



Food and Agriculture
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United Nations



Empowering women through national action plans for family farming

A toolkit to mainstream gender and
strengthen women farmers' participation
in the United Nations Decade of Family
Farming's national policy processes



United Nations
Decade of
**FAMILY
FARMING**
2019-2028



INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE
WOMAN FARMER
2026



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Abbreviations

CFS	Committee on World Food Security
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GAP	Global Action Plan
GFP	gender focal point
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
NAP	national action plan for family farming
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UNDIFF	United Nations Decade of Family Farming (2019–2028)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WFP	World Food Programme



Objective of the toolkit

This toolkit is designed to support stakeholders involved in the development, implementation and monitoring of national action plans for family farming (NAPs) in effectively addressing women farmers' considerations throughout the process. Its primary users include family farmers' organizations, government representatives, civil society organizations, and other technical partners engaged in promoting family farming and gender equality at the national and regional levels.

The toolkit aims to offer practical guidance, resources and tools to ensure that women farmers' considerations are systematically and meaningfully mainstreamed into each stage of the NAP process – from initial planning and stakeholder consultations to design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. It provides a flexible approach that users can adapt to different country contexts, regardless of whether gender equality efforts are at an early or advanced stage.

No matter where you are in the NAP process, this toolkit can help identify opportunities to promote transformative outcomes that empower women farmers and advance gender equality in family farming.

This toolkit is particularly timely given that 2026 has been declared the International Year of the Woman Farmer, a decision which underscores the urgency of mainstreaming gender to ensure that women family farmers are fully recognized, included and supported across agrifood systems.



SECTION 1: Basic concepts

Women in family farming

Family farming (including all family-based agricultural activities) is a means of organizing agricultural, forestry, pastoral, fisheries and aquaculture production that is managed and operated by a family, and is predominantly reliant on the family labour of both women and men. The family and the farm are linked, co-evolve and combine **economic, environmental, social and cultural functions**.

Family farming is not gender-neutral; it often involves a traditional division of labour in which women take on specific, often undervalued, tasks like responsibility for household consumption or livestock care and food processing. This can lead to inequalities, such as women having less access to land, credit and resources, or occupying fewer leadership positions. It also increases women's time poverty, which further exacerbates the barriers they face and often results in a triple burden of farm work, household tasks and care responsibilities.

Globally, about 40 percent of working women are employed in agrifood systems, and they are indispensable to their functioning. Despite these contributions, women farmers are often excluded from land ownership and inheritance rights, while disproportionate unpaid care work limits their mobility and opportunities. As a result of constraints in accessing resources and information, female managed farms are 24 percent less productive and more vulnerable to climate shocks – losing 8 percent more income in heatwaves and 3 percent more in floods.

Policies and plans that aim at strengthening family farming and enhancing sustainable and inclusive agrifood systems must reflect the realities women face on the ground in order to better identify gaps and guide more equitable decision-making. To do so they must integrate women farmers' voices and perspectives, ensuring fairness and respecting women's rights, while at the same time enhancing productivity, resilience and sustainability in agrifood systems as a whole.

RESOURCES

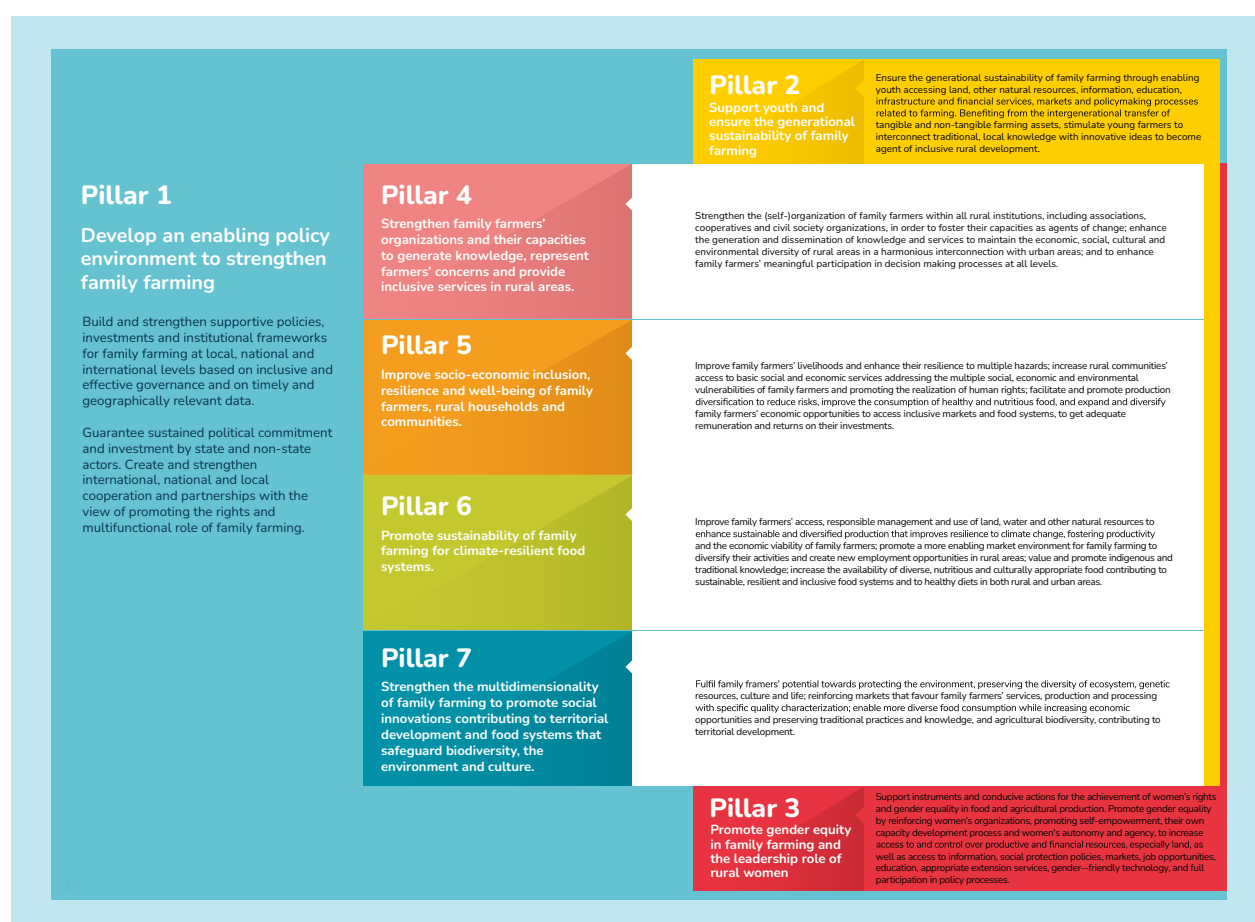
- ▶ FAO. 2023. [The Status of Women in Agrifood Systems](#). Rome.
- ▶ FAO. 2024. [The unjust climate: Measuring the impacts of climate change on rural poor, women and youth](#). Rome.
- ▶ FAO. 2020. [FAO Policy on Gender Equality 2020–2030](#). Rome.
- ▶ Costa, V., Piedrahita, N., Mane, E., Davis, B., and Slavchevska, V. 2026. [Global estimates of women's and men's employment in agrifood systems from 2000 to 2021](#). Global Food Security, Volume 48.
- ▶ Mane, E., Macchioni Giaquinto, A., Cafiero, C., Viviani, S., and Anríquez, G. 2025. [Closing the gender gap in global food insecurity: Socioeconomic determinants and economic gains in the aftermath of COVID-19](#). Global Food Security, Volume 45.

The UNDDF the Global Action Plan: A common framework for action

The United Nations Decade of Family Farming (2019–2028) (UNDDF) serves as a framework for countries to develop public policies and investments to support family farming from a holistic perspective, unleashing the transformative potential of family farmers to contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Global Action Plan (GAP) of the UNDDF is a **tool to guide the formulation and implementation of strategies, policies and investment at global, regional, national and local levels**. It employs an integrated approach which interlinks the productive sphere, social and cultural aspects, and environmental issues, translating these components into indicative and interconnected actions along seven mutually reinforcing pillars of work.

Indicative actions presented under the pillars provide guidance for all actors in building plans, policies and strategies at different levels. While presenting potential approaches or entry points, they cover a wide range of possible areas of interventions that simultaneously target different family farming aspects (including obstacles), to be assessed in a holistic manner for concrete action.



RESOURCES

- ▶ FAO and IFAD. 2019. **United Nations Decade of Family Farming 2019-2028 – Global Action Plan**. Rome.
- ▶ FAO and IFAD. 2019. **Putting family farmers at the centre to achieve the SDGs**. Rome.

Women farmers in the Global Action Plan

The UNDF acknowledges that promoting both gender equality in family farming and the leadership role of women farmers is fundamental for sustainable development, as they are essential components for achieving sustainable, productive and inclusive food systems and for eradicating poverty and hunger.

In order to pay due attention to the needs of women farmers and the challenges they face, the UNDF GAP was developed through a participatory and gender-responsive process. It offers an integrated approach to tackle the productive, social, cultural and environmental challenges faced by family farmers, including those that are most relevant to women farmers.

Through **transversal Pillar 3 (“Promote gender equity in family farming and the leadership role of rural women”)**, the UNDF reaffirms its commitment towards achieving gender equality in family farming.

It acknowledges the central role of women farmers in sustainable development and seeks to provide a response to the main challenges they face **through indicative actions to be tailored to local or national contexts.**

PILLAR 3: Promote gender equity in family farming and the leadership role of rural women

OUTCOMES:

- ▶ improved and active **engagement** of rural women in family farming and in rural economy;
- ▶ increased **access and control** of women in family farming to natural resources, (re) **productive assets, information, infrastructure, financial services** and to **markets**;
- ▶ increased **capacity** of women farmers and their organizations on **technical, advocacy** and **leadership** skills enhancing their **participation** within their organizations and in policy-making processes;
- ▶ reduction of all kinds of **violence against women and girls** in family farming and in rural areas; and
- ▶ improved knowledge on successful experiences of women achieving **affirmative political, social, economic and cultural change towards gender equality.**

The transversal pillar emphasizes the need to formulate instruments and conducive actions for the achievement of women farmers' rights and gender equality in food and agricultural production. The outcomes of Pillar 3 are an example of this integrated approach, which aims at tackling the complexity of the interconnected challenges faced by women farmers, by calling for comprehensive and dedicated solutions.

The pillar's transversality means that, **beyond the dedicated outcomes, activities to promote gender equality in family farming are mainstreamed in all the other pillars of the GAP.**

The GAP encourages stakeholders to promote gender equality by reinforcing women's organizations, promoting self-empowerment, supporting their own capacity development processes and improving women farmers' autonomy and agency.

It also encourages interventions aimed at increasing women farmers' access to and control over productive and financial resources, especially land, but also including access to information, social protection policies, markets, job opportunities, education, appropriate extension services, and gender-friendly technology. Women's full participation in policy processes is also supported.

The International Year of the Woman Farmer 2026 will strengthen the UNDF's commitment to women in family farming. It will leverage and elevate the GAP's Pillar 3, promoting gender equality and the leadership of rural women, and ensuring that their voices are central in shaping more resilient agrifood systems.

Gender mainstreaming in the Global Action Plan

SOME EXAMPLES

PILLAR 1: Develop an enabling policy environment to strengthen family farming

Provide gender- and age-disaggregated data.

Promote the equal participation of women and youth in family farming-related governance mechanisms.

PILLAR 4: Strengthen family farmers' organizations

Provide Peer-to-peer learning and mentoring of women's entrepreneurs to empower women.

PILLAR 5: Improve socio-economic inclusion, resilience and well-being of family farmers

Promote investment in human development (particularly for women and youth) and stimulate their participation in social networks.

PILLAR 6: Promote sustainability of family farming for climate-resilient food systems

Establish policy and institutional arrangements related to value chains' functioning that empower family farmers, particularly women, youth and their organizations.



National action plans: a key opportunity for empowering women in family farming

The GAP provides a universal guide to meaningful policies and interventions to support family farmers, but given the extensive heterogeneity of family farms around the world, its general policy prescriptions are unlikely to be relevant to all.

To effectively support women and men family farmers, it is necessary to consider **particular geographic and socioeconomic specificities and to develop context-specific interventions** focused on the explicit features of the relevant family farmer groups, while building on locally available resources and capacities.

NAPs are **consolidated national frameworks of action that** contextualize the implementation of the GAP **to implement effective and sustainable strategies and policies in support of family farmers, both women and men.**

IN SHORT: NAP basics

NAPs:

- ▶ provide a **national roadmap** to progress with the implementation of the GAP;
- ▶ aim to **mainstream and integrate family farming-related issues into broader food and agricultural policies and strategies**, as well as in the broader social and environmental policies;
- ▶ are based on an **agreed and strategic vision** that intertwines national priorities with the general objectives of the UNDF;
- ▶ align with the indicative actions proposed in the seven pillars of the GAP and are **tailored and adapted** to national and local conditions;
- ▶ include specific commitments based **on jointly identified needs and priorities** and translate them into public policies, programmes, regulations and investment;
- ▶ build **on existing national strategies, activities and mechanisms**;
- ▶ interlink with relevant national, regional and global processes;
- ▶ promote **policy coherence and multi-actor/inter-institutional** cooperation; and
- ▶ provide an inclusive umbrella for **all relevant national stakeholders** to consolidate, align and reinforce their actions.

RESOURCES

- ▶ World Rural Forum. [List of national action plans approved or in development.](#)

Supporting women farmers through national action plans: Understanding gender mainstreaming in family farming

Why is this important?

Although there is limited capacity to affect gender dynamics in the short term, a NAP is a key **opportunity to put mechanisms in place and to start creating an environment that will favour women family farmers' empowerment and their leadership role** by:

- ▶ **increasing commitment towards gender equality** in family farming;
- ▶ ensuring that **women family farmers will benefit** from all the NAP actions; and
- ▶ ensuring that **women farmers' specific concerns and challenges will be taken into consideration** and addressed effectively.

Mainstreaming gender considerations into the NAP formulation process will allow women farmers' needs to be identified, targeted budgets for gender-related activities to be provided, and results to be effectively monitored over time.

What does it look like in practice?

Gender mainstreaming in family farming is both a strategy and a process towards realizing gender equality. It seeks to bring men and women farmers' perspectives into each step of NAP formulation and implementation. It makes the distinct concerns and experiences of women and men farmers part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all NAP's interventions so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. Through gender mainstreaming, it is possible to ensure that policies and interventions respond effectively to the needs of both women and men family farmers.

Gender mainstreaming requires embedding a gender perspective into all stages of the NAP process, ensuring both targeted and integrated approaches are used together. By doing so, the NAP becomes more inclusive, effective and transformative.

IN SHORT: Gender mainstreaming in family farming

Through gender mainstreaming we:

- ▶ acknowledge that there are important gender perspectives in family farming;
- ▶ recognize that every action will affect women and men farmers differently;
- ▶ acknowledge the role of women in family farming and that women and men face different realities; and
- ▶ bring these perspectives, contributions and priorities to the centre of family farming-related discussions throughout all stages of the NAP formulation and implementation.

Gender mainstreaming is **not**:

- ▶ simply "adding women farmers" to projects or decision-making;
- ▶ tokenistic mentioning of women farmers without real action; and
- ▶ treating women and men farmers as homogeneous groups, without recognizing intersectional identities.

While gender mainstreaming provides the overarching strategy, the **gender-responsive approach** is a method to implement gender mainstreaming, which involves specific measures to address women's challenges in family farming, often requiring dedicated actions.

A **gender-responsive approach** in family farming identifies and considers existing differences and inequalities between women and men farmers, as well as gender norms, roles and relations in farming units and communities where the farming family is embedded.

- ▶ It acknowledges that there are important gender perspectives in family farming and that **every action affect women and men farmers differently**.
- ▶ It raises sensitivity and awareness and it takes measures **to reduce harmful effects of unequal gender roles**, norms and relations on family farming.
- ▶ It recognizes **men and women farmers will have different needs and priorities** based on the social construction of gender roles, and ensures these are actively addressed.

There are two main dimensions to be considered when integrating gender into NAPs using a gender-responsive approach:

- ▶ **Gender responsive content** – making sure that specific needs and interests of women and men family farmers are equally addressed through the formulation and implementation of the NAP.
- ▶ **Gender-responsive representation in the policy sphere** – to promoting women farmers' representation in leadership positions and decision-making throughout the NAP-related processes.

FOCUS: Understanding gender mainstreaming approaches

GENDER-BLIND

Overlooking: ignores different gender roles, needs and interests of women and men, and assumes that both will be affected equally by policies and interventions

GENDER-SENSITIVE/ RESPONSIVE

Raising awareness and addressing: acknowledges and responds to existing gender differences and social roles

GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE

Transforming: acknowledges, addresses and seeks to transform structural causes of gender inequality

RESOURCES

- ▶ CFS. 2024. [CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition](#). Rome, FAO.
- ▶ FAO, IFAD and WFP. 2024. [Step-by-step guide to integrating a gender transformative approach throughout the project cycle](#). Rome.
- ▶ Council of Europe. 1998. [Gender mainstreaming: Conceptual framework, methodology and presentation of good practices](#). Strasbourg.
- ▶ UN Women. 2014. [Gender mainstreaming in development programming: Guidance note](#). New York.
- ▶ Gender Equity Unit. [Introduction to gender responsive assessment and gender levels](#).

SECTION 2: Laying the foundation for mainstreaming gender into national action plans

Launching the process: Establishing a coordination team and identifying stakeholders

Why is this important?

The initial stages of discussion and mobilization aimed at the development of a NAP provide an opportunity to establish a commitment and affect the way the NAP is envisioned, making it possible to influence how gender inequalities in family farming are understood and addressed throughout the process, and placing women's considerations at the centre of the NAP.

Moreover, it is a crucial moment for identifying actors and initiatives related to women in family farming who could become strategic partners, strengthening both the NAP process and the sustainability of its outcomes.

What does it look like in practice?

- ▶ **Include a gender focal point (GFP)** in the team coordinating the promotion and elaboration of the NAP. The GFP should facilitate linkages with key organizations, national committees, and national ministries and institutions relevant to women farmers, and promote the inclusion of women representatives from the different constituencies and productive sectors of family farming. The GFP should maintain constant communication with all interested and involved stakeholders.
- ▶ **Establish high-level political commitment for a gender-responsive NAP** process by engaging senior management and leadership of the different ministries and government institutions in dialogue on women in family farming.
- ▶ **Identify key gender equality advocates and engage them as partners**, involving them in the NAP process and providing opportunities for them to share their perspectives.
- ▶ **Raise awareness among the members of the coordination team of the need to specifically address women farmers in the NAP process** by ensuring that it is on the agenda for all relevant meetings and workshops. Utilize these occasions as opportunities for knowledge sharing and capacity building on gender equality in family farming.
- ▶ **Identify and map key institutions, relevant governmental entities, and interested stakeholders** whose work focuses on women farmers and include them in the coordination team and the NAP process.
- ▶ Focus on **including women representatives from the different groups that make up relevant multi-actor platforms for policy dialogue**, including National Committees for Family Farming, women's farmers groups, women's saving and credit groups and other relevant networks.

FOCUS: A gender-responsive stakeholder analysis to kick off the NAP

Carrying out a gender-responsive stakeholder analysis in the initial stages of mobilization for developing a NAP can gather valuable data.

It can identify:

- ▶ key women and men stakeholders relevant to family farming, their interests (positive or negative) in the process of developing a NAP, and their position regarding women and men farmers' interests;
- ▶ actors with specific attitudes, expectations and potential for driving behavioural changes towards gender equality during the NAP process; and
- ▶ stakeholders who are able to address issues related to women family farmers in a comprehensive way that take into account conflict transformation and peacebuilding that incorporate men and women farmers.

It can assess:

- ▶ the influence of, importance of, and level of impact upon each woman and man stakeholder involved in the NAP process; and
- ▶ the best way to engage women and men stakeholders and actors who are active in the national committee for family farming and/or in other multistakeholder platforms for policy dialogue on family farming.

RESOURCES

- ▶ UNDP, AfDB, UNECA and AUDA-NEPAD. 2021. [Guide for Integrated Planning in Africa](#).
- ▶ Cosmas K. Lutomia, Kevin Ouko, and Eileen Nchanji. 2024. [A guide for mainstreaming gender in multistakeholder platforms in agri-food systems](#). Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT.
- ▶ European Institute for Gender Equality. 2025. [Conducting a gender-responsive stakeholder analysis](#).



Next steps: Stocktaking exercises and gender assessment in family farming

Why is this important?

When developing a conceptual framework of family farming a particular country context as a first step towards the formulation of a NAP, it is paramount to pay attention to and build on existing information, knowledge and capacities related to women in family farming. This provides an opportunity to further strengthen existing knowledge and resources and to avoid duplicating efforts.

At this stage, it is possible to establish **context of women farmers in the specific country or region by exploring gender relations and roles** in family farming, to better understand the impacts these will have on the provisions in the NAP and vice versa. It will also give a starting point to better understand the needs, capacities and contributions of women family farmers.

An agreed-upon definition or concept of family farming in the country, which could include criteria and parameters for the **identification of characteristics and roles of women and men family farmers**, as well as a review of the constraints and challenges that they face, is a fundamental step to conduct a meaningful needs assessment, which takes women family farmers' specific constraints into due account.

In order to define **policies, programmes and other ongoing initiatives that promote gender equality in family farming**, the NAP can be developed in coordination with already existing and relevant flagship programmes and initiatives, with the aim of maximizing impact through integration, coordination and complementarity.

Conducting a stocktaking exercise is therefore recommended to conduct a stocktaking exercise as a crucial moment to identify actors and initiatives related to the NAP dimensions and to women in family farming which could become strategic partners, strengthening both the process and the sustainability of its outcomes.

What does it look like in practice?

- ▶ **Build on what is already there: Identify and leverage existing policies and commitments** aiming to empower women farmers and improve their conditions, to create the mandate for integrating gender equality considerations in the NAP and take advantage of existing and relevant coordination mechanisms.
- ▶ **Explore ways to apply international commitments and domestic laws and policies on gender equality to NAP processes** to strengthen the mandate for promoting women farmers' empowerment and leadership role.
- ▶ **Carry out an initial literature review** on the main gender gaps in family farming in the country, identifying relevant gender assessments and nationally representative datasets available.
- ▶ **Analyse available information on gender dynamics** and differences between men and women in family farming. You might consider different sectors related to family farming, such as access to land and other productive inputs; access to credit and financial services; access to training and education; access to market and information; ownership and control of farm enterprises; and the effects of climate change on farming activities.
- ▶ Identifying **existing and supportive methodologies, interventions and activities** that could contribute to the NAP process.

- ▶ When possible, take **region-, sex- and age-disaggregated data and sensitive data, as well as targeted information on other specific groups**, into consideration in the analysis.

FOCUS: The importance of sex-disaggregated data in family farming

Sex-disaggregated data and statistics are key to obtaining a complete understanding of women and men farmers' roles, status and contributions to family farming, and for effective design of gender responsive NAPs that can achieve sustainable development and the transformation of rural sectors to reduce poverty and increase food and nutrition security.

However, many national governments and relevant stakeholders still lack sex-disaggregated data and the capacity to carry out a gender assessment. There are opportunities for all involved stakeholders to contribute to filling in the gap at all stages of the NAP process, including implementation, monitoring and evaluation, by doing the following:

- ▶ **Establish a gender focal point in national statistics offices** to better coordinate the collection, analysis and use of sex-disaggregated data.
- ▶ **Establish regular dialogue between data producers and data users** to support the collection and use of sex-disaggregated data.
- ▶ **Support local, participatory and policy-oriented co-creation of knowledge** on women in family farming through the collaboration of researchers and family farmers in the framework of the established platforms for policy dialogue.
- ▶ **Strengthen the capacities of women farmers' organizations** to generate and use gender responsive data that are relevant to their members and their activities.
- ▶ **Plan capacity-development sessions** for the team coordinating the promotion and formulation of the NAP to strengthen their knowledge and skills on methods for collecting and assessing disaggregated data.

RESOURCES

- ▶ FAO. [SDG Indicators Data Portal](#).
- ▶ International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). [Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index \(WEAI\)](#).
- ▶ FAO. [Country Gender Assessments](#).
- ▶ FAO. [Gender-Lex](#).
- ▶ FAO. 2018. [Guidance note on gender-sensitive vulnerability assessments in agriculture](#). Rome.
- ▶ FAO. 2018. [Employment, work and time use in agricultural contexts: what data do we need for gender analysis?](#) Rome.
- ▶ FAO. [Gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data](#).
- ▶ FAO. [FAOSTAT - Gender Domain](#).

Preparing for the consultations: Engaging stakeholders and ensuring adequate representation of women farmers

Why is this important?

The policy dialogue to develop a NAP builds on meaningful, effective and informed stakeholder engagement and participation. It is an ongoing and interactive process that promotes constructive relationship with stakeholders, building upon existing relationships while helping to connect with new actors and supporting their ongoing, effective and sustainable participation throughout the dialogue.

When consulting the different stakeholders and actors that are part of the platform for the promotion of the NAP and that are participating in the policy dialogue, it is essential to ensure that the process is conducted in a gender-responsive, culturally sensitive, non-discriminatory and inclusive manner. Vulnerable and marginalized groups, particularly women farmers, who may be affected by the process should be identified and opportunities provided to allow them to participate effectively.

Women farmers face multiple practical challenges to participation in this process, particularly relating to intrahousehold dynamics and gender roles and norms. These may include gaining family consent to leave the house and participate, managing caring and domestic responsibilities while finding the time to engage in extra-household activities, and being able to gather the financial resources required for transportation to and participation in discussions and events.

It is also important that discussion agendas take into account and include women farmers' specific concerns to be discussed in plenary and integrated into the further steps along the process for the approval and implementation of the NAP, including initial advocacy efforts and policy formulation.

What does it look like in practice?

- ▶ Depending on the composition of the group involved in the consultation, explore the possibility of setting a **minimum percentage of women participants** as a validity threshold to hold meetings and dialogues.
- ▶ Support women farmers' participation through the provision of appropriate, context-specific practical and logistical arrangements to ensure that the **time and place of meetings are appropriate for both women and men**, considering security, facilities and their productive, reproductive and community management responsibilities.
- ▶ Explore the possibility of **reimbursing women farmers** for their participation.
- ▶ Consider **preparatory meetings/calls and guidance notes for all participants** to enable them to fully understand the organizational structures and the potential for their influence. This will allow participants to be well prepared, increasing their impact and ensuring their time is used wisely.
- ▶ Consider that **women farmers are not a homogeneous group**: Look for equal representation of women from different age, occupation, constituency and stakeholder groups to represent all their diversity.
- ▶ Engage with **women farmers and their organizations as equal partners**, including by involving them in setting and shaping agendas for the consultations and other meetings in order to ensure their priorities are addressed.

- ▶ Consider providing **briefings, training and tailored support** to build the capacities of women farmers and their organizations, enabling them to contribute fully and effectively to the consultation process.
- ▶ Actively **engage men farmers** through awareness-raising and capacity-building activities that promote positive changes in gender norms and roles in family farming and increase their appreciation of and commitment to women's participation and empowerment throughout the policy dialogue process and in the inclusion of objectives related to gender equality in the NAP.

RESOURCES

- ▶ UNDP. 2022. [Checklist for Gender Responsive, Socially Inclusive Stakeholder Consultations](#).



Conducting the consultations for the NAP: Making sure that women farmers' voices are heard

Why is this important?

Participatory approaches are not always gender responsive, and despite the basic principle of participation by all concerned parties, experience shows that this is often not fully achieved and the “silent” members of a community are excluded. This is often the case for women family farmers.

By contrast, a gender-responsive participatory approach acknowledges the numerous obstacles to women farmers' participation and establishes mechanisms to address them. Moreover, it ensures that women farmers will benefit from what is being discussed, allowing the selection of different types of solutions/interventions in order to ensure that gender inequality is not perpetuated. Deploying a gender responsive participatory approach when formulating a NAP increases the overall impact of the plan, improves the sustainability of actions, and supports women farmers' empowerment by helping them to understand the issues at stake, discover and value their own experience, skills, knowledge and strength, and increasing their self-confidence.

Additionally, engaging multiple stakeholders in the preparations for gender-responsive NAP consultations helps raise awareness of the crucial role played by women farmers and increase interest in developing strategies to close gender gaps, creating momentum for gender equality in family farming. It helps foster a consensus that promoting gender equality leads to better informed decision making processes, more equitable distribution of resources, and improved livelihoods for family farmers as a whole. It also provides an opportunity to establish gender equality as a guiding principle through the design, implementation and evaluation of the NAP, which will enhance accountability in relation to gender equality commitments and will facilitate reflection in terms of gender-responsive public policies and budgets.

What does it look like in practice?

The methodology should be adapted to the context, participants, budget and timeline for the consultations; however, some general considerations to enable women farmers' meaningful participation are given below.

Team composition and sensitivity: to ensure meaningful participation of women, the team that carries out the consultations should be gender balanced and gender responsive. Consider the following:

- ▶ Have **gender experts** present at the consultations.
- ▶ Have **women lead some of the consultations**, since women may feel more comfortable speaking to other women.
- ▶ Agree on a **code of conduct**, addressing issues such as representation and respectful communication. Share this code of conduct with stakeholders and garner commitment to it during consultations and workshops.
- ▶ Utilize **household methodologies** to raise awareness of intra-household dynamics, including gender roles, division of labour, and access to resources.
- ▶ Reflect collectively on individual gender-related biases as well as those that exist within and among institutions; consider how they may inhibit progress in addressing women farmers' considerations in the NAP process and identify opportunities to challenge these biases.

FOCUS: Active facilitation and participatory exercises for NAP consultations

Consider the following:

- ▶ Hold some **discussions in single-sex groups**.
- ✎ **KEEP IN MIND:** This might not be necessary or productive, depending on the level of the consultation, and depending on the available budget for these consultative processes.
- ▶ Ask **women farmers for their opinion**.
- ✎ **KEEP IN MIND:** They should not be pressured to disclose information they are not comfortable with, especially related to traumatic events.
- ▶ Hold **alternative plenary sessions for wider community issues and for small working groups** to allow them to explore specific and intersecting issues relevant to the different groups of women farmers.
- ▶ Hold **debrief sessions with the people responsible for leading the consultations** to discuss whether the process is enabling women farmers' participation.
- ▶ Give **equal weight to priorities relevant to women and men farmers** by ensuring that women and women's organizations are actively engaged to validate and shape the findings of the consultation beyond the initial engagement.

RESOURCES

- ▶ UNDP. 2022. [Checklist for Gender Responsive, Socially Inclusive Stakeholder Consultations](#).
- ▶ IFAD. 2022. [Household methodologies](#). Rome.
- ▶ FAO, IFAD and WFP. 2020. [Gender transformative approaches for food security, improved nutrition and sustainable agriculture – A compendium of fifteen good practices](#). Rome.



SECTION 3: Formulating national action plans that include women farmers' priorities

Identifying the main challenges faced by women family farmers

Why is this important?

In this phase, leveraging the outcomes of the consultation and the results of the context analysis, conducting a **gender-needs assessment and problem analysis is key to understanding how gender relations might affect the impact of the NAP on both women and men farmers, and its sustainability over time**. The goal is to uncover how gender inequalities affect outcomes, to identify specific women farmers' needs, and inform the development of more equitable and effective solutions when formulating the objectives and activities included in the NAP.

What does it look like in practice?

- ▶ Based on the identified gender gaps of the stocktaking exercise and the discussion and results emerged from the consultations (see Section 2), **identify the main challenges faced by women family farmers** (specific to the country or region) that the NAP should address.
- ▶ Discuss with all stakeholders involved in the NAP development process and conduct a problem analysis in order to understand and map **cause-and-effect relationships that connect the different challenges**.
- ▶ Develop potential solutions for women farmers' challenges based on the root causes identified, brainstorming and discussing together **to identify priority needs and actions**.
- ▶ Identify **key policies and ongoing interventions** relevant to family farming, which could strengthen the NAP in promoting gender equality, using the stocktaking exercise.

RESOURCES

- ▶ FAO. 2022. [Gender-responsive needs assessment for mechanization. Questionnaire](#). Rome.
- ▶ FAO. 2023. [Methodological guidance for gender-responsive water assessments](#). Cairo.
- ▶ Petrics, H., Barale, K., Kaaria, S.K. and David, S. 2018. [The Gender and Rural Advisory Services Assessment Tool](#). Rome, FAO.

Building the theory of change into national actions plans to address women farmers' needs

Why is this important?

Based on the information collected and the consultation undertaken, the NAP will be detailed into concrete outcomes, actions, and initiatives, including proposals for specific intersectoral policy interventions aimed at targeting specific groups or constituencies of family farmers. There are various approaches to soliciting feedback on such strategy, including those which engage with households, communities and families.

In this phase, **defining the objectives for each main gender gap and challenge identified and designing appropriate implementation strategies** is the best way to mainstream gender into the NAP. This includes designing activities and inputs needed to address the challenges of women and men farmers, while ensuring consistency between the objective, challenge and proposed activities.

FOCUS: NAP objectives

Objectives are the end changes you would like to achieve in response to the challenge that has been identified in the problem analysis.

There are two types of objectives:

- ▶ **impact** – the longer-term change a project or programme hopes to contribute to; and
- ▶ **outcome** – The intermediate term change hoped for by the end of the project or programme, which contributes to the long term change (impact) that is desired.

The outcome is a specific, often measurable change in behaviour, knowledge, or attitude, whereas impact is a more significant and holistic shift that is the result of multiple interventions and evolutions. It can take years to fully realize and is more challenging to measure.

What does it look like in practice?

- ▶ Using the results of the gender assessment that has been conducted, **identify changes to achieve through the implementation of the NAP** in terms of gender equality in family farming and promotion of the leadership role of women farmers. You can do so by asking the question: What do you want to achieve?



KEEP IN MIND: this is an important point of departure from the traditional approach that begins with identifying the inputs, activities and processes that will eventually address the question: What have you done?

- ▶ Translate these desired changes into **theories of change**: create a framework to explain how and why specific inputs and interventions are expected to lead to this desired change.
- ▶ For each one of these changes, identify the most feasible and effective strategy to apply: it could be a mainstreaming approach, a gender specific intervention, or an operational arrangement (see next chapter).

IN SHORT: Guiding questions

What is the problem for woman family farmers?

CHALLENGE

What CHANGE do we want to achieve in the long run?

IMPACT

Which changes do we want to achieve with the NAP to contribute to long term change around gender equality in family farming?

OUTCOMES

What products, goods and services do we need to promote such a change?

OUTPUTS

Which actions do we need to take to produce those products, goods and services?

ACTIVITIES

Which financial, human, and material resources do we need to conduct such actions?

INPUTS

RESOURCES

- ▶ FAO, IFAD and WFP. 2024. *Theory of change for gender transformative programming for food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture – Technical note*. Rome.
- ▶ GRLS. *Theory of Change*.
- ▶ Oxfam. *WEMAN Theory of Change*.
- ▶ IFAD. 2022. *Household methodologies*. Rome.
- ▶ FAO, IFAD and WFP. 2020. *Gender transformative approaches for food security, improved nutrition and sustainable agriculture – A compendium of fifteen good practices*. Rome.



Three-pronged strategy to integrate women farmers' perspectives into national action plans

When formulating and implementing the NAP, the following three steps are meant to be used in a complementary fashion to achieve transformative and sustainable improvements in terms of gender equality in family farming and the living conditions of women farmers, while securing the necessary political will, mandates and resources to translate gender-equality commitments into real benefits for women farmers and to ensure accountability.

A. Include specific objectives and actions in the NAP that address the main gender gaps faced by women farmers in the country, identified with stakeholders

This step involves specific, targeted outcomes and outputs that focus directly on empowering women and girls in family farming or addressing specific gender inequalities that cannot be resolved through mainstreaming alone. This is particularly critical for accelerating progress in areas where significant disparities exist, such as economic empowerment, access to resources or addressing gender-based violence.

IN SHORT: Priority areas to achieve gender equality in family farming *From the GAP*

- ▶ Increase voice and decision-making power of women farmers.
- ▶ Enhance capacity of women farmers and their organizations on technical, advocacy and leadership skills for meaningful participation within their organizations, and in policy-making processes.
- ▶ Improve women farmers' access to, and control of, land, agricultural inputs, and natural resources.
- ▶ Improve women's access to agricultural research, agricultural technology, knowledge, information, trainings and rural advisory services.
- ▶ Improve women's access to financial services in family farming and rural areas.
- ▶ Improve women farmers' access to markets and agri-food value chains.
- ▶ Reduce women's time burden and time poverty in family farming and rural areas.
- ▶ Reduce all kinds of violence against women and girls in family farming and in rural areas.

EXAMPLE: A NAP outcome specific to women family farmers, with relevant outputs, activities and inputs

Outcome	Output	Activities	Inputs
Women's time burden and time poverty in family farming and rural areas is reduced	Improved understanding of women's time burden in productive and domestic work Increased involvement of men and young boys in these tasks Improved access to health and social rights, such as maternity leave and free childcare	Awareness-raising and advocacy events and trainings to increase understanding of time burden National campaigns and programmes challenging discriminatory social norms with regards to child care and household chores Development programmes aiming at increasing women's access to mechanization and labour-saving technologies Programmes and initiatives aimed at promoting the creation of child-care services and maternity allowance for women farmers	Equipment for the trainings Venues for trainings and events Transport Communication channels Project staff Trainers Facilitators Communications specialists Policy specialists Etc.

B. Integrate gender equality as a transversal theme into all NAP objectives and actions

Integrating gender equality as a transversal theme strengthens the NAP's approach and methodology, as well as including women farmers' considerations in all the objectives and activities. This approach increases the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the NAP in support of stronger and more sustainable family farming. The goal is to ensure that all planned actions assess and address the different implications for both women and men farmers so that both groups benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.

- ▶ At different steps in the formulation process, ensure that **ALL** NAP objectives, outcomes, actions and indicators meet women farmers' needs, using a gender-responsive approach.
- ▶ Make sure that the outputs and activities are tailored to allow the inclusion of, and are relevant to, both women and men family farmers.

EXAMPLE: integrating gender equality into a NAP outcome

Outcome	Output	Activities	Inputs
Enhanced standard of living and reduced household vulnerability for family farmers, in particular for youth, women and for their communities	Improved access to social protection systems for both men and women farmers, addressing multiple vulnerabilities Financial services tailored to women and men farmers and to their communities are developed and in place Improved access of family farmers and their communities to basic services, including education and services for children	Capacity development (particularly for women and youth) to stimulate their participation in social networks Advocacy to expansion and scale-up of social protection interventions for women and men farmers (contributory and non-contributory social pensions, maternity allowance, pensions for domestic work) Promote and strengthen advisory and financial services tailored to men and women farmers' different needs (extension, training, cash transfers, microcredit, start-up capital, insurance), and ensure inclusive and non-discriminatory access to these services in particular for women farmers	Equipment for trainings Venues for trainings and events Transport, particularly for women Provision of child-care services during the trainings and events Communication channels Project staff (50% women) Trainers Facilitators Communications specialists Gender mainstreaming specialists Policy specialists Etc.

C. Anchor gender equality in the mechanisms for the promotion and implementation of the NAP

This can be achieved with adequate allocation of human and financial resources, establishing accountability mechanisms and promoting capacity building to make sure that all partners are committed to gender equality in family farming and have mechanisms, skills and tools to promote women farmers' engagement in political dialogue, advocacy, and policy discussion at various levels (multilateral, regional, country) as a key political objectives. To this end, it is important to:

- ▶ Define gender-responsive quantitative and qualitative indicators.
- ▶ Allocate appropriate financial and human resources to address gender equality dimensions and to ensure women farmers' participation in each stage of the NAP process.
- ▶ Make sure that key NAP-related processes (e.g. dialogue between key stakeholders and planning tools and strategies envisaged in the NAP) are explicit and specific on gender-responsive approaches and women farmers' participation.

RESOURCES

- ▶ FAO. 2018. What gender mainstreaming means in practice - Cases from selected countries of the European Union. Rome.
- ▶ FAO. 2025. Integrating gender equality and social inclusion in national drought management planning. Self-administered course.
- ▶ FAO. 2023. Building a gender-responsive policy and legal framework for agricultural investment and supply chains. Certified course.



Preparing gender-responsive indicators

Why is this important?

Indicators are a set of performance metrics or measurements that are used to assess the progress and effectiveness of a particular project or programme. Gender-responsive indicators will allow us to monitor and measure differences between the living conditions of women and men farmers, as well as progress towards gender equality in family farming, once the NAP has been implemented.

Indicators can be quantitative (statistical data disaggregated by sex, like unemployment rates) or qualitative (assessing changes in empowerment or attitudes). These indicators help analyse the impact of the actions and interventions conducted in the framework of the NAP, identify areas where women farmers are particularly disadvantaged, and inform strategic planning and reorientation of the activities over time.

What does it look like in practice?

- ▶ Include both **quantitative and qualitative indicators** to ensure we will measure not only numerical changes, but also changes in women farmers' level of empowerment, and in public attitudes towards gender equality, among others.
- ▶ Establish **monitoring and evaluation systems** to track progress, assess a range of impacts on women farmers, and ensure opportunities for incorporating the results of the assessment into the review of programmes and interventions included in the NAP.
- ▶ Develop methodologies and indicators that can assess **changes linked to women farmers' empowerment, productive capacity and access to work**; their intrahousehold roles and dynamics (e.g. decision-making, and agency, and work burdens); and whether the NAP negatively affects women and men farmers' welfare or exacerbates existing inequalities and risks.
- ▶ Make sure that both gender-responsive **monitoring and evaluation indicators** are present. Monitoring indicators measure the scope and quality of the **activities** implemented in the framework of the NAP, while evaluation indicators, also known as performance indicators, are focused on the objectives and measure the progress made towards the expected **impact and outcomes** of the NAP on both women and men farmers.
- ▶ Consider developing a **gender responsive data collection strategy when formulating the NAP**, to help you identify the sex disaggregated data that are needed, how and when they will be collected, and who will be responsible for collecting and reporting the data (the means of verification). This is also an opportunity to identify costs and potential sources of financing for the data collection exercise.

EXAMPLE: Gender-responsive indicators

Quantitative	Inputs
Proportion of women involved in the governance bodies of the NAP at different levels (national, regional, community)	Change within the household regarding control of income/use of additional income generated by women farmers (spending decisions, etc.)
Increase in the proportion of land owned or controlled by women farmers	Improvement in women farmers' position within the household, farmers' association or cooperative (role in decision-making)
Change in women farmers' allocation of time between household chores and agricultural activities	Change in men's and the community's perception of women farmers as economic actors
Percentage of women farmers who have access to and control over agricultural inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, tools, etc., compared to men farmers	Improvement in women's economic independence

RESOURCES

- ▶ FAO, IFAD, WFP and CGIAR GENDER Impact Platform. 2023. [Guidelines for measuring gender transformative change in the context of food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture](#). Rome, FAO, IFAD, WFP and CGIAR.
- ▶ FAO, IFAD and WFP. 2022. [Guide to formulating gendered social norms indicators in the context of food security and nutrition](#). Rome.
- ▶ Murray, U. 2019. [Gender Responsive indicators: Gender and NDC planning for implementation](#). New York, UNDP.



Identifying risks for women farmers

Why is this important?

When formulating the NAP, a **gender responsive risk assessment** is an essential step to make sure that the formulation of objectives and activities takes into account structural inequalities and the specific and differing needs and perspectives of women and girls in rural areas, which may differ from those of men and boys.

A gender risk assessment is a process that evaluates how interventions and activities included in the NAP may affect women and men family farmers differently, identifying risks and vulnerabilities related to gender inequalities. This will in turn help unpacking the root causes of vulnerability to poverty, food insecurity, disaster and climate risks, which disproportionately affect women farmers.

It involves analysing how factors like social norms, power dynamics, laws, gender roles, and access to resources affect individuals and communities differently, leading to the development of more inclusive and equitable solutions.

Understanding and addressing the origin of the resilience gap, and the different risks faced by men and women farmers resulting from gender inequality – including socioeconomic disparity and unequal access to and control over resources – is a vital step. It allows the formulation of inclusive and equitable NAP processes and outcomes that prevent the worsening of existing inequalities and allow the design of programmes that actively improve women farmers' conditions.

What does it look like in practice?

Risks are closely associated with objectives (impact and outcomes) and should be assessed against these components.

It is important to differentiate between two types of risks:

- ▶ **Internal risks:** Factors which could arise under the framework of the NAP formulation and implementation and that may hinder the achievement of the NAP outcomes in terms of improvement of women farmers' conditions. Examples could include the limited capacity of human resources to deal with gender-responsive approaches, lack of funds dedicated to women farmers' specific needs, etc.
- ▶ **External risks:** Conditions outside the control of the NAP process that could have a negative influence on the achievement of specific goals addressing women farmers and seeking general improvement in their conditions. They could result from political, institutional, economic, environmental, social, cultural and technological constraints.

Once the possible internal and external risks are identified, it is important to assess what the probability is of each risk occurring:

- ▶ If the risk is very likely to occur and have a serious impact on the NAP, meaning it would make it doubtful that the specific goals around gender equality and women farmers' empowerment could be achieved, the NAP should be reformulated and the NAP drafting process redesigned to eliminate or significantly reduce this risk, if it is internal.
- ▶ If the risk is likely to occur and the impact could potentially be significant in terms of hindering results for women farmers, the risk (whether internal or external) should be included in the formulation matrix and monitored over time. If possible, mitigation activities should be included to minimize the risk.

EXAMPLE: Indicators, risks and means of verification developed for a specific NAP outcome

Outcome	Indicators	Means of verification	Risks
Increased voice, decision-making power, and capacity of women farmers and their organizations in technical, advocacy and leadership skills, resulting in enhancing their participation within their organizations, in policymaking processes, and in legal frameworks	Number of women and women's organizations that participated in advocacy and capacity-development programmes Percentage of women participants in (sample/representative) meetings of public entity bodies sampled at national, subnational and local levels, including outcomes such as: ratio of contributions in decision-making meetings by women and men; percentage of decisions adopted from women's contributions at meetings Number of women occupying leadership positions in cooperatives and other community groups (e.g. village savings and loan associations) Number of established affirmative actions in local and national government bodies to increase women's representation in policymaking processes	Minutes of meetings Reports of training activities Individual perspectives of key stakeholders with a gender perspective Perceptions and perspectives of women and men farmers Gender ratio in leadership positions Number of laws, policies and interventions at local and national level to increase number of women in leadership positions	Social and cultural resistance to women's leadership Psychosocial challenges for women leaders Unconscious gender bias of implementing bodies Token representation of women Project funding is diverted because of unforeseen circumstances: e.g. natural disasters, emergency aid

RESOURCES

- McGinn, C. and Venkateswaran, K. 2020. [Mainstreaming gender within local government climate and disaster risk assessments – A review of methodology and practice in the Philippines](#). Deutsche für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, Global Initiative on Disaster Risk Management and Institute for Social and Environmental Transition-International.

Defining a monitoring and evaluation strategy to track progress in women farmers' conditions

Why is this important?

Gender mainstreaming in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) involves integrating a gender perspective into every stage of the M&E process to assess whether the NAP is addressing the different needs of women and men family farmers and ultimately promoting gender equality in family farming. This requires using gender-responsive data collection tools and indicators, analysing data by sex, and ensuring the participation of both women and men in the M&E processes.

By integrating gender systematically in the overall NAP M&E system, and/or by defining additional gender-specific monitoring fields, it is possible to identify and track changes in gender behaviours, norms and relations connected to the priority areas of work for family farming in the country.

What does it look like in practice?

- ▶ Design appropriate monitoring and evaluation strategies to track progress on the different activities and the different impacts they have for women and men farmers, including the development of gender-responsive indicators.
- ▶ Link objectives, activities, inputs and indicators to a plan and a system that feeds back information to the NAP coordination team on a regular basis.
- ▶ Pay particular attention to tracking outcomes specific to **for women family farmers**. The monitoring and evaluation plan should have the following components:
 - Frequency of monitoring
 - Collection of information and means of verification
 - Assessment of information
 - Responsibility
- ▶ To effectively monitor and evaluate the integration of gender perspectives into each NAP outcome and the results achieved in terms of gender equality and empowerment of women farmers, prepare a **check list of evaluation questions** to assess different dimensions of the NAP:
 - **Efficiency:** Is the cost of the NAP activity/output justified by the results achieved for women farmers? (For example, have the trainings and activities targeted for gender equality shown any results?)
 - **Relevance:** Does the NAP effectively and meaningfully address the needs and priorities of the women (and men) farmers who are the target constituencies? (For example, does it meet the practical needs and strategic interests of family farmers in the country, both women and men?)
 - **Sustainability:** Will the interventions in support of women farmers continue on their own upon completion of the NAP activities and time horizon? (For example, will groups established by the NAP activities and policy dialogue keep working, and if so, will women continue to have leadership and influencing roles within the groups?)

IN SHORT: M&E

It measures:

- ▶ if the activities were carried out as planned (with the active participation of women and men farmers);
- ▶ if positive progress has been made towards achieving the predefined gender-related outcomes of the NAP; and
- ▶ if unexpected results or impacts have been observed for either women or men farmers.

It involves:

- ▶ systematically breaking down M&E data by sex to detect any imbalances;
- ▶ adding indicators that are more qualitative in order to identify any differences;
- ▶ considering the risks of bias when collecting data; and
- ▶ maintaining a high level of participation with a gender perspective during M&E interviews.

RESOURCES

- ▶ UN Women. 2015. [UN Women Evaluation Handbook: How to manage gender-responsive evaluation](#). New York.



EXAMPLE: A monitoring framework developed at a NAP outcome level

Outcome	Indicators	Means of Verification	Collection methods	Frequency	Responsibility
Increased voice, decision-making power, and capacity of women farmers and their organizations in technical, advocacy and leadership skills, resulting in enhancing their participation within their organizations, in policymaking processes and in legal frameworks	Number of women and women's organizations that participated in advocacy and capacity-development programmes Percentage of women participants in (sample/representative) meetings of public entity bodies sampled at national, subnational and local levels, including outcomes such as: ratio of contributions in decision-making meetings by women and men; percentage of decisions adopted from women's contributions at meetings Number of women occupying leadership positions in cooperatives and other community groups (e.g. village savings and loan associations) Number of established affirmative actions in local and national government bodies to increase women's representation in policymaking processes	Minutes of meetings Reports of training activities Individual perspectives of key stakeholders with a gender perspective Perceptions and perspectives of women and men farmers Gender ratio in leadership positions Number of laws, policies and interventions at local and national level to increase number of women in leadership positions	Document review Individual semistructured interviews Focus groups Survey data of quantitative and qualitative information Activity reports and evaluations Analysis of composition of leadership of the main involved entities at the community level Desk review of policies and laws	Annually	NAP coordination team Implementing entities and agencies

Building a gender-responsive budget

Why is this important?

Gender-responsive budgeting consists of ensuring that the budget allocated for the implementation of the NAP works for everyone. It does not mean budgeting specifically for women family farmers, but rather **understanding how the budget allocation can have a different impacts on women, men, boys and girls**. It also analyses whether the allocation is sufficient and responds to the practical and strategic needs of women and men in family farming. A gender-responsive budget responds to the lived realities of women and men farmers and makes existing inequalities visible in budgeting. Through gender-responsive budgeting, women and men can benefit equally.

What does it look like in practice?

- ▶ Base budget allocation on on the **analysis of gender gaps** and the main challenges that women family farmers face in the country or region.
- ▶ Align the budget with the objectives and strategies that have been identified to promote women farmers' participation in activities on an equal footing with men.
 - For example, this could mean ensuring there is budget allocated to improve/provide child-care services for women to allow them to attend the capacity-development and awareness-raising activities planned under the NAP without increasing their work burden.
 - If budget is allocated for the workshops but there is no allocation for alleviating women's work burden, the activities will be unlikely to have a positive impact, and they may even exacerbate inequalities.
 - Another example of positive alignment would be allocating budget to compensate women for taking time off from farm or household chores to participate in the activities/ initiatives planned under the NAP.

RESOURCES

- ▶ FAO. 2025. [Gender-responsive budgeting to realize women's and girls' right to adequate food](#). Legal Brief for Parliamentarians in Africa, No. 9. Rome.
- ▶ FAO. [Gender-responsive budgeting for agriculture and climate policies](#). Certified course.



ANNEX: Glossary

This glossary is reproduced from the FAO report *The status of women in agrifood systems*.¹

Agency: The ability of people to identify their goals, make choices and then act upon them. Agency can take multiple forms, such as bargaining, negotiation or resistance.

Empowerment (of women and girls): The expansion in the ability of women and girls, and other marginalized populations, to make strategic life choices and to transform these choices into actions and outcomes in a context where this ability was previously denied to them. This relates to equal enjoyment of human rights, development of capabilities and increased access to resources and opportunities.

Gender equality: Indicates a state in which women and men enjoy equal rights, opportunities and entitlements in civil and political life. It implies their equal participation in decision-making, their equal ability to exercise their human rights, their equal access to and control of resources, services and the benefits of development, in addition to equal opportunities in employment and in all other aspects of their livelihoods.

Gender equity: Implies fairness and impartiality in the treatment of women and men in terms of rights, benefits and obligations so that resources and opportunities are distributed fairly between them. This often requires allocating additional resources targeted to women in order to overcome longstanding inequalities in accessing means of self-improvement and empowerment. This process leads to gender equality.

Gender mainstreaming: The process of assessing the implications for men and women of any planned action – including legislation, policies and programmes – in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of women and men an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that they benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.

Gender norms: Define and govern what is expected, appropriate and acceptable behaviour for men, women, boys and girls. Gender norms are learned early in life, shaped by belief systems, can differ within and among cultures, and depend on ethnicity, social class, age and other socio-economic factors.

Gender: Socially constructed roles, identities and expectations of women and men, and the differences between them. As a social construct, gender varies from society to society and can change over time. Other factors such as class, age, marital status, health status, disability status, sexual orientation and race determine the distribution of roles, power, and resources between men and women.

Gender-responsive approaches: Approaches that acknowledge, recognize and address the specific barriers, needs, priorities and outcomes of men and women based on the social construction of gender roles.

Gender-sensitive approaches: Approaches that acknowledge and highlight existing gender differences, issues and inequalities, and consider them in the design and implementation of strategies and actions.

¹ See FAO. 2023. *The status of women in agrifood systems*. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc5343en>.

Gender-transformative approaches: Approaches that seek to examine, challenge and transform the underlying causes of gender inequalities rooted in discriminatory social structures. As such, gender transformative approaches aim to address the unequal power relations, discriminatory gender norms, attitudes, behaviours, and practices as well as discriminatory or gender-unaware policies inequalities.

Intersectionality (in relation to gender): An approach used to study, understand and respond to the ways in which gender intersects with other social factors and/or personal characteristics/identities linked to age, ethnicity, education, wealth, health status, disability status, and how these intersections combine to influence unique experiences of privilege, social exclusion and discrimination







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