienced other forms of violence (including physical and emotional violence). Nearly half of ever-married women aged 15-49 who had suffered both physical and sexual violence perpetrated by their partners sustained physical injuries. Another national survey from MoWA and WHO showed that one quarter of women who had experienced physical or sexual IPV reported

that it had considerable negative impact on their physical and/or mental health, ranging from physical injuries to loss of concentration and memory loss, to having suicidal thoughts (MoWA and WHO, 2014). The emotional abuse may be less visible but equally devastating. It was reported that almost one third of women (32 percent) have experienced emotional abuse from their partner (MoWA and WHO, 2014).

The prevalence of violence against women is higher in rural areas than in urban areas with 29.6 percent and 23.1 percent respectively. Women in rural areas, particularly those having lower income and those with no schooling or lower levels of education are more likely to experience violence (MoWA, 2016).

Reports from men confirms that IPV is pervasive in Cambodia. More than one in three (36 percent) of ever-partnered men reported perpetrating physical and/or sexual violence against a female partner during their lifetime (Fulu, 2013), and this was true across different ages, regions, and income levels. Men also reported particularly high rates of economic abuse. More than half of ever-partnered men (53 percent) had perpetrated some type of economic abuse (Fulu, 2013).

The cost of sexual harassment of garment workers—in turnover, absenteeism and reduced productivity on the job – has been estimated at almost USD 89 million per year (CARE International, 2017). Research into sexual harassment found that 89 percent of all respondents (not just those who reported harassment) felt unsafe working or studying at night and 24 percent felt unsafe when using public spaces at any time (ActionAid, 2014).

Harmful social norms and gender discrimination are both a cause and consequence of violence against women and girls. Harmful social norms including patriarchal values that condone violence against women and children remain the main barriers hindering Cambodian women from gaining wider opportunities for economic empowerment, participation in the household and in different levels of decision-making, enjoying career development, and acting against domestic violence. Women and men still believe that husbands can beat their wife or female partners for a specific reason, mostly related to unperforming well in their roles at home. Cambodia's cultural practices and gender norms continue to contribute to gender inequality in the division of labour at the household level (MoP and NIS, 2014).



# 3

## POLICIES AND LEGAL FRAMEWORKS FOR GENDER RESPONSIVE AGRICULTURE





Cambodia has developed a robust policy and institutional framework to promote gender equality and support gender-responsive agriculture. This section includes a summary of gender equality in agriculture commitments and policies of the RGC, and the national and sub-national institutional mechanism and frameworks for gender responsiveness in agriculture.

### 3.1 Gender equality commitments, policies, and plans

The Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) has indicated a commitment to promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. This is reflected in a number of gender-focused policies and national strategic plans.

Cambodia has ratified almost all international human rights instruments, several of which are relevant in the advancement of gender equality and protection of women's and girls' rights, notably the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the CEDAW Optional Protocol, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It also endorsed the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995 on advancing gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) and the Beijing+25 review report which also called for the action, to ensure that all people, particularly women and girls living in poverty and in vulnerable situations benefit from inclusive economic growth and development (UNESCAP, 2019). The constitution of Cambodia also clearly states that men and women are equal before the law and that women should be free from all forms of violence and exploitation (RGC, 2008).

Cambodia has endorsed the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development. The Cambodia Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2016-2030 provides a strong framework to promote gender equality and improve the status of women, particularly in the SDG goal 5 on gender equality, the SDG goal 2 to 'end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture', and the SDG goal 12 on responsive consumption and production.

Aligned with the above international frameworks and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Rectangular Strategy for Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency Phase IV 2019-2023 (RS-IV) provides

the framework for policies and strategies addressing poverty reduction and promoting economic empowerment in four strategic areas: (i) human resource development, (ii) economic diversifications, (iii) promotion of private sector development and employment, and (iv) inclusive and sustainable development. The strategy recognizes gender equality as a key component of national development, capacity building, and human resources development, and highlights the need to further improve the status of women, who are the backbone of national economy and society (RGC, 2019). This has been further elaborated in the National Strategic Development Plan (2019-2023), which focuses on promoting the role of women in political and technical positions at the national and sub-national levels, mainstreaming gender aspects in government initiatives and policies, and promoting women's economic empowerment, particularly through entrepreneurship and increased access to technical and vocational training for women (RGC, 2018).

The Fifth Neary Ratanak – a five-year national strategic plan (2019-2023) developed under the coordination of the Ministry of Women's Affairs, also provides comprehensive framework and objectives for mainstreaming gender and women's empowerment in sectoral policies, strategic plans, and development programmes at all levels throughout the country. It focuses on key strategic areas related to women's economic development, education, health, legal protection, women's public leadership and politics, and climate change.

Cambodia has enacted several laws to promote and protect women's and girls' rights and interests. This includes the 2001 Land Law to ensure women's and men's equal rights to land ownership, the 2005 laws on the Prevention of Domestic Violence and the Protections of Victims, and the 2008 Law on the Suppression of Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation. Cambodia also endorsed a National Social Protection Policy Framework (2016-2025) which has recently been expanded to cover women and girls in vulnerable situations, including those experiencing shocks. It has limited scope in addressing gender-related issues, including unpaid care and domestic work.

The National Social Protection Policy Framework 2016–2025 is comprised of two main pillars: Social Assistance and Social Security. It has been developed using a life cycle approach to the social protection



system. Social Assistance foresees interventions for the poor and most vulnerable and includes four components: 1) emergency response, 2) human capital development 3) vocational training and 4) welfare for vulnerable people. Social security focuses on assisting

poor and vulnerable people, including people living close to the poverty line, infants, children, pregnant women, families with food insecurity, people with disabilities and the elderly.

**Table 3: Gender equality relevant policies and frameworks in Cambodia**

Sector	Name of Strategy/Plan	Key Focus
Women's rights	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)	Rights-based approaches towards prevention and protection of all forms of discrimination against women.
Human rights	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	Rights-based approaches towards economic, social and cultural rights.
Child's rights (Girl's rights)	Convention on the Rights of the Child	Prevention and Protection of Child's rights.
Gender equality	Beijing Platform for Action	Advancing gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE)
Economic development	Beijing+25	Actions reviewed for women and girls living in poverty and in vulnerable situations to benefit from inclusive economic growth and development.
Sustainable development	Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – goal 5	Promoting gender equality and improve the status of women.
	Rectangular Strategy for Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency Phase IV 2019–2023 (RS-IV)	Poverty reduction and promoting economic empowerment in four strategic areas.
Gender and women's economic empowerment	The Fifth Neary Ratanak 2019–2023	Mainstreaming gender and women's empowerment aspects in sectoral policies, strategic plans, and development programmes at all levels throughout the country.
Land	2001 Land Law	Women's and men's equal rights to land ownership.
Domestic violence	The Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence and the Protections of Victims, 2005	Human rights and protection from domestic violence.
Human trafficking and sexual exploitation	2008 Law on the Suppression of Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation	Human rights and law on human trafficking and sexual exploitation.
Social protection	National Social Protection Framework (2016-2025) – 2 pillars	Social protection, which has recently been expanded to cover women and girls in vulnerable situations, including those experiencing shocks

Source: Authors' own elaboration.



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### 3.2 Government mechanisms and institutional frameworks for gender equality

Cambodia has established national machinery to promote gender equality and women's empowerment under the coordination of the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA). MoWA provides support for gender mainstreaming activities across all government ministries. The Cambodian National Council for Women (CNCW) is an inter-ministerial mechanism to oversee, coordinate and report on the implementation of CEDAW. It is responsible for providing recommendations to the RGC on the implementation of CEDAW in Cambodia and compiling periodical national CEDAW reports.

Other structures of national machinery are the Technical Working Group on Gender (TWG-G) and the Gender Mainstreaming Action Groups (GMAGs) in the line ministries and government agencies. TWG-G is an inter-ministerial coordination body that supports the implementation and monitoring of

efforts and commitments to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. It is chaired by MoWA. GMAGs is mandated to develop and implement gender mainstreaming action plans (GMAPs) for their respective ministries. At MAFF, it is named as the "Working Group on Gender and Child Labour (WG-GCL)". They provide a mechanism for institutionalizing gender mainstreaming into sectoral policies and programmes. There were 30 out of 31 line-ministries and institutions that had developed Gender Mainstreaming Action Plans (GMAPs) in 2018 (UNESCAP, 2019).

At the sub-national level, the Women and Children Consultative Committees (WCCCs) have been instituted at the provincial, municipal, district/khan levels; Commune Committee for Women and Children (CCWCs) were established at commune/sangkat level. The roles of these committees are to provide advice and recommendations on issues related to gender equality, women's and children's issues within the authority, function, and duties of the council at sub-national levels.

**Table 4: Summary of government mechanisms and institutional framework for gender equality**

Responsible Ministry	Name of the Framework	Key Focus
At national level		
CNCW	Inter-ministerial mechanism	to oversee, coordinate and report on the implementation of CEDAW
MoWA	Technical Working Group on Gender	Inter-ministerial
Line Ministries	Gender Mainstreaming Action Groups (GMAGs)	Mandatory for gender mainstreaming action plans in respective ministries
MAFF	Working Group on Gender and Child Labour (WG-GCL)	to promote gender equality and women's empowerment within MAFF
At sub-national level		
District/Provincial Governor	Women and Children Consultative Committees (WCCCs)	to provide advice and recommendations on gender-related issues at provincial, municipal, and district/khan levels
Commune Chief	Commune Committee for Women and Children (CCWCs)	to provide advice and recommendations on gender-related issues at commune level

Source: Authors' own elaboration.



### 3.3 Gender aspects in agriculture and rural development policies and strategies

Agricultural policies, strategies and plans recognize the crucial role of women in production processes in agriculture, forestry and fisheries, and in environmental stability. The Agricultural Sector Master Plan 2030 and particularly the Agriculture Strategic Development Plan 2019-2023 acknowledge gender differentiated roles and integration of gender aspects in strategic development, including raising awareness about gender issues, strengthening women's networks in agriculture, increasing the influence, capability and number of women in leadership roles at national and sub-national levels, and improving accessibility to resource management and extension services for rural women (UN Women and CDRI, 2021).

MAFF's recent Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Strategic Framework in Agriculture (GMPSFA) 2022-2026 aims to effectively implement and achieve gender equality and women's empowerment stated in the Agriculture Strategic Development Plan. GMPSFA recognizes the significant contribution of Cambodian's women in the agricultural sector, including in agricultural labour, production, harvesting, processing, marketing and food supply chains. Climate change is a cross-cutting issue that affects agriculture, livestock, fisheries and forestry practices. GMPSFA's key strategic objectives focus on 1) promoting women's economic empowerment through women's access to goods and services for agricultural development and market; 2) strengthening capacities, resources and commitment within MAFF to ensure effective mainstreaming of gender perspective into agriculture sector; 3) increasing women's and men's equal representation and participation in agriculture sector; and 4) improving collaboration and coordination between all stakeholders in agriculture sector, climate change and natural resource management.

The Fisheries Strategic Planning Framework (2019-2023) recognizes the important role of women and persisting gender inequalities in the sub-sector. The Fishery Administration has endorsed the Action Plan for Gender Equality Promotion and Child Labour Elimination in fisheries 2016-2020 in alignment with the implementation of the ministry's gender mainstreaming policy. To update an action plan for the Gender Equality Promotion and Child Labour Elimination in Fishery sector, 2022-2026, the FiA Working Group on Gender and Child Labour (FiA WG-GCL) was established to lead and coordinate

the development and implementation of the Action Plan, and, in collaboration with various development partners including FAO, has been working towards these objectives. A stocktaking of the progress, gaps and challenges of the implementation of previous gender action plan in this sub-sector was conducted to inform and update the next five years of the action plan for the Gender Equality and Child Labour Elimination in Fishery sector. The national Fishery Administration's Gender Promotion and Child Labour Action Plan 2022-2026 was developed by FiA in consultation with relevant development partners and local communities. This action plan aims to contribute to the following five interconnected long-term objectives: 1) effective mainstreaming of gender and child protection perspectives in main Strategic Frameworks through strengthened capacities and management mechanisms; 2) equality of women and men in representation and participation in decision-making for informed fisheries planning; 3) equality of women and men to access economic and natural resources, training opportunities, information and technology; 4) protect girls and boys from child labour in the fisheries sector; 5) strengthened accountability and delivery mechanisms, including targeted data collection within the sub-sectorial information systems and research. The action plan was informed by the recommendations to combat child labour and enhance women's empowerment in fisheries. These recommendations were derived from the Gender Analysis and Gender and Child Labour assessment conducted in 2021 in the context of the Cambodia Programme for Sustainable and Inclusive Growth in the Fisheries Sector (CAPFISH) which was financed by the European Union (EU).

The government is also committed to promoting gender considerations in the forestry and the natural resource management sectors. The National Forest Programme 2010-2029 includes the participation of women in the management of the institutional structures and management of the Forestry Administration to make the forestry sector more efficient and effective. An update of Gender Mainstreaming in the forestry sector by the Forestry Administration is currently prepared (UN Women and CDRI, 2021).

Cambodia's Roadmap for Food Systems for Sustainable Development 2030 also emphasizes empowerment of youth, women and the vulnerable groups in Cambodia, through promotion of gender equality, decent employment, enterprise development and the



creation of job opportunities for youth, women and the vulnerable in the food system (Council for Agriculture and Rural Development and the Technical Working Group for Food Security and Nutrition, 2021).

Gender aspects have been mainstreamed in key policies and strategic plans on addressing issues of climate change and disaster risk in relevant ministry sectors, such as specific impacts of climate change on women.

The Cambodia Climate Change Strategic Plan 2014-2023 (CCCS) recognizes women's differentiated vulnerability to climate change and presents gender equality as one pathway to reduce vulnerabilities (UN Women, 2016). Women's reliance on agriculture and natural resources is also highlighted, as are women's limited resources and capacity to adapt to the changing climate. CCCSP's strategic objectives include consideration of gender issues and identifies women as beneficiaries (Royal Government of Cambodia, 2013).

The Climate Change Strategic Plan for Agriculture, Agri-industry, Animal Production, Fisheries and Forestry 2013-2018, and the Climate Change Priorities Action Plan 2014-2018 also highlight gender responsiveness in the policy, strategies, key activities, management and financial management, and monitoring and evaluation framework by recognizing the gendered

impacts of climate change and proposing to promote an understanding of the impacts of climate change and the need for disaster risk reduction among males and females (MAFF, 2013, 2014).

The RGC's National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction 2019-2023 (NAP DRR) also emphasizes enhancing vulnerable social groups' (such as women, youth, children the elderly and people with disabilities) awareness of and resilience to disaster risks and increasing the accessibility of early warning systems for these groups (NCDM, 2020).

The Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Plan in Environment Sector 2021-2025 has been developed based on the experiences and achievements of the Strategic Plan 2016-2020. This Strategic Plan is a roadmap contributing to gender inequality reduction, women's rights improvement and women empowerment in the environment sector by creating spaces and opportunities for women in access to resources and in decision-making in the use of resources, enhancing agricultural livelihoods and rural communities' resilience to climate change and in strengthening the equal partnership of men and women in natural resources protection and governance that promotes participation and inclusion, especially disadvantage groups.

Table 5: Relevant policies and frameworks on gender in agriculture and rural development

Responsible Ministry	Name of the Framework	Key Focus
MAFF	Agriculture Strategic Development Plan 2019-2023	Strategic roadmap for agriculture sector, in which there are links to Gender Mainstreaming Policy.
MAFF	Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Strategic Framework in Agriculture (GMPSFA) 2022-2026	Main guiding framework for gender equality and women's empowerment stated in the agriculture.
Fishery Administration, MAFF	Fisheries Strategic Planning Framework (2019-2023)	A strategic framework for fisheries plan.
Fishery Administration, MAFF	Action Plan for Gender Equality Promotion and Child Labour Elimination in Fisheries 2016-2020	Fisheries administration's working Group on Gender and Child Labour (FiA WG-GCL)
Forestry Administration, MAFF	National Forest Programme 2010-2029	Includes the participation of women in the management of the institutional structures and management of the Forestry Administration to make the forestry sector more efficient and effective.
Forestry Administration, MAFF	Gender Mainstreaming in the Forestry Sector	At preparation stage – it will focus on the empowerment of youth, women and the vulnerable groups in Cambodia as part of food system and forestry.
RGC	Cambodia Climate Change Strategic Plan 2014-2023	Recognizes women's differentiated vulnerability to climate change and presents gender equality as one pathway to reduce vulnerabilities. Each ministry needs to establish action plans to implement this.
MAFF	Climate Change Strategic Plan for Agriculture, Agri-industry, Animal Production, Fisheries and Forestry 2013-2018	Highlights gender responsiveness in the policy, strategies, key activities, management and financial management, and monitoring and evaluation framework.
RGC	National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction 2019-2023	Emphasizes enhancing vulnerable social groups' (such as women, youth, children the elderly and people with disabilities) awareness of and resilience to disaster risks and increasing the accessibility of early warning systems for these groups.
MoE	Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Plan in Environment Sector 2021-2025	A roadmap contributing to gender inequality reduction, women's rights improvement and women empowerment in the environmental sector.

Source: Authors' own elaboration.



# 4

## GENDER ANALYSIS OF THE AGRICULTURE AND RURAL SECTORS



## 4.1 Emerging gender inequalities in the agricultural value chains and rural livelihoods

The majority of rural households in Cambodia are small-scale farmers engaged in crop production, including rice-based agriculture, cultivation of vegetable and fruit crops, livestock production, fisheries, and collection of forest products to meet household consumption needs and, through the sale of surpluses, to generate income. This section describes women's and men's roles in agriculture value chains, access to and control over productive resources and services in the context of structural changes to agriculture and rural economies, including labour migration, export-led agriculture, and climate-related impacts.

### 4.1.1 Agricultural crops production

For crop production, women are engaged in a wide range of crop value chains and manage many functions as small-scale farmers and collectors, retailers, and wholesalers. In general, farming is considered as a household activity. However, agricultural activities such as land preparation, irrigation control, fertilizer and pesticide application are divided as men's or women's work. Mechanization, manual works, and operation of farm equipment are generally performed by men, whereas women take care of seed, seedlings, weed control, transplanting, etc. (ADB, 2018).

Women are often responsible for communication and contact with local service providers or hiring labour in the cycle of transplanting and harvesting. When men chose to migrate for waged employment, women increasingly manage all farming activities.

Women are also increasingly engaged in the programmes' activities at the national and sub-national levels on improving technologies, practical demonstrations with modern seeds to increase yields, and in monitoring rice seeds for quality (MAFF, 2022).

Cambodian women are increasingly engaged in horticultural crop production such as vegetables and

fruit trees as cash crops for sale. The tasks are generally performed close to home and are more likely to be performed by women than men. The cultivation of other industrial crops is often the primary responsibility of men although women actively contribute to weeding, harvesting, and post-harvest management (MAFF, 2022). Moreover, Cambodia Agriculture Survey (CAS) 2020 shows that women's involvement in agriculture is 522 hours per year, not much different from the 651 average hours performed by men (MoP, 2021).

Decisions related to agricultural production were not always made jointly by women and men, although women are actively involved in performing tasks. Men usually make all decisions related to seed selection, herbicides used, and the cropping system to follow. They also propose investment ideas related to purchasing machinery and expanding agricultural production. Women are primarily responsible for managing household income and spending and are usually consulted on household finance related issues prior to the men making the decisions (ADB, 2018).

There is often a joint discussion and agreement between women and men on selling or purchasing land and accessing loans as it is a requirement from the bank to have both husband and wife's names and signatures. Searching and identifying the sources of loans is usually done by women.<sup>1</sup>

Decisions about where and to whom crops should be sold is often made jointly by women and men. It is often the responsibility of women to contact the collector via phone and source the current market price of their products.<sup>2</sup>

In some Indigenous communities, women have less voice and power in the major decision-making, and men usually perform all tasks including contacting collectors and searching for the market price of the products. The price is set by the local collectors as there is limited access to market information among household members. The price often fluctuates and may be very low during harvesting and collection of crops.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Interviews with women and men farmers in various studies, including gender assessment of agri-ecological transition and through WFP study.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.



#### 4.1.2 Livestock and poultry

Rural households generally perform various farming activities, including farming crops, animal raising, and other jobs for income generation. Raising livestock and poultry in Cambodia is an important source of food and supplementary income for the rural households. For many rural poor households, especially for women, livestock and poultry serve as a source of saving as well as insurance for health issues and shocks, including natural disasters such as flood and drought.

Based on the CSES 2019/2020, 54 percent of all households engaged in raising livestock and poultry. The most common types of livestock and poultry are chickens (57 percent), followed by raising ducks (35 percent), and cattle (4 percent). Comparing by gender, the share of households headed by men who raised livestock and poultry is higher than the share of households headed by women in four zones, except Phnom Penh (MoP and NIS, 2020).

**Table 6: Number of households raising livestock and poultry by sex of head of households and zone, 2019/2020 (in thousands and percent)**

Number of households	Zone											
	Cambodia		Phnom Penh		Plain		Tonle Sap		Coastal		Plateau/ Mountain	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Households missing livestock and poultry	336	1 622	3	13	155	628	107	541	23	129	48	310
All households	782	2 854	161	371	290	992	208	843	37	194	86	455
Percent of all households	42.9	56.8	1.6	3.6	53.4	63.3	51.4	64.2	62.7	66.4	56.2	68.2

Source: National Institute of Statistics, 2020. Cambodia Agriculture Survey 2019/2020. [www.nis.gov.kh/nis/Agriculture/CAS2020/CAS2020\\_Final\\_Report\\_EN.pdf](http://www.nis.gov.kh/nis/Agriculture/CAS2020/CAS2020_Final_Report_EN.pdf)

The national CSES report also showed that women actively engage in livestock and poultry activities nearby their house while their reproductive roles are constructed traditionally in household caring for the family (FAO, 2022). However, on average women have fewer animals than men (13.4 chickens for women and 19.5 for men) (MoP and NIS, 2020). The interviews with key informants of the study indicated that despite women's active participation in livestock and poultry value chains, they usually recognized poorly in value chain interventions and received less benefits. Moreover, livestock and poultry raising was reportedly decreasing due to the threatening impacts of climate change, such as floods, increasing temperature and diseases. Other challenges include lack of water, lack of food, and the intensive nature of labour. The traditional method of animal and poultry raising, such as leaving the cows to feed on the farm or forest nearby is still practiced by most rural villagers. Most smallholder farmers, especially women still have limited knowledge

and/or skills in operating medium or large scale-farm, and they lack entrepreneurial skills and capital to invest in poultry and livestock infrastructure, medication/or vaccines, and to purchase feed.

#### 4.1.3 Fisheries and aquaculture

Based on a Gender Analysis report on post-harvest fisheries in Cambodia in 2021 (UNIDO) fisheries play an important role for the Cambodian economy, providing income, jobs, food security and nutrition for the rural population. Small-scale fisheries contribute to the majority of fish catches (more than three-quarters) in Cambodia and employ more than 90 percent of people working in fisheries. About half of the workers in fisheries are women, who are mostly active in the pre- and post-harvest sector as preparing fishing operations, processing, marketing and trading, but also fish in their own boats or together with other family members.

However, albeit the significant contribution of women at all stages of the supply chain, including captures, and their preponderance in downstream activities of fish selling and processing, their role tends to be conceptualized more as an extension of domestic work, and thus not sufficiently documented in fisheries statistics and research and undervalued in the economic sense.

All along the fish value chain, women face gender inequalities that limit their capacity to develop, upgrade and secure their livelihoods and income.

The report on post-harvest fisheries in Cambodia in 2021 (UNIDO) reveals that a half of the wholesale businesses and 80 percent of retail businesses are owned by women, whereas 38.5 percent of these businesses are co-owned by both men and women. However, women-led post-harvest MSMEs tended to have smaller business operations and were less likely to have plans for business expansion, than the SMEs solely owned by men or in joint ownership.

Among fish processing businesses, female ownership accounts for 42 percent of the business, while joint ownership is at 55 percent (UNIDO, 2021). Women are predominately employed in the processing segment, accounting for 54 percent of fermented products, 67 percent of marinated fish and fish ball products, and 75 percent of fish sauce production and half of dried shrimp production (MAFF, 2022). Women mostly support fisheries in the tasks such as purchasing raw materials, fish selection, sorting, cleaning, salting, fermenting, and smoking fish. They are more visible in decision-making and post-harvest activities related to marketing, and in tasks that require negotiation skills. Most bookkeeping at household level, as well as community financial management, is done by women.

In addition, about 47 000 households, more than 1 percent of all households in Cambodia, were engaged in aquaculture activities in 2020. Women were also found to be playing a larger role in household-based aquaculture than men. Despite women's extensive participation in aquaculture activities, they are largely bypassed for technical training and technology transfer and underrepresented in community fisheries and local leadership positions. Moreover, women's representation and voices in decision making in the Community Fisheries (CFi)<sup>4</sup> remain limited. Out of the total 516 Community

Fisheries (CFi) that were formed with 332 168 members, countrywide there were less than 35 percent women, and only 17 percent women have been selected for taking roles in the Community Fisheries' Management Committees, being in administrative roles, cashiers, and so on. Therefore, it is recommended to set a gender quota when selecting a committee at CFi level.

This may be explained by underlying gender inequalities as women's lack of time due to their triple roles, social norms undervaluing women's contribution and knowledge in fisheries and hindering them to raise their concerns, women's low literacy skills, and their lack of mobility, especially since some fishing communities are floating villages or close to the water (MAFF, 2020). Other prevailing constraints include that women lack capital, technology and equipment. The reduction of available fish resources leads to reduced capacity to repay loan and fears of debt bondage. A 2021 report of UNIDO-Captured Fisheries, also highlighted the concerns of men and women fishers on illegal fishing activities, adverse effects from hydropower dams in the Mekong and its streams, limited capacity of community fisheries to protect their natural resources, lack of understanding of their rights and the law, weak law enforcement, effects from the use of chemical inputs in agriculture etc. (UNIDO, 2021).

Based on discussion with multi-stakeholders and staff of FAO projects, they suggested that there is need for joint efforts in addressing challenges of the CFi and to improve fishery conservation and protection. Three key concrete actions are essential to be considered: 1) enhanced capacity of the government at the national, sub-national level, and community to manage fisheries resources including efforts to enact and implement domestic fisheries legislation, related regulatory frameworks and international treaties; 2) support targeted fisheries and conservation area in the community fisheries and fishery domains, with particular attention to women's political and economic empowerment to better manage natural resources and livelihoods through the design and implementation of gender-sensitive strategies for fishery management, and for food system; and 3). assist fish farming communities, and dependent community fisheries and fish farmers' organizations and other key stakeholders at sub-national level to improve their adaptive capacity to climate change, and to prepare for and respond to the natural threats and related crises.

<sup>4</sup> Community Fishery (CFi) is established to improve management of local fisheries and to ensure local food security. The CFi is managed and coordinated by the management committee members that are selected from community members.

#### 4.1.4 Forestry

Forestry accounted for about 1.6 percent of GDP (2019) in Cambodia (ADB, 2021) and contributed to the livelihoods of many communities and impoverished families living near and in the forest area. Men and women have different interests in accessing to forest resources, with men focusing more on forest products and women more on non-timber forest products for subsistence such as food and for income generation. The 2019 census showed that women comprised of 41.4 percent of those working in forestry, including hunting and logging services, gathering non-timber forest products and supporting other forestry related services. Collecting non-timber forest products, accounted for 65.1 percent of forest work, with 45.7 percent of this workforce being women and 54.3 percent for men (UN Women and CDRI, 2021).

Although women's involvement is believed to contribute to sustainable forest management in term of the most effective use of forest functions, women's participation in important meetings and decision-making processes at different levels are very limited. Only 21.5 percent of women represented in the management committees of 645 forestry communities with almost half of total members are women (RECOFTC, 2019; Forestry Administration Report, 2022). Moreover, the Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Strategy Framework in Agriculture 2022-2026 pointed out that women's access to information and education, including technical capacities is still limited. Women are less likely than men in accessing to new technologies, appropriate trainings and credit and market. Social norms and attitudes are still strongly enforced in this sector. There are perceptions that forestry activities are men's work. Women are usually not encouraged to participate in forestry community committee as it is not appropriate for women to perform the tasks at nighttime and due to concerns for women's safety (MAFF, 2022).

Furthermore, expansion of agricultural lands has been known to be the main driver of deforestation and forest degradation. In Cambodia, this has been linked to the agricultural production of commodities such as rubber, palm oil, and cassava. The forestry sector is being impacted by changes in forest cover, increasing forest conversion and land-use change, and the impact of climate change on the forestry community (UN

Women and CDRI, 2021). These have tremendous impact on climate change resilience, carbon emissions, biodiversity loss, and on rural communities and livelihoods dependent on agricultural lands and forest resources. The indigenous communities who are most likely living nearby forest are the most affected by deforestation and forest degradation, especially women as they highly depend on forest products. Research suggested that gender concerns should be taken into consideration in forest projects and programmes. The better inclusion of women and gender-responsive processes would more successfully address concerns relating to sustainable forestry and environmental management.

#### 4.1.5 Livelihood diversifications

The report by the Asian Development Bank (2019) reveals that besides agricultural income generation activity, many of Cambodia's rural households especially the poor rely on natural resources such as land, fisheries, forests, and clean rivers and other livelihood activities. Many rural women are also engaged in other economic activities through owning and operating micro-enterprises or are employed in a range of income-generating activities such as small stores that sell food, drinks, household goods, and other commodities and services such as food carts and restaurants, tailoring and sewing and hairdressing, and handicrafts. These activities can be seasonal, informal, full-time, or part-time work to provide additional household income and income security; however, they do not provide rural women with decent and formal employment opportunities.

#### 4.1.6 Access to agriculture value chains and markets

Both men and women can access to agricultural inputs and supplies for production. However, women play a more important role in some farming tasks such as seedlings, planting, buying and applying fertilizer whereas men manage other tasks such as machinery, pesticide spray, transportation of post-harvest produces (MAFF, 2020). Furthermore, women are responsible for these activities in addition to their crucial role of ensuring the food security and nutrition of their households and managing the care needs of their children and families. Women are also accountable for the financial supervision of the household (MAFF, 2022).

Significantly, women make major contributions in planting, crop caring, harvesting, processing, and transporting from communities as well as in managing logistics of the wholesale or retail of the agricultural crops and products. Managing multiple tasks, women are small-scale producers, operators or owners of their agri-businesses<sup>5</sup> and as small-scale non-timber forest collectors and retailers (FAO, 2022).

With the growth and expansion of the agricultural economy of Cambodia, women are increasingly involved in the commercially oriented agricultural production and agri-business value chains including the wholesale and retail marketing of agricultural products. They are involved as collectors and/or traders, are the principal retail sellers in the local markets and are often responsible for managing the finances of their enterprises (ADB, 2018). In addition, many women own or are active partners in the input supply of agri-businesses, dealing directly with clients and providing information and knowledge of the use of inputs, fertilizers and pesticides.

In recent years, improvements in transport infrastructure, adoption of value chain approach by different stakeholders as well as the prevalent use of mobile phones and other digital technologies have facilitated easier access to markets, pricing and reduced market costs for women and men farmers. The value chain strengthens business linkages between producer groups, service providers and other actors, such as processors and importers, rather than focusing exclusively on farm interventions (MAFF and RGC, 2022).

Yet, Cambodian farmers, especially women, have difficulties finding markets for their products. 90 percent of smallholder farmers usually sell their products to middlemen or brokers, traders who dominate in price setting at the farm gate (World Bank, 2015). Based on the experience of FAO projects, female and male farmers have limited knowledge about the products or field crops (short and medium-term) to be produced or cultivated and often follow neighboring farmers who also have limited information on market needs. Lack of market information for agricultural commodities results in excess production. Peak time of surplus produce results in a very low price.

Women farmers increasingly supply local markets and high-value products, but compared to men, women still face a number of disadvantages, including less mobility, lower literacy level, less access to training, less access to market information, and less access to productive resources. Their low financial literacy and concerns for safety during travel are identified as the main gender gaps for Cambodian women to access to markets (ADB, 2018).

As export opportunities in agriculture and agri-processing continue to increase, men are better placed to benefit due to having greater access to market information and networks, enabling them to better understand and work within the system (MAFF, 2022).

Women have less confidence in accessing to knowledge and business skills, particularly of pricing information of their products and services, or being less competent in business development including accounting and business planning skills as compared to men. Women-owned SMEs have shown lack of capacity in financial accounting, marketing, and human resources development compared with men-owned SMEs (IFC, 2019).

#### 4.1.7 Access to finance services and credit

Cambodia has made significant efforts to increase the financial inclusion of women. There are considerable and potential rural financial services in Cambodia, but women still do not have equal access to or fully benefit from these financial services.

According to Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey 2019, men-headed households have better access to credit than women-headed households. 52 percent of women-headed households recently borrowed from banks or MFI compared to 65 percent for men-headed households. When comparing the credit that was approved, the gender ratio was 1:5, meaning that only one woman was given a credit for every five men that got a credit. Moreover, only three percent of the nation's women entrepreneurs, majority are of micro and small businesses, have access to formal credit (IFC, 2019).

Farmers generally take loans from MFIs in small amounts and at greater interest rates compared to commercial banks. The majority of women access

<sup>5</sup> There are a total of 3 359 000 hectares of agricultural land in Cambodia. In 2016 approximately 12.4% (418 000 hectares) was owned by women-headed households, while 87.6% (2 941 000 ha) are owned by men (NIS, 2017).

informal loans, rather than MFIs to avoid the necessity of providing collateral. Multiple stakeholders pointed out that at household level, women were primarily responsible for managing household finance, expenses, and purchases. Micro-finance or credit is accessed to pay for production costs and purchase agricultural inputs and equipment such as seeds, chemical fertilizers, hand tractors, or motorcycles, and also to cover a variety of expenses for food, health and household maintenance. Loan repayments and seeking sources of credit are assumed to be women's responsibilities rather than those of their male counterparts. Repaying interests on loans poses a significant burden for women farmers.

Furthermore, women farmers tend to purchase agricultural inputs and equipment on credit (seed, fertilizer, pesticide, water pump, etc.) which can put them in a risky debt situation with suppliers. They often pay off the debts after they have harvested and sold their agricultural products. A low yield or crop damage caused by natural shock, however, can push women and in particular female headed households more deeply into a critical situation in terms of loan repayment and food shortage. This problem of debt relationship with suppliers can impact women's ability to access better sale price or market via a mechanism such as collective Agriculture Cooperative or contract farming.

The recent COVID-19 situation has made borrowing even more difficult, especially for women-headed households, and farmers vulnerable to climate change. Many family members lost or could not find jobs with a reasonable income to pay back the interest to the bank (ADB, 2022). Microfinance loans to vulnerable groups and the rural poor by microfinance institutions (MFIs), agricultural and rural development banks, and private or informal lenders represent a severe concern for women.

Saving groups supported by government projects and non-governmental organizations for poor and small-household farmers offer a more flexible form of credit loans that can assist farmers with small amounts of household expenditure, and do not require collateral. The interest rate is usually at 1-2 percent per month. Loans are also products being offered by farmer associations or agriculture cooperatives to their members. In the last five years, 817 saving groups were established by MAFF and another 1 905 established

through joint MAFF and NCDDS project funded by ADB (TSSD-AF Project, 2022). In average, 68 percent of saving group members are women, however, only 10 percent of these saving groups are led and managed by women.

#### 4.1.8 Access to agricultural labour and migration

In Cambodia, internal and external migration has heightened the labour shortage in rural areas, although it contributes to increasing incomes of many rural households through remittances. Around 4.1 million people have migrated domestically, and approximately 1.1 million have migrated internationally. More than 35.7 percent of women and 34.4 percent of men migrate from rural to urban areas. Almost half of the migrants were between ages of 20 and 39 for both males and females and 90 percent were aged 15-64 years old (MoP and NIS, 2020). Poverty, lack of income generated from farming activities, debts resulting from crop failure, and emergency medical expenses, are the main reasons for the decision of many rural people to migrate and look for alternative work.

Migration has a strong impact on gender roles and the division of labour in rural Cambodia. It has resulted in a shift in women's participation in the agricultural labour force and their participation in agriculture value chains. There has been increased migration of young women and men to garment factories, construction work, service industries, and others.

Moreover, migration has increased the burdens of care responsibilities of older women in rural communities to look after children and grandchildren and to take care of domestic labour as well as to contribute to productive work (Green and Estes, 2019).

Outmigration of men, on the other hand, can create new opportunities for women, such as becoming more involved in farm management, gaining greater control over household resources and having access to learning opportunities that offered nearby or in the community (MAFF, 2022).

Migration can also increase demand for other services, such as saving markets for remittances, childcare options in the village, the enhancement of a formal agri-business sector for young rural women and access to digital literacy.





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#### 4.1.9 Access to and benefit from agricultural extension services and other services

Access to information, advice, training, and knowledge related to agriculture, fisheries or livestock production, processing, and marketing has improved but is still limited for both men and women farmers. Women often have limited access to extension services and training opportunities due to social norms and gender stereotypes of being responsible for the household and child-care responsibilities, the lack of childcare options and other factors, including distance to the point of service provision and insensitivity to the level of literacy, time constraints and mobility difficulties.

At the same time, there is still a perception that men are exclusively responsible for agriculture-related activities and should have better knowledge and skills related to agriculture. Thus, often men are more likely to be encouraged to participate in agriculture extension activities, learning events and farmer field demonstrations of main crops, than women. Moreover, invitations to extension training activities are made to the head of the household, rather than other members of the household. So, this gives limited opportunity for women farmers to access agriculture-related knowledge and skills compared with men.

There is also the limited capacity of institutions to address this issue for rural agriculture. Despite government efforts to expand extension services for men and women, extension services in Cambodia are still predominantly provided by men, who tend to focus service delivery on male farmers. In 2018, women accounted for 9 percent of the 9 276 village agricultural extension agents and 41 percent of the 1 220 commune agricultural extension agents. Women comprised of 31 percent of the total participants in the training courses provided to provincial, district, communal, and village agricultural extensions staff, agents and farmers (MAFF, 2019). In the field of animal health and animal production, among the 9 262 village animal health agents in the villages who provide technical extension service, care, and protection related to animal husbandry, only 7.7 percent of them were women in 2018.

Women also showed their interest in learning practical information and agricultural techniques that could help their households to increase agricultural productivity, including other crops, besides rice, which are resilient to diseases and climate change, improved cultivation techniques, and water management technologies. Field visits to crop demonstrations in nearby villages/

communes and hands-on technical assistance provided to women farmers would be helpful to gain better knowledge. Increasing female agriculture technical staff and extension workers at both national and sub-national levels and improving their access to capacity-building opportunities is therefore considered essential.

#### 4.1.10 Access to improved and innovative technologies, mechanization, and digitalization

Agriculture mechanization has been increasingly introduced based on the government's vision to transform and modernize the country's industrial structure from a labour-intensive economy to a skill-driven industry by 2023, and the labour shortage caused by people migrating outwards from rural areas. Hand-tractors, tractors, and planter and harvesting machines are increasingly available and used by farmers across the country.

The introduction to new technologies and mechanization impacts women and men farmers differently. Mechanization contributes to increased production, reduces women farmers' workload and facilitates some hard operations. Based on the recent study on Conservation Agriculture and Gendered Livelihood in Cambodia, the use of no-till equipment and machinery in conservation agriculture (CA) practices was indicated to have helped to reduce the amount of time men and women allocated to land preparation. A widowed woman in the Ratanak Mondul district, for example, reported that 'she hired the service of the planter, and the machine does all the work, including applying the fertilizer and sowing the corn seed'. By doing so, she was able to save time and expand corn production (UNDP, 2021).

Increasing mechanization in agriculture may reduce the opportunities for unskilled labour that are particularly important to landless households or those with small plots of land, and women, to generate income. Tractors, planters, or harvesting machines are typically operated by men which has reduced the opportunity for women being engaged in paid jobs. For example, harvest and post-harvest activities, which are often carried out by women, are increasingly undertaken with the use of machines (ADB, 2018).

There are still limited efforts to ensure women have equal access to machinery or training in using new agricultural technologies, particularly machinery. Recent research from the 'gender technology assessment' (2019) showed that access to



women-friendly hand tools and equipment for CA in vegetable production can help to simplify women's time and labour requirements. Equipment such as the drip irrigation system was mentioned by women farmers as useful but technical assistance is needed. Moreover, women need to have access to knowledge on herbicides or cover crops to reduce weed pressure and reduce women's labour burden related to manual weeding.

Digitalization has been introduced and is rapidly increasing in business practices, including in agriculture and agriculture value chains, especially during the restrictions on movements caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Digitalization can create potential benefits for women, including working remotely or from home. Women still face a gender gap in access to such technologies and training for the necessary skill development, particularly for rural women. The digital divides remain a challenge. A study of digital and agriculture (2020) indicated that 85 percent of females own smartphones compared to 94 percent of male respondents. Only 36 percent of female respondents know how to search for agricultural input information through the internet compared to 47 percent of men (CPS, 2020).

#### 4.1.11 Access to land and water

- **Access to land:**

Despite some improvements in women's access to land, including for agricultural land, there are still some gender-based constraints on land registration.

The number of male-headed agricultural households with access to agricultural land is higher than that of female-headed agricultural households. The report of the Cambodia socio-economic survey, conducted between 2019 and 2020, indicates that only around 12 percent (448 thousand hectares) of the total 33 819 thousand hectares of agricultural land in Cambodia were owned by female-headed households. The report also shows that 49 percent of female headed-households have only one plot, while more than 61 percent of male headed-households have more than one plot (MoP, 2020).

In addition, 85 percent of the total agricultural households in Cambodia have access to agricultural land, with an average area of agricultural land per agricultural household of 1.4 hectares. Men comprised of 1.4 million or 73 percent of all holders while women accounted for 0.5 million or 27 percent (MoP, 2019).

Among the total agricultural land used in the wet season (around 2 million hectares), 272 thousand hectares was used by women headed households and 1 682 thousand hectares by men-headed households. Moreover, in the dry season, the share of agricultural land used is even smaller at 36 thousand hectares which were used by women-headed households, while 336 thousand hectares are used by men-headed households (MoP, 2020).

There are some remaining gender-related barriers to access land security, particularly land registration, including issues with access to information about the land titling process, difficulties for women-headed households to acquire paperwork to prove their single status and gender imbalance in control and decision making. Although there are some barriers to land ownership, women can make use of agricultural land owned by men.

- **Water governance:**

In total, there are 33 Farmer Water User Committees (FWUCs) registered in 13 provinces of Cambodia (Gender Analysis Report, 2020). A study report of the WAT4CAM programme of the Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology (MoWRAM) and MAFF indicated that women have less access to and control over water resources, but they are actively engaged in agricultural activities and household work that are related to the needs of water. However, there is low levels of women participating in and voicing their ideas in the decision-making process of FWUC because women's roles are determined by men. Women have not been invited by male committee members to meetings and discussion of irrigation planning. Furthermore, women are less supported and encouraged to participate in water resource management by their husbands as well as the community.

A discussion with the Department of Water Management and Conservation of MoWRAM revealed that less than 25 percent of representatives in management positions of FWUC's committees are women. This is corroborated by a report of gender assessment of HEIK/CARITAS (2022). The report also highlighted the lack of women in the leadership roles due to the decision-making and preferences of the people in power in FWUC. Women can be members but not leaders. From a man's perspective, they think they are concerned with women's security. It may be that men prefer women to perform subordinate tasks in the committee such as secretary, assistant, treasurer or



to put more effort into domestic work at home rather than taking risks. In addition, other reasons for women being less engaged in the committee roles may be that the positions are requiring time and availability for patrolling, attending meetings, and traveling for distances on difficult roads to track the illegal acts of offenders, which usually occur at night (HEIK/CARITAS, 2022).

The results from key informant's interviews show that women often lack confidence and knowledge in works that require physical and more laborious as compared to men. The perception and preference derived from social norms that majority of women think that they prefer performing less labour intensive and less time-consuming tasks while optimizing time doing other income-generating activities that are closer to home. Women have limited knowledge of using machinery to pump water from the river for their farm. Moreover, women showed low interest in water management committee because they consider the work of FWUC to involve technical matters, intensive physical works, time-consuming, tasks that are responsibility of men. However, women perform various tasks, including drip irrigation or sprinklers, as the tasks are less technical and less labour-intensive (FAO, 2022).

Ensuring women's participation, rights, and their roles and responsibilities in access to and control over water resources in the community, it is essential for government institutions, development partners and the private sector to assert their roles to coordinate, facilitate, and support the strengthening of community capacity especially in relation to women-headed household, the poor, indigenous and vulnerable people to gain access to land tenure rights and water. Building gender awareness among farmers and water user associations and groups, as well as sustainable agriculture and climate resilience, should be integrated as a cross-cutting issue.

#### **4.1.12 Women's representation in agriculture administration and rural organizations**

Women are still under-represented in key decision-making bodies of the agriculture sector at all levels, including community-based organizations and rural institutions. Women represented for 28 percent of MAFF staff at the national level and 20 percent at the provincial level (MAFF, 2021). In the sub-sectors, women presented 24 percent of staff working in

forestry, 30 percent in livestock, 31 percent in rubber, and 23 percent of staff in fisheries. The representation of women in decision-making positions at the national level remains low for all sub-sectors.

In 2018, women accounted for 62 percent of a total of 130 059 members of 1 116 agriculture cooperatives in Cambodia. However, of the agricultural cooperative's Board of Directors, only 34 percent were women (MoWA, 2019).

Women's representation in the academic institutions of agriculture remain relatively low compared to men. In the last five-years, the number of women in senior positions in the three-agriculture university, institute and school has remained the same for some positions, has slightly increased for a few positions and even decreased for others. Among these three institutions, only one woman become Vice Rector at Royal University of Agriculture (RUA) while as the number of women who were Vice Chief has decreased by two. Moreover, the number of female students is still lower compared to the number of male students. The number of women students studying at the Royal University of Agriculture, Prek Leap National Agricultural College, and Kampong Cham Agriculture Institute, has slightly increased in recent years from 34 percent in 2017 to 39 percent in 2021 (MAFF, 2022).

Although women's roles and contributions to agriculture activities are in some ways recognized, the low representation of women at all levels reinforces women's lack of skills and limited access to social networks to undertake greater roles, influence decisions, and support collective actions to promote agriculture value chains and sustainable resources to address women's specific needs. Efforts by MAFF, MoWA, and development partners have sought to build gender awareness and change discriminatory attitudes against women throughout Cambodia.

## **4.2 Challenges and gaps related to policy, legal and institutional context from a gender perspective**

There are notable legal frameworks, policies and plans to advance gender equality and women's empowerment in Cambodia, including in the sector of agriculture and rural development. However, implementing these policies and frameworks is challenging. Those challenges are summarized

as follows.

- Gender aspects are not integrated systematically into the policies and framework of sub-sectors related to agriculture, food security, nutrition and other relevant sectors, although there is a national gender mainstreaming strategy and in agriculture sector by MAFF. Some task forces and working groups are limited to only some sub-sectors. For instance, the Gender and Children Working Group of MAFF has been established to coordinate and support for development of policies and plans to promote gender equality and women's empowerment for the sub-sectors of agriculture, forestry, and fishery. There are gender focal points at the provincial departments of agriculture, forestry and fisheries, but they are responsible for mainly agriculture, not fisheries or forestry.
- Limited inter-ministerial coordination in implementing gender-related policy or frameworks of the sectors and sub-sectors. For example, MoWA reports that the Industrial Development Policy 2015-2025 does not explicitly tackle the challenges faced by women, although there are an increasing number of women-owned enterprises. Most are still concentrated in low productivity industrial sectors, of which agro-processing is part (Oxfam, 2020).
- Lack of holistic coordination and support in fixing gender gaps to address social norms and gender stereotypes. Current interventions tackle issues on a project-funded and ad-hoc basis. They depend on external donors and often work in silos, hence compromising investment and scale of impact. More investment and adequate resource allocation are needed to address these gender-related issues.
- Limited institutional and technical support to enable all staff to integrate and implement gender related policies (MAFF, 2022). This includes lack of ongoing funding and/or supports building capacity on gender issues and gender responsiveness for staff.
- Lack of resources and investment in research on gender gaps. In particular, there is a lack of gender assessment and analysis to understand and identify differing needs, challenges, and opportunities of women and men in relevant policies, programmes and projects of relevant sub-sectors of agriculture. The result is limited interventions and solutions in the policies or frameworks to address issues in agriculture and rural development sectors.
- Lack of gender data, including sex-disaggregated data and information to provide an evidence- base (UN Cambodia, 2021) to inform policy and intervention development.
- Limited resource allocation for the implementation of gender mainstreaming policies and plans per line ministry, and at sub-sector at both national and sub-national levels. Most interviewers, including representatives of line ministries indicated **"insufficient resources allocated to carrying out activities under the gender related policy or action plan."** Progress is slow on integration of gender perspectives into the national budget framework and public financial management reform. A lack of gender-responsive budgeting and planning has led to a lack of financial and human resources to effectively design the gender-specific national policies and efficiently implement the policies at the sub-national and local levels (Oxfam, 2020).
- Limited leadership, guidance, mechanisms, and capacity in inter-ministerial coordination, including resources and capacity in monitoring mechanisms, technical guidance, tools and systems for gender-based issues at sectoral ministries and sub-sectors and in resource mobilization (MAFF, 2022).
- Limited representation of women in leadership roles in agricultural and rural development sectors. This is related to the low rate of women who hold positions or degrees in agriculture or rural development, particularly in higher-ranking positions. Women hold lower-ranking positions compared with their male counterparts.



# 5

## STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS





The assessment included interviews and assessment of relevant key programmes and projects, including from FAO. The list below shows some selected initiatives that promote gender equality in agriculture.

- Through the Country Programming Framework (CPF) and other relevant frameworks aiming at achieving gender equality, FAO Cambodia is implementing a globally initiated project on piloting and building evidence-based gender transformative approach in agriculture, food security, and nutrition. The projects and models below show success and catalyze efforts for women equality work in agriculture sector.
- First, the **Women’s Empowerment Farmer Business School (WE-FBS) model** has included a gender transformative approach that seeks to build the capacities of female and male small-holder farmers to create sustainable and profitable agriculture enterprises and to transform gender relations in households, communities, and markets. The approach was recently introduced by FAO with a training of trainers’ model targeting government officials and agriculture extension practitioners.
- Second, Dimitra Clubs (DCs) were also introduced. DCs is a community-led and participatory approach with a strong focus on tackling gender inequality and issues of social inclusion, particularly in marginalized groups.

FAO’s WE-FBS:
1. Introduction to the WE-FBS approach
2. Gender analysis and tools for gender analysis
3. Social analysis and action (SAA)
4. Gender Action Learning System (GALS) methodology
5. Introduction to marketing systems and product ranking and enterprise selection
6. Establishing a marketing committee and participatory market research
7. Collective marketing
8. Gender value chain mapping
9. Group dynamics and women’s leadership
10. Business planning and record keeping as key components of WE-FBS

- Third, through the **EU-funded CAPFish project (2021-2024)**, FAO provides complementary support to the component of Capture Fisheries that focuses on strengthening inclusive and sustainable management conservation, and control systems in Cambodia’s inland and marine fisheries through improved conservation, management, and compliance with fisheries laws and regulations in the inland and marine domain; the development of the post-harvest fisheries; and the improved resilience of the fisheries communities in the inland and marine fishery domains. As part of this project, FAO provides policy support to FiA in updating their Strategic Framework on Gender Equality Promotion and Child Labour Elimination and integrating gender and child protection targets into FiA legal frameworks, policies, programmes and projects as reflected in the budgeted FiA workplan on gender and child protection, technical support to the FiA gender and children working group in enhancing female representation in institutional decision making and capacity development on gender and child issues in FiA, targeting women’s economic empowerment in CFi and improving gender and child-specific data collection and research for the fisheries information system.
- **SNV** (Foundation of Netherlands Volunteers) and **USAID**: are actively supporting the development of agricultural value chains and market linkages and working with women farmers. The recently completed Cambodia HARVEST project (2017-2022) and a new USAID Cambodia horticulture project and the work SNV’s is doing, particularly on SDC’s funding project, namely ‘CHAIN’ show that horticulture crops have highly potential for income generation, especially for women. In the SNV project, more than 60 percent of farmers were women who learned of improved technologies that resulted in increases in yields and household incomes as many of them gradually became semi-commercial or commercial farmers. The project introduced production technologies through demo-farm, including growing nets, drip irrigation, quality seeds, plastic mulch, shaded greenhouses, and mechanized land preparation. A cluster approach supports market linkages between the clustered farmer groups with key private actors and farmer incubator activities to support farmers with business skills for vegetable aggregation and input sales to group members. The project also supports SMEs, vegetable collectors, traders, market sellers, and input retailers with improved business skills to expand their businesses. The project works on the development

- of greater climate resilience by promoting year-round production, smart water solutions, and water resource management, especially to support women's access to technologies for water drip and pipe systems which can reduce a lot of labour burden and save time as well as to encourage women and men farmers to invest in higher-value crops and smart water and irrigation systems.
- **HARVEST project** (2022-2027): USAID projects related to agriculture work with a wide range of actors on a demand-driven orientation approach through improving capacities for market participation, market linkages, governance and an enabling environment. The recently completed HARVEST II project helped strengthen women- and youth-led businesses. A total of 55 entities not only expanded their businesses but also survived during the COVID-19 pandemic by improving new processing lines, developing new products, and improving quality standards. The project also supported farmers, more than half of whom were women, to apply new and improved agriculture practices, including expanding net-house technology and other climate-smart agriculture, tools to support year-round production. The project supported the dissemination of digital technologies, a digital sourcing system for farmers, and an accounting system for ACs and SMEs and the increased registration of new products via a certification system. As a result, the project assisted farmers to increase their sales and enabled Cambodian farmers to reinvest in equipment and input supplies, extended their markets as well as leveraged private sector's investments, which contributed to increasing effective and sustainable development outcomes, inclusive economic growth, and accountable governance. The project helped to increase skills and expertise by supporting 131 female and male students to pursue long-term training, including associate, bachelor, MSc, and Ph.D. degrees in agriculture, food security, or environment-related sectors.
  - **MAFF's projects:** a number of projects being implemented by government ministries and led by MAFF with co-funding from the government target enhancing agriculture and making linkages to smallholder farmers. **ASPIRE** (Agriculture Services Programme for Innovation, Resilience, and Extension) (2015-2022) is IFAD funded project. The project works to enhance the agriculture services model that supports small-holder farmers to contribute to broad-based economic growth through profitable and resilient farm businesses. It supported the establishment of diverse cluster groups of producers with 40-60 women and increased their access to market information and pricing.
  - **TSSD-AF project** (2019-2023) (Tonle Sap Poverty Reduction and Smallholder Development Project with additional funding from ADB and IFAD, has recognized the important roles of women in the agriculture value chain and rural livelihoods. The project promotes the role of women in providing leadership and participation in decision-making at the community level through various groups and women's equal access to agricultural inputs, value chain and agribusiness enterprise development services, extension training, and rural finance. The project works to ensure that at least 50 percent of women, including female-headed households, participated in project activities and that 60 percent of rural loans (saving and/or revolving funds) are taken by Livelihood Improvement Group (LIG)'s rural women members.
  - **Oxfam:** Gender Transformative and Responsible Agribusiness Investment in South-East Asia (GRAISEA) programme (2018-2023) in Cambodia works to achieve transformed opportunities for marginalized women and men in the agriculture sector in Cambodia through inclusive value chains and business models that drive women's economic empowerment and climate resilience. It works to promote financial viability, and gender-equitable and sustainable supply chains with a focus on rice farming as a key source of income for smallholder producers and their families, especially women through three intertwined approaches: 1) supporting men and women smallholder farmers in building their capacity to participate in agriculture value chains and benefit fairly from economic opportunities; 2) engaging with and supporting market actors in agricultural value chains to deliver opportunities that integrate smallholder producers, promote women's economic empowerment and support climate resilience; and 3) engaging with government actors and coordinating with civil society organizations and NGOs to influence national policy frameworks to drive inclusive business models that support women's economic empowerment and climate resilience. Through GRAISEA and Fair Finance Asia (FFA), Oxfam with its partners developed a policy brief on sustainable finance and gender issues in the agribusiness sector for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) governments with four broad policy recommendations, including sustainable finance taxonomies that uphold human rights and social standards, adopt sustainable finance taxonomies



that will uphold human rights and social standards; strengthen enforcement mechanisms to ensure that regional (e.g., ASEAN RAI Guidelines) and national guidelines are fully adopted; adopt national human rights due diligence regulation for the private sector and financial institutions in accordance with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises; as well as improve women's access to credit and financial products.

- **Oxfam** is also a leading consortium of 15 organizations working on the CAPFish/Foster<sup>6</sup> project (2021-2024) which focuses on improving resilience, productivity, and socio-economic conditions of fishing communities as well as the ecological sustainability of the Tonle Sap Biosphere Reserve (TSBR) through community-centered interventions that improve access to safe water, sustainable sanitation, eco-waste management services, enhanced education opportunities, and sustainable alternative livelihoods. The project's key cross-cutting approaches are gender equality and disability-sensitive approaches and biodiversity protection. The project aims to improve the increased leadership and management capacity of women in the community fisheries in green economy activities. The Gender Road Map (GRM) and Gender Action Learning (GALS) tools are adapted for the needs of CFI committee members, along with the development of specific training manuals on strengthening the entrepreneurial capacity of CFIs, women's economic empowerment, leadership and management for CFI leaders and women's economic empowerment for fishery communities. A study was conducted to gain an in-depth understanding of the current demographic and a needs assessment on Women's Leadership (WL) in targeted locations of the CAPfish/Foster project that provided a better picture of gaps, enabling factors, and challenges for women in CFIs and their training and vocational needs in relation to the application of various gender tools and modules such as Gender Action Learning (GAL) tools and women's leadership training.
- **UNIDO**: women's economic empowerment and youth employment are integral parts of the cross-cutting themes for all interventions of UNIDO's Programme for Country Partnership (PCP) in Cambodia. UNIDO is one of the key partners

in the CAPFish-Capture component which works on improving the agro-value chain by promoting competitive and inclusive growth of the country's agro-industrial sector. The CAPFish-capture project (2019-2024) recognizes the key contribution of women in fishery activities, particularly in small-scale processing and marketing-related activities, and works to increase women's agencies and improve women's access to productive assets and resources. The women-owned MSMEs, particularly in the post-harvest fishery have been prioritized and supported through 1) institutional support for establishing an efficient food safety official control system in post-harvest fisheries to harmonize Cambodian products with global market requirements, including the EU; 2) supporting value chain investment for upgrading the operations and market compliance to enhance business competitiveness; and 3) including women's knowledge, skills, and needs related to processing and technology upgrading into research and development by working in collaboration with Universities and research institutes for improving capacities for product development, innovations, and entrepreneurship.

- **World Food Programme (WFP)**: Gender equality and women's empowerment are central to WFP's mission of saving lives and changing lives and supporting countries in their mandate to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Home Grown School Feeding (HGFS) is a signatory programme of WFP Cambodia to support the Government of Cambodia, and particularly the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) to improve household food security and nutrition through increased availability of nutritious foods in schools and the diversification of crops grown by smallholder farmers in the community. WFP has worked to improve gender transformative HGFS and across all of its programmes. Through HGFS, studies have been conducted, including a study undertaken to deep dive into the barriers that limit the meaningful engagement of women smallholder farmers in the HGFS supply chain that provided insights on the needs and opportunities for female farmers by providing key recommendations for improving women farmers' engagement in the HGFS supply chains and in broader market opportunities. The project has collaborated with FAO and the organization partners to improve gender equality and women's empowerment in the agriculture value chain.

<sup>6</sup> Full name of the project is 'Fisher Folks Making Circular Economy Work For The Western Tonle Sap Lake'.



# 6

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS





## 6.1 Conclusions

The analysis shows that Cambodia has made significant progress in improving gender equality over the last decade. Agricultural activities in Cambodia are considered household roles, generally performed by both men and women in the household. The role of women in agricultural development has been strongly recognized as contributing to supporting economic growth, ensuring food security and nutrition, and promoting the development of the rural economy in the country.

Women are increasingly participating in crops, livestock, poultry, fisheries, and vegetable growing, activities customarily considered rural Cambodian work for income generation, food security, and nutrition.

The RGC recognizes important role of the women with many existing policies, frameworks, and agricultural and rural initiatives that promote gender equality and women's empowerment and make women integral to the development of the interrelated sectors. However, the analysis shows that there are still lack of resources and data in gender-related and sex-disaggregated categories in specific sectors. There is limited resource allocation and commitment to addressing gender-related issues across all levels. Many gender-related frameworks are broadly institutional-based and mainly donor-driven, which means they operate in silos with limited timeframes and resources. The analysis shows there is limited research and credible data at key sectoral level, limited integrated guidance in gender analysis, monitoring and evaluation frameworks available for key sectors in agriculture and rural development; and limits to the integration of frameworks and commitment for sectoral gender focuses, particularly for inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms.

Women's role and engagement in agricultural and rural development activities at all levels has been enhanced, evolving from more traditional roles to a more recognized role by their community and society, especially in new agricultural techniques, skillsets, technologies and digitalization.

Advancement and optimization of farm technologies and mechanization are crucial tools for shifting and improving women's roles with their male and household counterparts in agriculture and rural development. In particular, the tools help

female-headed households to effectively work while being able to perform agricultural activities, safeguard their household members and land, reduce their mobility and resources, and reduce migration. However, interventions need to take into account capacity building and women's access to these tools and minimize trade-offs between the advances of tools and women's roles and responsibilities in social contribution (reproductive, cultural, religious, and community responsibilities, etc.)

The analysis shows that women's rights to access and use land have improved. However, access to land ownership remains a critical issue for female-headed households, Indigenous groups, and poor and vulnerable people.

In the last decade, farming mechanization and technologies have advanced and become more significant in agriculture. They help farmers and producers to save labour, time and costs.

Although mechanization has replaced some manual labour performed by women, such as crop cultivation, the study found women undertake multiple roles concurrently: unpaid work, paid works, and community roles, in the households and community development while men tend to focus on productive and leadership roles sequentially.

The analysis shows that many farmers, both men and women, have limited capacity to cope with natural disasters, with women having lower capacity than men due to their limited knowledge of climate resilience. There is a lack of frameworks and policies for social protection or agricultural protection schemes for both men and women rural farmers in coping and mitigating climate change impacts. The analysis shows that the impacts are more severe for women, smallholder farmers, and poor households, and the impacts, if not addressed, will hinder the efforts towards gender equality and socioeconomic growth in the country.

Agricultural productivity is relatively low due to reliance on rain-fed systems, poor farm management practices, limited access to quality inputs and seeds, high cost of production, and lack of market value chain and lack of investment capital. Women, women-headed households, and poor and vulnerable groups lack access to market information on the needs of domestic and export agricultural markets, and lack farming technologies, skills, and techniques.



Despite increased representation and voices for women in the Agricultural Cooperative (AC) and farmer water user committee (FWUC), their representation in management committees remains low due to their limited education and skills, time constraints, and lack of availability to participate in the association's work. This requires support from local stakeholders and development agencies to strengthening women's roles and relevant skills (agricultural techniques, marketing, the value chain, better access to credit, and comprehensive extension services) and integration of gender awareness in the farmer water user associations and groups, and smart climate resilience agriculture and water technology.

Addressing key challenges and significantly accelerating the gender-responsive agricultural value chain, climate resilience and smart agricultural practice would require collaborative work involving the various stakeholders including the government, private sector, and development partners. There is need for tangible support including the capacity to manage human resources and financial resources in order to increase women's technical knowledge of agriculture, entrepreneurial skills, farm technologies (climate resilience and water saving technologies, digital marketing etc.) and business knowledge so that they can take on more entrepreneurial businesses and farm management opportunities for both domestic and international markets.

## 6.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations emerged from the key findings and conclusions from a gender perspective at macro (policy), meso (institutional and technical), and micro (community and household) levels, including for FAO country programme in Cambodia. The recommendations draw out different levels of interventions with the concrete suggestions to promote gender equality, women's empowerment, and social inclusion in food security, nutrition, sustainable agriculture and technologies.

### 6.2.1 Recommendation for macro (policy) level:

- Promote equal representation of women and men in decision-making and in the workforce of governmental institutions at all levels.
- Improving the investment and business environment by government ministries, including the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) to encourage the creation of

agri-businesses for small-scale holders, including women-led micro, small and medium enterprises. Tax incentives, innovation matching grant funds and agri-business incubators can be considered to support the growth of innovative small and medium agri-business enterprises, especially among young women business entrepreneurs.

- Identify and work with gender champions within Cambodian and development partner institutions to advance efforts in making the trade and business environment more gender sensitive.
- Enhance capacities of the government at the national and sub-national level, and communities to address gender challenges by enforcing related policies and the management of fisheries and farming resources, community forestry conservations, and land rights.
- Promote equal representation of women's and men's voices in decision-making in the workforce of governmental institutions at different levels.

### 6.2.2 Recommendation for meso (institutional and technical) level:

#### Institutional level:

- Operation and management:
  - Improve gender integration and mainstreaming approaches, tools and the design, monitoring, and evaluation frameworks: in compliance to SDGs, institutional Policy for Gender Equality, CEDAW and relevant frameworks of the RGC, the project's management framework.
  - Ensure that gender analysis and assessment is integrated into each project proposal and formulation, with inclusion of gender indicators and objectives. This includes gender data and information such as sex-disaggregated data and ensures that gender-differentiated impacts are embedded or enhanced across projects/programmes, including relevant research and studies related to agriculture and rural development.
  - Identify, assign, or recruit gender focal points within the institution and counterparts of line ministries and sub-sectors.
  - Encourage for gender equality compliance across institutional management frameworks. This includes reviewing the current practices and mainstreaming gender considerations in recruitment processes of the implementing institution and of partners.

- Enhance technical skills and knowledge on gender equality, gender mainstreaming and women’s empowerment within staff, counterparts and other key stakeholders at all levels. Ensure curriculum for an orientation and refresher training to all relevant staff on guideline for gender sensitization and awareness, and for mainstreaming gender into project cycles, any new developed tools.
- Promote the best practices and user guides of gender mainstreaming and producing more good practices and user guides with adequate resource and budget for development of case study and conducting research.
- Promote the integration of gender transformative approaches in agricultural and rural development programmes and applying at different levels to reduce gender norms and bias stereotypes at various policy, institutional community, and household level.
- Advocate for initiatives, research and studies for better evidence of gender gaps and women’s needs, as well as practices that promote gender equality evidence which provide for a better-informed decision-making at policy and practitioner levels.
- Advocate for resources mobilisation efforts that contribute to closing gender gaps and promote gender equality in agriculture, food and nutrition, technology, and rural development, including women’s economic empowerment and climate change issues.

**Technical level:**

- Joint government and stakeholders’ efforts in improving market information platforms, transport infrastructure, adoption of climate resilient agriculture technologies, digital skills where men and women farmers can access price information and marketplaces.
- Establish initiatives for better ecosystem services that enable agricultural-businesses, commercial viability, particularly for produces and products from start-ups, smallholder farmers, and disadvantaged groups such as minorities or indigenous groups.

- Efforts for better financing in agricultural value chains should be promoted at all levels. Initiatives and funds include investors, grants, value chain financing, or revolving funds that support farmers cooperatives or groups at production or post-harvest actors.
- Assist farming communities, fisheries-dependent communities, farmers’ organizations, and other key stakeholders at the sub-national level to improve their adaptive capacity to climate change, and to be ready in responding to natural threats and related crises.
- Work in collaboration with the national councils, governmental institutions, civil society organizations, development partners and private sectors to encourage and support in applying new technologies that should be in support of women’s processing, post-harvest and marketing activities, as well as their production activities.

**6.2.3 Recommendations for micro (community and household) level:**

- Increase more women trainers and provide more capacity activities on climate resilience agriculture techniques, administrative, financial literacy, and leadership skills to existing and new women smallholders, female members and leaders of farmer’s associations and community conservative groups.
- Enhance knowledge and skills for the community enterprise groups, associations, and women farmer on entrepreneurial skills, including business development concepts, financial literacy, loan and credit management, and related leadership skills.
- Promote voices and representation of women, poor and vulnerable groups in the farmer associations, community fisheries, forestry, customary land and climate change issues and establish special measures to address gender challenges.
- Support the community and multi-stakeholder to address gender issues/challenges in climate resilience and smart agriculture, fisheries, forestry, customary land, and climate change related risk and crisis.

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# ANNEXES

## Annex 1: Interview guides with stakeholders

### A. Interview guide with government representatives

#### I. Background information:

Name of the organization: .....

Position: ..... Sex: .....

Department/Unit: .....

#### II. Gender equality and women empowerment

Objectives	Questions
Gaps, constraints, needs and priorities	
<p><b>Objective 1:</b> To identify needs and constraints of both women and men in selected FAO areas of competence as well as priorities and gaps</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What value chains and markets do women and men participate in? In which phase/node are they mainly present?</li> <li>2. What constraints do women and men face in agricultural related activities?</li> <li>3. How are gender inequalities affecting household food security, poverty reduction, agricultural production and rural employment?</li> <li>4. Why are these problems (gender inequalities) occurring and persisting? What needs to be done so that these household roles and responsibilities are shared equally across all household members?</li> <li>5. What are some of the practical barriers that hinder women's ability to engage in and fully benefit from agricultural activities and rural development? Can you suggest ways of eliminating such barriers?*</li> <li>6. How has the emergency situation of the country impacted rural women and men? Is there any difference in the way they cope with the emergency?</li> <li>7. Are women directly involved in the way the productive land, forestry, livestock and aquaculture is put to use?</li> <li>8. What do we need to change in the accustomed roles of men and women for increased agricultural productivity?</li> <li>9. What do women and men require increasing crop and animal production?</li> <li>10. What do you suggest as appropriate and sustainable ways of addressing men and women's needs in agriculture?*</li> </ol>
Progress towards women's empowerment	
<p><b>Objective 2:</b> To assess the progress towards women's empowerment and gender equality in the agriculture sector</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What key achievements have been registered at household and community level in country with regards to women's empowerment and gender equality in the agriculture sector?</li> <li>2. Do you have ongoing programmes aimed at improving agricultural livelihoods? If so, how these programmes improved the livelihood of women at household and community levels?</li> <li>3. Can you provide examples/good practices/successful approaches that have worked in the Somalia as regards improvement of the livelihoods of women? How? Why?</li> <li>4. What do you suggest should be done differently to empower women in country?</li> <li>5. In which economic activity supported by FAO rural women participate in and why?</li> </ol>



Objectives	Questions
Gender equality, women empowerment, food security and agricultural growth linkages	
<b>Objective 3:</b> To examine the links between gender equality and women's empowerment, food security and agricultural growth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are women engaged in agriculture for commercial or subsistence production?</li> <li>2. To what extent can women make decisions in agricultural production and marketing? What decisions do women make?</li> <li>3. Are there cases of malnutrition? If yes, what are the root causes and what interventions are in place?</li> <li>4. Do women have opportunities to organize themselves into agricultural groups; for example, agricultural production, marketing, and can they be in key leadership positions in these groups?***</li> <li>5. Do women farmers have access to agricultural extension workers, trainers, advisers, and successful private farmers for information sharing and learning? If not, why not?***</li> <li>6. Do both women and men have access to financial services to boost their agricultural production? If not, why not? If yes, which financial services are mainly accessed by women and men rural farmers in the country?***</li> </ol>
Institutional capacity	
<b>Objective: 4</b> To assess the institutional capacity for gender equality and women's empowerment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do you have a GFP/gender advisor in your institution? If yes, do you liaise with him/her? How? If not, who advises you on how to integrate gender into your work?</li> <li>2. Do you have a policy/guiding framework/strategy on gender in agriculture to guide the integration of this issue in your work?</li> <li>3. Do you have tools that enable you to integrate gender in your work?</li> <li>4. Have you ever received training or attended awareness raising sessions of gender issues in the agriculture sector?</li> <li>5. What would be needed to allow you to better integrate gender in your work?</li> </ol>
Recommendations and stakeholders	
<b>Objective: 5</b> To provide recommendations and guidance to promote gender sensitivity of future programming and projects, as well as identifying possible partners for gender related activities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are your future recommendations to improve the quality of the programme for the improvement of men and women in the agricultural sector?</li> <li>2. Are there any other organizations, (CSOs, networks, private companies, individuals) involved in gender and agricultural activities in your area? What is their mandate? What is your working relationship with them, if any?</li> <li>3. What should FAO do to contribute to more gender equality in agriculture in country?</li> </ol>

## B. Interview guide with UN Agencies, Development Partners, INGOs/NGO and Private Sector

### a) Programme management level

#### I. Background information:

Name of the organization: .....

Position: ..... Sex: .....

Department/Unit: .....

**Objectives:** to identify and analyse the factors that hinder efforts to integrate gender into organization programmes/projects and to identify approaches to strengthen staff capacity to integrate gender in planning, implementation, and evaluation of programmes/projects.

1. What type of agricultural value chains does your organization/department work with?
2. Have there been any gender analyses in your organization to determine gendered constraints and opportunities along the agricultural value chains you work in and to incorporate these in planning, implementation, and M&E?

3. Do you have ongoing programmes aimed at improving agricultural livelihoods? If so, how have these programmes improved the livelihood of men and women at the household and community levels?
4. Are gender equality goals and objectives included in project or programme activity designs?
5. Has your organization budgeted adequate financial resources to support its gender integration work?
6. Is sex disaggregated data collected and used systematically in planning and reporting?
7. Does your organization have any projects or programmes that focus exclusively on gender equality?
8. Does the implementation plan for your project or programme include activities that strengthen skills and provide women/girls, men/boys with equal access to services and trainings?
9. Can you provide examples/good practices/successful approaches that have worked in the Cambodia as regards improvement of the livelihoods of women? How? Why?
10. Do you monitor and evaluate gender impacts of projects and programmes?
11. What key achievements have been registered at the household and community level in the country with regards to women's empowerment and gender equality in the agriculture sector?
12. Do men and women farmers have equal access to agricultural extension services, inputs, advice, trainings, and financial services? If not why?
13. What are some of the obstacles to integrating gender in project planning, implementation, M&E in your organization?
14. How are gender inequalities affecting household food security, poverty reduction, agricultural production and rural employment?
15. Why are these problems (gender inequalities) occurring and persisting? What needs to be done so that the household roles and responsibilities are shared equally across all household members?
16. Do you think that the national gender machineries like MoWA, GMAG/CWCG and CCWC at sub-national level are working at best expected of them? If yes how? If not why?
17. How do you evaluate coordination of stakeholders in gender equality and women empowerment?
18. What else is needed to increase gender integration in organizational project or programme works?
19. What do we need to change the accustomed roles of men and women for increased agricultural productivity?
20. What do women and men require to increase crop and animal production?
21. What are your future recommendations to improve the quality of the programme for the improvement of men and women in the agricultural sector?
22. What should FAO do to contribute to more gender equality in agriculture in the country?

## b) Higher officials

### I. Background information:

Name of the organization: .....

Position: ..... Sex: .....

Department/Unit: .....

### II. Gender equality and women empowerment

1. How do you evaluate the process of policy dialogue and programme development in agricultural and rural development sectors in Cambodia?
2. Do you think that all stakeholders, particularly national gender machineries and gender equality and women empowerment advocacy organizations have been adequately represented in such processes?
3. What has been the role of your organization/FAO in the process of developing key national policies in relation to agriculture and rural development?
4. Do you think that the national policies, programmes in agricultural and rural development sectors and FAO-Cambodia and CPF adequately addressed gender issues?
5. Do you think that adequate resources (budget) have been allocated to the gender equality and women empowerment activities in the country?
6. What are the constraints in integrating gender in national policies and programmes?
7. What are constrains in implementing gender equality and women empowerment components of the policies and programmes?
8. What are your future recommendations to improve the quality of the programme for the improvement of men and women in the agricultural and rural development sectors?
9. What should FAO do to contribute to more gender equality in agriculture and rural development sectors in the country?

## Annex 2: List of people consulted

No.	Organization's name	Name of person	Sex	Position
A. Government ministries/institutes				
1.	Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA)	H.E The Chhunhak	Male	Director General of Gender Equality General Department
2.		Sav Kimsoeun	Female	Deputy General Director of Gender Equality
3.	Gender Technical Working Group (GTWG) of Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF)	H.E Hor Malin	Female	Secretary of State and MAFF and chair of GCWG
4.	Fishery Administration (FiA) of MAFF	Kang Kim	Female	Deputy Director General
5.	Forestry Administration (FA) of MAFF	Vong Sokpanha	Female	Deputy Director
6.	General Department of Agriculture (GDA) of MAFF	Sin Sophorn	Female	Deputy General Director
7.	Royal University of Agriculture (RUA)-MAFF	Representative	Female	Vice-Rector of RUA
8.	General Secretariat for the National Social Protection	Sek Raksmeay	Female	Director General of Social Protection Assistance
9.		Chan Davit	Male	N/A
10.		Chhay Chhat	Male	N/A
11.	Ministry of Health (MoH)	Dr. Chea Mary	Female	Director of National Nutrition Program, National Maternal and Child Health Center
12.	Council for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD)	H.E Sok Silo	Male	Secretary General, CARD
13.		H.E Bunheang Chou	Male	Deputy Secretariat General
14.		Say Un	Male	Director of Department Director of Food Security and Nutrition
15.		Nea Chamman	Male	SP-CARD
16.		Chea Somalina	Female	N/A
17.		Hem Sopheap	Male	N/A
18.		Meng Hongkry	Male	N/A
19.	The National Council for Sustainable Development (NCDS)- Ministry of Environment (MoE)	H.E Mom Thany and Team	Female	Secretary of State and MoE and Chair of GMAG



No.	Organization's name	Name of person	Sex	Position
20.	Ministry of Rural Development (MRD)	Noun Monichenda	Female	Director of Department of Ethnic Minority Development
21.		Sam Somaly	Female	Deputy Director of Ethnic Minority Development
22.	Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology (MoWRAM)	Mr. Thach Sovanna	Female	Director of Dept of Water Resources Management and Conservation
<b>B. United Nations (UN) agencies and development partners</b>				
23.	United Nations Women (UNW)	Sovann Rotvatey	Female	Programme Officer
24.	World Food Programme (WFP)	Chea Phalla	Female	External Partnerships Officer
25.		Ul Socheat	Male	Programme Officer
26.	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Rany Pen	Female	Assistant Resident Representative
27.	United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)	Meas Chanthavy	Female	National Gender/livelihoods Expert
28.	Asian Development Bank (ADB)	Chea Chandy	Female	Senior Program Officer
<b>C. INGOs/NGOs/private sector</b>				
29.	World Fish	Mark Dubois	Male	Country Lead
30.	NGO Forum	Ouk Vannara	Male	Deputy Executive Director
31.	Oxfam	Natacha Kim	Female	Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist
32.	SNV	Rik Overmars	Male	Team Leader CHAIN Project at SNV
33.	Agricultural and Rural Development Bank (ARDB)	Thay Jeudi	Male	Head of Green Finance Department
34.		Hong Mayhai	Male	Chief of Research Policy and Training Division
35.		Path Saveth	Male	Deputy Division of Green Loan Underwriting and Portfolio Management
36.		That Sokrachan	Female	Deputy Division of Administration and Relation
37.	AMK	Sothea Phan	Male	Head of Research Department
38.	Amru	Lun Yeng	Male	Secretary General



# COUNTRY GENDER ASSESSMENT SERIES

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ASIA AND  
THE PACIFIC

The FAO Country Gender Assessment series provides updated insights, based on available sex-disaggregated data, on the main gender dimensions of the agriculture and rural sector by country. In alignment with the FAO Policy on Gender Equality 2020-2030, the Assessment describes women's and men's specific roles and opportunities in agriculture and rural development, and explores the impact of existing gender inequalities. Through a detailed analysis of the various subsectors, the policy framework and the main national stakeholders, it offers concrete recommendations to the government, FAO and other relevant partners for strengthening the integration of gender equality dimensions in agricultural and rural development policies and programmes.

ISBN 978-92-5-138285-1 ISSN 2710-1622



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