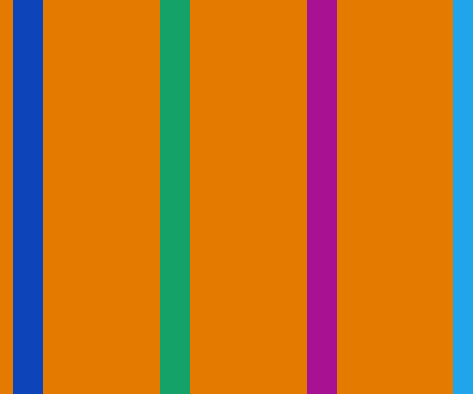
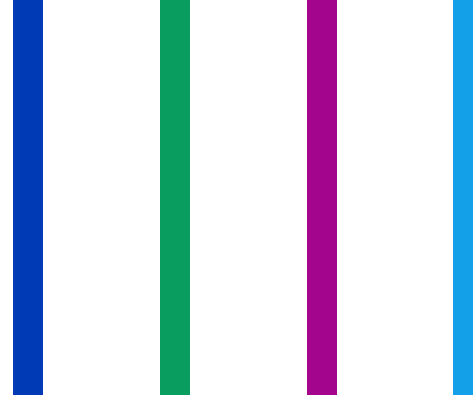




Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



Guide to mainstream gender in the FAO project cycle



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Introduction



This guide is an updated version of the 2017 *Guide to mainstreaming gender in FAO's project cycle*. It supports the implementation of Minimum Standard 8, set by the *FAO Policy on Gender Equality 2020–2030* (FAO, 2020): “Projects and programs integrate gender-related results and indicators, based on the findings of a gender analysis. Their formulation and implementation are guided by specific gender requirements established by the FAO project cycle.”

Following an introductory section which highlights the rationale and institutional framework for gender-related work, the objectives of this guide are:

- to support the formulation of projects and programs that contribute to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in agrifood systems, as foreseen by FAO's mandate;
- to provide project formulators with practical guidance and tools to implement the gender-related requirements established in the different phases of the FAO project cycle.

Box 1. Gender equality

FAO defines gender equality as a state in which women and men enjoy equal rights, opportunities and entitlements in civil and political life. This refers to the equal participation of women and men in decision-making, their equal ability to exercise their agency and human rights, and their equal access to decent employment and control over resources, services and the benefits of development.

Gender equality is achieved when women and men become equal partners in the household, community and society. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same, but that their specific rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on their gender.



Why does gender equality matter to FAO's work?

Across regions, rural women still face major constraints and structural barriers that inhibit their resilience and limit their potential as economic agents, thus affecting their capacity to fully benefit from their work within agrifood systems (FAO, 2020; FAO, 2023).

The crucial contributions of women are still not recognized adequately in national statistics and by decision-makers as much of their work is invisible and unpaid. The root causes of the inequalities and multiple forms of discriminations affecting mainly women and girls can be found in the rigid social norms, attitudes and beliefs that shape how women and men are expected to behave, and that determine the opportunities that are offered to them.

FAO recognizes that persistent inequalities are a major obstacle to agriculture and rural development and that eliminating these disparities is essential to building efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems, making sure to leave no one behind.

What are FAO's commitments to gender equality?

The FAO's gender equality commitments are defined in the *FAO Policy on Gender Equality 2020–2030*, which aims to achieve equality between men and women in sustainable agricultural production and rural development as a means of eliminating hunger and poverty. The four gender equality objectives of the policy highlight the key dimensions that must be addressed to achieve better production, better nutrition, a better environment and better lives:

- Women and men have equal voice and decision-making power in rural institutions and organizations to shape relevant legal frameworks, policies and programmes;
- Women and men have equal rights, access to and control over natural and productive resources, to contribute to and benefit from sustainable agriculture and rural development;
- Women and men have equal rights and access to services, markets and decent work and equal control over the resulting income and benefits;
- Women's work burden is reduced by enhancing their access to technologies, practices and infrastructure and by promoting an equitable distribution of responsibilities, including at household level.

What is FAO's strategy to achieve gender equality?

Through its policy on gender equality, FAO promotes a **twin-track strategy** for the implementation of gender work:

Systematically **mainstream and integrate a gender perspective** in FAO's normative and technical work, provided it has a human/social component, to respond to the different needs, interests and capacities of women and men.

Develop projects and programmes that **target women or focus on gender equality**, when there is clear evidence of wide gender-related gaps.

The gender-related requirements of the project cycle support this strategy and set out clear steps to address gender dimensions in the different phases of the project, starting with the formulation of concept notes and project documents through supporting implementation with mid-term reviews and terminal reports.

Moreover, FAO also highlights the importance of adopting **two important approaches**:

Box 2. Approaches

Intersectional approach

FAO highlights the centrality of an intersectional approach to address gender equality and women's empowerment, recognizing that gender often intersects with different factors such as age, ethnicity and socioeconomic status. This can create and reinforce specific forms of discrimination and social exclusion, not only between women and men but also among women and among men.

For example, Indigenous Women may suffer double discrimination, based on their gender and ethnicity (FAO, 2020; FAO, 2022a).

Gender transformative approaches

Gender transformative approaches not only take into consideration the different needs of women and men, but also actively seek to redress and overcome unequal power dynamics, resource allocations and role distributions.

This can be achieved by challenging and transforming structural barriers that are at the root of persistent gender inequalities such as discriminatory social norms, behaviours and attitudes, and by promoting individual and collective actions.

What support mechanisms are in place?

The *FAO Policy on Gender Equality 2020–2030* establishes that all FAO employees should – with the help of available tools, training and knowledge materials – be able to assess gender roles and responsibilities and to analyse the specific constraints and opportunities that men and women might face.

The project task force members can rely on the support of gender focal points at headquarters and in decentralized offices, of regional gender officers and gender experts in the Rural Transformation and Gender Equality Division at headquarters.

As of 2024, projects will be specifically targeted to gender equality and women's empowerment (those assigned a GM2 gender marker) will be notified to include a gender expert in their the project task force.

Besides the project cycle handbook (and templates), and the how-to guides in the Field Programme Management Information System, relevant information can be found in the FAO website and in the FAO Learning and Information Centre (forthcoming). Regional offices may also have developed tailored guidelines.

Where is gender integrated in the project cycle?

FAO has identified specific gender-related requirements in its project cycle as per Figure 1 to guide the analysis of the different roles and responsibilities of women and men in agrifood systems, identify gender-related constraints and formulate specific measures to address them.

The main templates available in the Field Programme Management System, contain gender-related questions to provide guidance at each stage of the project cycle (e.g. concept note, formulation of project document, progress and terminal report).

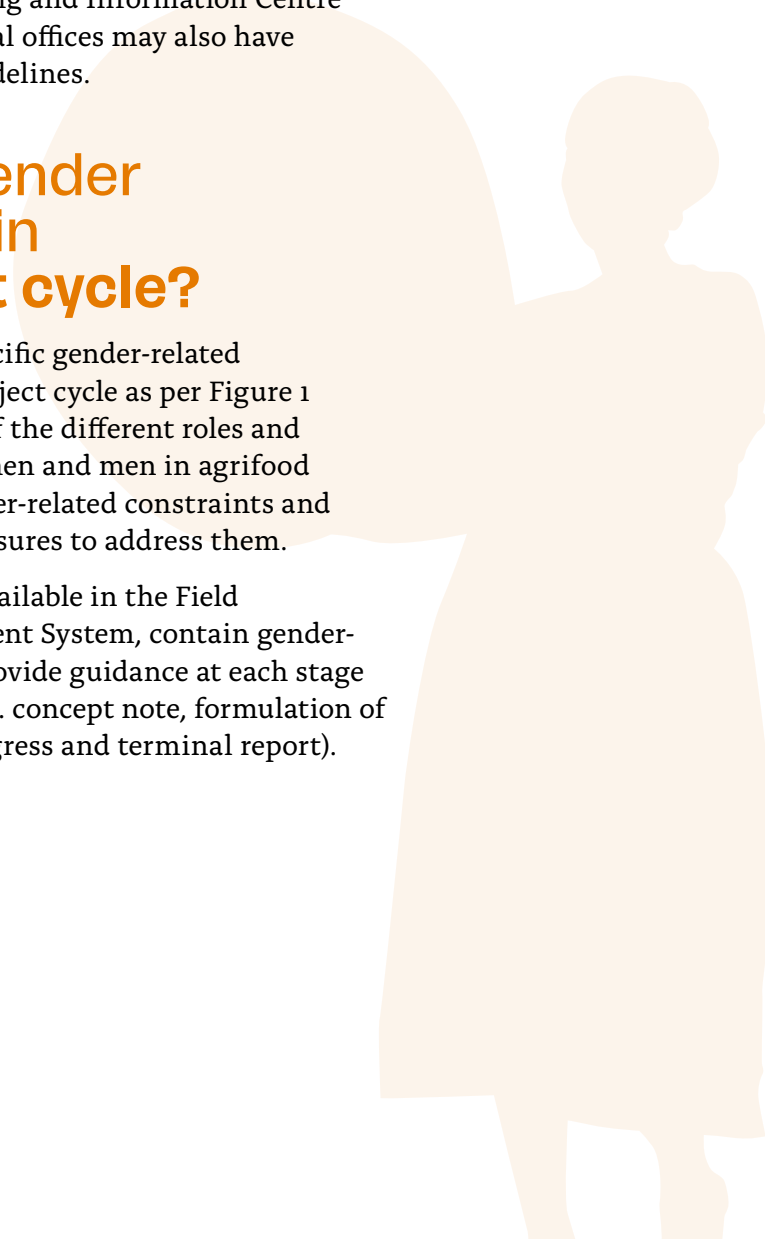
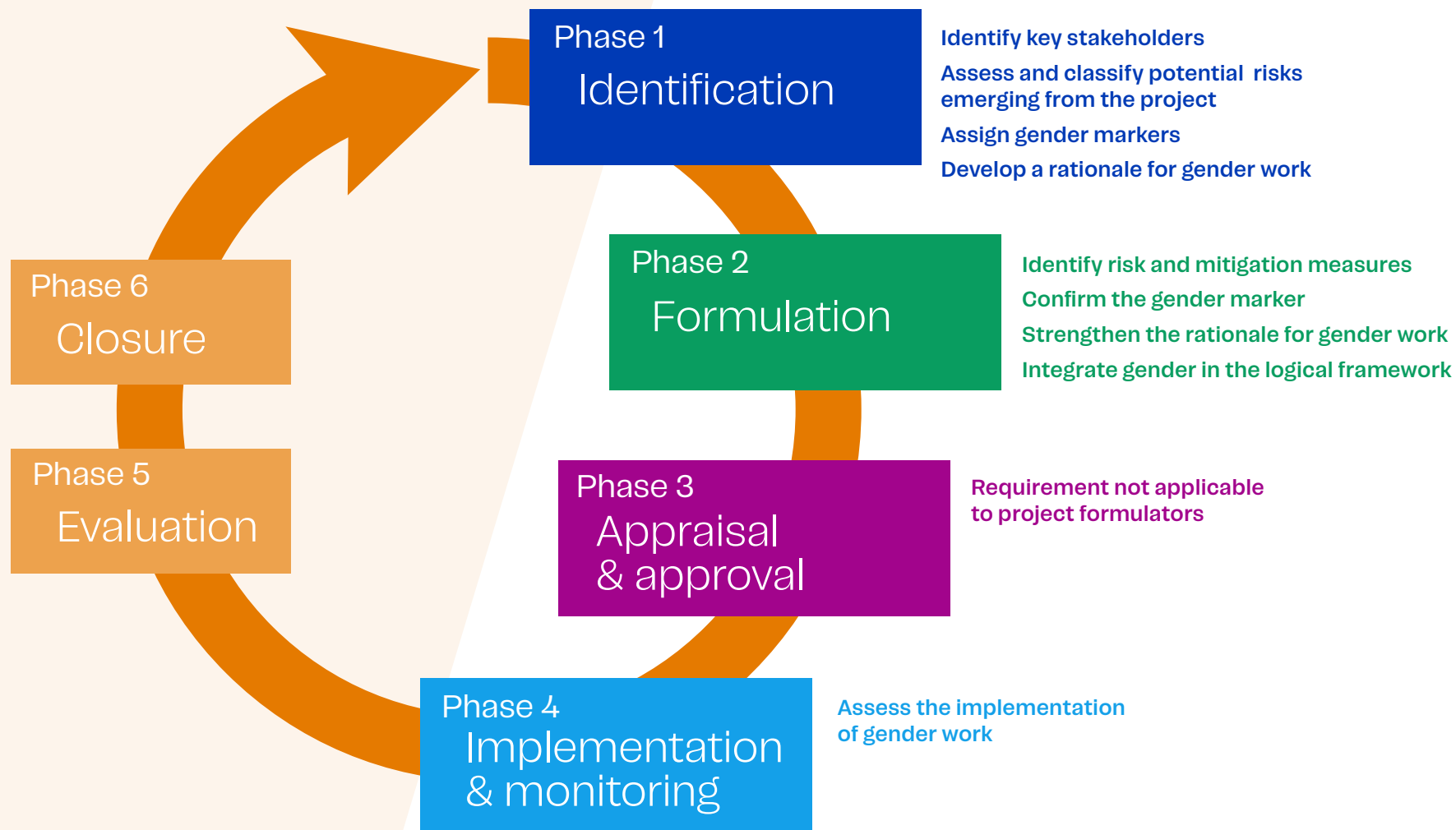



Figure 1. **Gender-related requirements in the FAO project cycle**





Gender-related
requirements
in the FAO
project cycle

Phase 1 Identification

The main deliverable under Phase 1 of the project cycle (project identification) is the development of a **concept note** that provides the initial project idea and the basis to commit further corporate resources to develop a fully-fledged project document.

The concept note is structured on the basis of the FAO project cycle quality assurance criteria of Relevance, Feasibility and Sustainability criteria:

Identify key stakeholders

Assess and classify potential risks emerging from the project

Assign a gender marker

Develop a rationale for gender work

Identify key stakeholders

The identification of organizations, associations and informed stakeholders working on either or both gender equality and women's empowerment (the stakeholders) is important for project planning both at the identification and formulation stages as these counterparts can provide support with:

- the **collection of relevant information** on the status of gender equality in the country, and how to identify and address the interests and needs of women and men and determine their priorities (key to gender analysis);
- the **identification of the target group**, based on an understanding of how men and women are likely to affect, be affected by and benefit from the project; and
- the **implementation of the project**.

This information can be gathered by reviewing government websites, consulting FAO country offices and key partners, and searching for non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations that are active at country level.

EXAMPLES OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS

- Ministries of women's affairs
- Gender units in key ministries
- Research organizations
- focusing on social or gender work
- Relevant non-governmental institutions

Assess and classify potential risks emerging from the project

All projects are assigned a level of risk and are assessed against the **Safeguard on Gender equality and prevention of gender-based violence, including the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse**, established under FAO [Framework of Environmental and Social Management](#) (FAO, 2022b). An environmental and social risk screening checklist is provided in Field Programme Management System, to support project formulators in the process of identifying risks and assigning the projects with a risk category. This will later be confirmed at the formulation phase when mitigation measures will be identified and adopted.

Two gender-related trigger questions are included in the checklist to establish preliminary risk categories:

Question 1:

Could the project lead to increased gender-based discrimination or inequalities?

Question 2:

Could this project operate in a context where there is a high risk of gender-based violence and discrimination against women and girls, such as in conflict situations, camps or shelters, areas where women's mobility is restricted, or with high numbers of poor female-headed households or unaccompanied minors?

Box 3. Question 1: Guidance

For example, through:

- not assessing social identities intersecting with gender (such as age, minorities and disabilities), which can exacerbate inequality);
- using approaches that are not culturally and socially contextualized;
- overlooking the specific constraints women face in gaining access to resources (natural and productive) and services (advisory and financial);
- overlooking women's major skills (leadership/technical) and their knowledge gaps;
- excluding or failing to engage women in decision-making and planning processes;
- engaging implementing partners/service providers that are not gender sensitive;
- not addressing gender dimensions when providing policy advice;
- increasing the work burden for women;
- perpetuating women's poor labour conditions or displacing work currently carried out by women onto men; and
- not engaging men and boys in the efforts to address gender inequalities.

Box 4. Question 2: Screening checklist

- What are the socio-cultural factors affecting the groups that will directly or indirectly benefit or be affected by FAO's intervention/ response (age, gender, health and wealth status, disabilities, etc.)?
- What are the gender and other intersecting factors affecting the target groups that might render them more susceptible to gender-based violence (high vulnerabilities among single-female-headed households, children, ethnic groups, the elderly, persons living with disabilities and refugees)? A list of examples of gender-based violence is included.

Assign a gender marker

The FAO gender markers indicate the extent to which a project or programme plans to achieve either or both gender equality and women's empowerment. They also reflect to what extent the gender dimensions are considered in the design of the intervention and are addressed in the project document.

The *FAO Policy on Gender Equality 2020–2030* requires that all projects and programmes address gender equality dimensions unless they do not have a social or human component. In this sense, gender markers serve to categorize and differentiate FAO's project portfolio among:

- projects for which **gender is not relevant** (no human or social component) and that have no potential to advance gender equality and women's empowerment (**GM 0**);
- projects that **systematically integrate gender dimensions** because of their relevance (human and social component), even if promoting gender equality is not the main objective (**GM 1**); and
- projects where the main objective is to **promote either or both gender equality and women's empowerment** (**GM 2**).

For each gender marker there are some specific gender-related requirements, which are presented in Table 1, and more detailed guidance in the gender marker checklist is presented in Table 2.

Box 5. FAQ: Gender markers

Who assigns gender markers, and when?

Gender markers are mandatory. Project formulators assign them at the concept note phase directly in Field Programme Management Systems, and as necessary, reconfirm or amend them at the formulation of the project document when more detailed planning takes place.

Who can help with the gender marker assignment?

Gender focal points in their respective office/division and/or gender officers in regional offices or at headquarters are available upon request.

When is the accuracy of the gender markers assessed, and by whom?

The accuracy of the gender markers is assessed by the gender officers as part of their review of the project document at the appraisal and approval phase. To be approved, the project must meet the gender requirements listed in table 1 or otherwise it risks being rejected. Gender markers are also periodically evaluated by the Office of the Inspector General as part of country office audits.

What are gender markers for? How does FAO use this information?

Gender markers are used at the corporate level to report on Minimum Standards 8 and 9 of the *FAO Policy on Gender Equality 2020–2030*, which set specific requirements for projects. Minimum Standard 9 sets that all decentralized offices and headquarters' divisions dedicate resources and implement Minimum Standard interventions with the main objective of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment (i.e. projects coded with GM2).

Table 1. **FAO gender markers**

	Examples of initiatives	Concept note requirements	Project document requirements
Gender Marker 0			
Promoting gender equality is not relevant to the project because this has no human or social component	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Support to the creation of a national soil information system, with purely biophysical descriptors; and – Establishment of a food price monitoring mechanism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A brief explanation in the Gender Equality section of the reasons why gender equality is not relevant to the project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – An explanation in the Sustainability section, of the reasons why gender equality is not considered relevant to the project.
Gender Marker 1 Gender mainstreaming			
Promoting gender equality is relevant. Gender dimensions are systematically integrated in the project even if the promotion of gender equality is not the main objective of the intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Promotion of climate- smart practices through the provision of inclusive advisory services that target women's and men's different productive roles; and – Technical advice for the development of a national livestock policy/strategy, which includes expertise for the gender analysis and formulation of gender-specific follow-up actions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A brief explanation under the Gender Equality section, of how the project intends to address women's specific needs and constraints. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The project is designed based on a gender analysis and describes under the Sustainability section, gender-based roles, opportunities and constraints (supported by sex-disaggregated data); – The logical framework includes gender-related activities/ outputs and indicators; – A sufficient budget is allocated to meet implementation needs; and – Gender-related tasks and responsibilities are included in the Terms of Reference of key project personnel, where relevant.
Gender Marker 2 Gender-specific interventions			
The project's main objective is to promote gender equality and women's empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Enhancing rural women's access to market and participation in agrifood value chains through tailor-made training and the provision of women-friendly technologies; and – Empowering women in small-scale fisheries by supporting the implementation of the gender objectives and principles included in the Voluntary Guidelines for Sustaining Small-Scale Fisheries (FAO, 2015). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A brief explanation under the Gender Equality section how the project intends to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The project is designed based on a gender analysis, which clearly identifies gender-based roles, opportunities and constraints that the project aims to address (supported by sex-disaggregated data); – The logical framework includes gender-related outcomes, outputs, activities and indicators and this is reflected clearly in the available or hired budget; and – Gender expertise is available/hired to support the implementation of the project and partnerships with organizations working on gender equality and women's rights are established.

Table 2. **Gender marker assignment checklist**

Minimum requirements	GMO	GM1	GM2
Analysis			
Conduct a preliminary assessment/analysis to understand whether gender issues are relevant, and if the project has the potential to impact women and men differently and contribute to any of the objectives set by the FAO Policy on Gender Equality.	X	X	X
Consult with organizations, associations and/or informed stakeholders working on gender equality and/or women's rights to gain information and identify potential implementing partners (information to be included in the Stakeholder Engagement Matrix in Annex II).		X	X
Carry out a gender analysis to assess women's and men's different roles, needs and capacities and understand the gender-based discriminations and unequal power relations that are likely to affect the ability of women and girls to participate in and benefit from the project.		X	X
Assess the potential risks of the intervention to perpetuate or exacerbate gender inequalities (including the risk of gender-based violence), as required by FAO Environmental and Social Safeguards.		X	X
Intervention strategy			
Actions and measures			
Integrate the findings of the gender analysis and the risks assessment in the project document (in particular, under Section 3.4 under Sustainability and Annex V on Risk Management).		X	X
Include measures to minimize the identified risks of perpetuating or exacerbating gender inequalities (Annex V).		X	X

Minimum requirements	GMO	GM1	GM2
Formulate gender responsive actions to address the identified gender-based discriminations and unequal power relations, as part of the project intervention strategy and integrate them in the logical framework in the form of activities or outputs (Annex I).		X	
Formulate the intervention with the specific aim to achieve gender equality and/or women's empowerment, with the logical framework articulated around clear gender-related outcomes, outputs and activities.			X
Monitoring			
Formulate gender-sensitive indicators that allow for monitoring whether the project is engaging and benefitting both women and men, and whether it is effectively addressing the identified gender-based inequalities (Annex I).		X	
Formulate a gender responsive monitoring and reporting framework that allows for monitoring whether the project is achieving the expected outputs and effectively contributing to reducing the identified gender inequalities and transforming gender and power relations.			X
Budget			
Ensure that sufficient budget is allocated for implementing the planned gender-related activities.		X	
Ensure that most, if not all the budget, is dedicated to gender-related work.			X
Human resources			
Include in the Terms of Reference of key project staff (Chief technical advisor, monitoring officer, key consultants, etc.) specific gender-related tasks and responsibilities.		X	
Ensure that gender expertise is available (or hired) to support/coordinate the implementation of gender-related work.			X

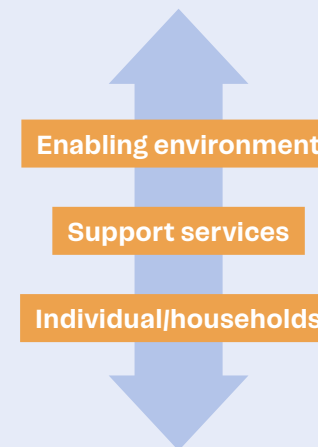
Develop a rationale for gender work

Concept notes must include a rationale describing why and how gender equality and women's empowerment is relevant to the project objectives and how the project intends to address this. The information provided should highlight:

- the different **roles, capacities and needs** of women and men in relation to the planned intervention and the constraints that are likely to affect them, as identified in the preliminary gender analysis;
- the gender-related strategy and **actions that** the project will put in place to overcome or reduce the identified gender inequalities (e.g. unequal access to assets, resources and services; unequal participation; etc.); and
- the organizations, associations and informed **stakeholders** working on gender equality or women's rights consulted for the development of this concept note, who might be considered as partners also in project implementation.

Box 6. How to conduct a gender analysis

- Collect **quantitative and qualitative sex-and age-disaggregated data**. Examples on secondary data include country gender assessments, CEDAW reports, statistical websites and gender policies – or conduct primary data collection at field level for example through key informant interviews, focus group discussions and household interviews.
- Assess **gender-based constraints at various levels**, as shown in the illustration and analyses the underlying social norms affecting decision-making, participation and access to resources and services.
- Analyse the **linkages that exist between gender and intersecting social dimensions** such as age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status to assess multiple forms of marginalization and exclusion (**intersectional approach**).



Box 7. Guiding questions for a gender analysis

Gender roles and responsibilities

- What roles and responsibilities do women and men, and boys and girls have?
- What are their domestic roles and responsibilities (e.g. water, fodder and fuel wood collection, childcare and other domestic tasks)?
- How is men's and women's time divided between household and productive activities?
- Are there any social sanctions for women and men who do not comply with their traditional gender roles (women to take care of domestic and care work; men to be the breadwinner for the family)?
- Will participation in the project increase or reduce women's work burden?

Participation and decision-making

- Will women and men have the same opportunities to participate in the project activities? If not, why?
- Are women represented in producer organization and/or cooperatives active in the sector(s) of the project?
- Do women actively participate/have leadership positions in decision-making bodies and processes?
- Is women's leadership accepted in a mixed group/organization?
- Who decides about the allocation of resources within the household? How are these resources allocated among the different members (e.g. husband, wife, adolescent sons and daughters, elders)?
- Do women have control over and benefit from the resources and assets deriving from their work or their participation in the project activities?

Access to assets/resources and services

- Are there any legal restrictions (within statutory or customary legal systems) to women's ownership or inheritance of land or other assets?
- When resources are scarce, do farmers believe men should have the right of access rather than women?
- Do women have the same access to credit and other financial services as men? Are there indirect constraints that might affect them (e.g. lack of collateral)?
- Do women and men have equal access to decent employment opportunities along agrifood value chains? Do they have equal access to markets and social protection schemes?
- Do women have equal access to key financial, extension and advisory services to access information and training?
- Do women and men have equal access to technologies/ICTs and services that might improve the quality and efficiency of their work?

Phase 2 Formulation

The project document is the main deliverable of the formulation phase. In this phase it is important to involve and consult FAO teams (country level, regional offices, headquarters) and relevant stakeholders (implementation partners and target group) to validate the project proposal. The project document follows and builds on the concept note and describes in greater detail the relevance, feasibility and potential sustainability of the proposal.

Therefore, it is expected that the content included at the concept note stage will be reviewed and improved upon based on the more accurate information obtained. The following gender-related requirements apply to the project document, where specific information should be included under the Feasibility and Sustainability sections:

- Identify risk and mitigation measures
- Confirm the gender marker
- Strengthen the rationale for gender work
- Integrate gender in the logical framework

Identify risk and mitigation measures

Based on the Environmental and Social Risk Assessment carried out at the concept note stage, the risks and risk category should be updated and confirmed at the formulation stage. Depending on the risk category, relevant gender-related mitigation measures must be identified and inserted in the Risk Management Plan in Annex V of the Project document. A simplified gender action plan or a gender-based violence or protection from sexual exploitation plan may be required.

Confirm the gender marker

The gender marker can be reconfirmed or amended at the formulation phase prior to the project appraisal. Projects coded with a gender marker GM1 or GM2 are expected to include specific gender-related outputs, activities and indicators in the logical framework, depending on their scale and budget. The requirements to be considered at the consolidation stage of the project document linked to each gender marker are highlighted in Table 1 (page 10).

FAQ: SUPPORT TO GM2 PROJECTS

As of 2024, the formulation of projects marked GM2 will benefit from the support of a gender expert as a member of the project task force.

ARE PROJECT FORMULATORS REQUIRED TO INCLUDE A RATIONALE FOR GENDER WORK IF A DIFFERENT TEMPLATE IS USED?

Yes. Not all projects are formulated using the FAO project document template, but all projects must explain whether and how they will address gender-based constraints.

Strengthen the rationale for gender work

Compared to the content of the concept note, the rationale for gender work in the project document should be revised **based on more in-depth research and analysis**, building also on the findings of the gender analysis conducted when the project was identified. At this stage, it is necessary to describe how the

project expects to contribute to one or more of the objectives of the FAO Policy on Gender Equality and review the concept note by elaborating on:

- the different roles, capacities and needs of women and men (if possible disaggregated by age and socio-economic status) in relation to the planned intervention;
- the gender-based discriminations and unequal power relations that are likely to affect the ability of women and girls to participate in and benefit from the project; and
- the specific intervention that the project will put in place to reduce existing gender inequalities and contribute to the objectives of the FAO Policy on Gender Equality.

The *FAO Policy on Gender Equality 2020–2030* is a good reference document for understanding critical gender-related constraints and entry points for action.

Box 8. How the analysis of discriminatory social norms can support project design

Ecuador

Throughout 2022, the Joint Programme on Gender Transformative Approaches for Food Security and Nutrition, supported two social norms diagnostic studies, one of which was implemented jointly by the three United Nations Rome-based agencies in partnership with CARE Ecuador.

Applying the Social Norms Exploration Tool to identify gendered social norms, the study engaged more than 1 300 people from the provinces of Imbabura and Manabí and pointed to several key findings that can inform project design and interventions by focusing on structural gender inequalities. Participants highlighted three social norms:

- that women's domestic, care and agricultural activities should not be valued in the same way as men's, which resulted in women's lack of participation in family farming decision-making processes;
- that women should be responsible for care and domestic work, which resulted in a lack of time for their training and for taking other types of initiatives; and
- that men should be responsible for agricultural work because of their physical and intellectual capacity, which was at the root of their lack of interest in promoting equality in family farming.

The Joint Programme on Gender Transformative Approaches for Food Security and Nutrition organized several sessions in Quito and in the two provinces to validate, disseminate and discuss the findings of the studies, including coming up with solutions to improve their livelihoods.

Source: FAO.2024. Joint Programme on Gender Transformative Approaches for Food Security and Nutrition. <https://www.fao.org/joint-programme-gender-transformative-approaches/en>

Integrate gender in the logical framework

The gender analysis reflected in the rationale for gender work is the basis of the formulation of either or both **gender responsive or transformative outcomes, outputs, activities and indicators in the logical framework**. As one of the United Nations Common Country Programming Principles, gender is expected to be adequately integrated in the logical framework.



Depending on the focus of the project and the assigned gender marker, the logical framework will either include selected gender responsive or gender transformative outputs and activities or be entirely focused on gender equality as its main objective.

The human and financial resources to carry out these actions will be

reflected in the budget (Annex IV) and the organizations or associations working on gender equality and women's rights will be engaged for the implementation of this project (Stakeholder Engagement Matrix in Annex II).

FAO promotes the adoption of gender transformative approaches to redress unequal power dynamics, resource allocations and role distributions.

Box 9. How to address gender in the logical framework

The logical framework can address gender issues by:

- **formulating gender responsive outputs** that clarify how the project intends to support gender equality and women's empowerment;
- **formulating activities** that respond to women's specific needs and priorities and/or address discriminatory social norms;
- including **gender-sensitive indicators and targets** (see page 19); and
- allocating adequate **human and financial resources** to implement the gender-related work.

Impact and outcome statements may not refer explicitly to gender, unless the project specifically targets gender equality and women's empowerment. However, outputs, activities and indicators should be gender responsive.



Box 10. Gender mainstreaming approaches

Key characteristics of gender responsive approaches

Gender responsive approaches recognize gender-related constraints and aim to respond to these with specific actions. The following are selected examples of gender responsive actions:

- support policymakers to formulate policies and strategies that respond to the different needs of women and men;
- engage with local organizations/cooperatives to review membership requirements that are discriminatory to women;
- build the capacities of extension workers to understand gender-based constraints and improve information and resource access to women; and
- promote business management and financial literacy to increase women's bargaining power.

Currently the majority of FAO's programming tends to be gender responsive.

Key characteristics of gender transformative approaches

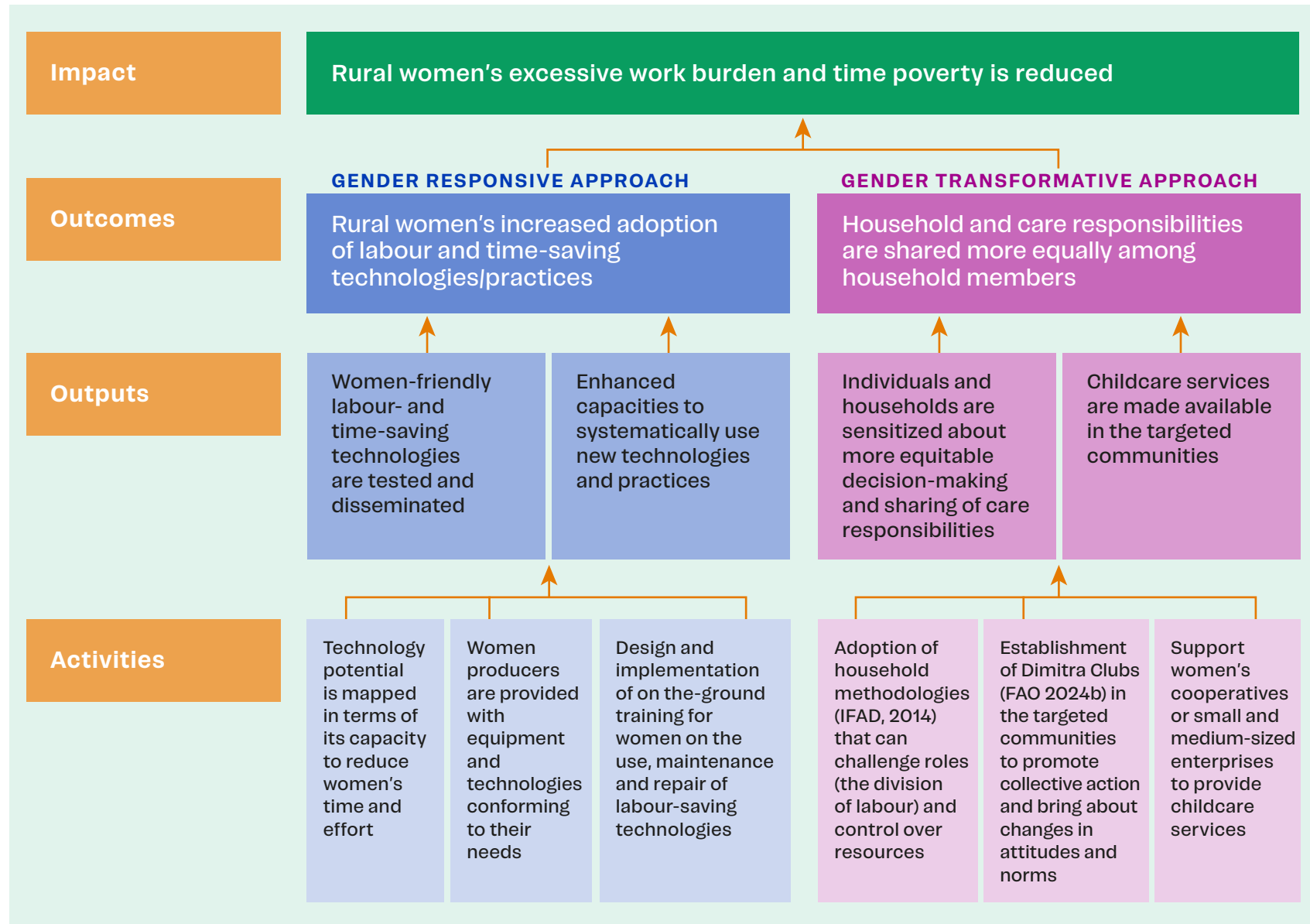
Gender transformative approaches seek to address discriminatory norms, attitudes and behaviours and the imbalance of power between women and men.

Gender transformative change is a process that is comprised of different dimensions: i) building individual and collective agency; ii) challenging unequal power relations; and iii) making social institutions (formal and informal rules and norms) more gender equitable. All of which influence changes at the individual, household, and community spheres at micro, meso and macro levels.¹ See below some key characteristics of gender transformative programming:

- engage with men and boys as allies for gender equality and women's empowerment;
- engage with influential social norm holders such as traditional community and religious leaders and women and men's main reference groups (e.g. spouse, parents, parents-in-law, siblings, peers) as agents of change;
- address both practical needs (knowledge, skills) and strategic interests (decision-making power/social status) of men and women; and
- implement participatory household and community-level approaches and tools to raise awareness and build capacities, such as the FAO Dimitra Clubs, the Gender Action learning system, Community Conversations.

¹ FAO, IFAD, WFP & 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. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc7940en>

Figure 2. How to embed gender responsive and gender transformative outputs and activities into the logical framework of a project



Box 11. Gender-sensitive indicators

- require data to be disaggregated by sex, age and other socio-economic variables;
- measure the different roles, responsibilities and access to resources and services of different members (men and women) of the household or community;
- measure the existing gap between men and women;
- measure change on discriminatory social norms, attitudes and behaviours;
- gauge progress towards achieving gender equality goals; and
- demonstrate the impact of changes in power relations between women and men.

Levels of indicators	What do they measure?	Examples
Activity level indicators	Focus on the process Measure the delivery of activities	Number of trainings on innovative practices targeted to women and men Number of women's groups established Number of Dimitra Clubs that discussed men's perceptions of women's roles
Output level indicators	Measure the direct results of activities and show that they are having the intended effect	Number of women who show increased capacity to use a specific labour-saving technology Number of women-owned/-led firms with increased access to finance
Outcome level indicators	Measure long term change	Women's leadership and engagement in decision-making increased in local institutions Reduction of women's work burden Change in men's attitude towards women's work and needs
Types of indicators	What do they measure	Examples
Quantitative indicators	Measures of quantity based on sex disaggregated data	Number of men and women attending farmer field schools Number of credit, financial and technical support services accessible to women and men Number of seats held by women on local councils/boards of rural organizations Changes in the amount of property owned by women and men (land, houses, livestock) across socio economic, age and ethnic groups
Qualitative indicators	Stakeholder's perceptions (both men and women) of changes in behaviour, knowledge, skills and self reliance	Men's and women's perceptions of the quality of their participation and the impact of project activities on their lives Men's and women's awareness of the available technologies, extension and financial services Opinions of women and men about whether women are becoming more empowered and why Women's perceived increase in self-respect and confidence Men's perceptions of these changes

Phase 3 & Appraisal & approval

WHICH PROJECTS ARE APPRAISED FOR GENDER?

All projects above USD 500 000 (except emergency projects) undergo an online quality appraisal by the Program and Project Review Committee on Relevance and Sustainability before being approved.

In phase 3, projects are appraised and approved by gender officers at FAO headquarters, in the case of global and inter-regional projects, and by regional gender officers in the case of national, subregional or regional projects.

The gender appraisal questions focus on key requirements highlighted in the project identification and formulation.

Box 12. Appraisal questions

- The project takes into consideration the priorities, opportunities, needs, constraints and knowledge of both women and men, as identified by the gender analysis;
- The project includes activities and outputs that address gender inequalities and aims for women and men to benefit equally from the intervention.

If the appraisal finds that the project does not meet the requirements and that it was marked with the incorrect gender marker, specific advice will be given for a revision.

Phase 4 & monitoring Implementation

In Phase 4, gender-related outcomes, outputs and activities should be managed and monitored

based on the logical framework, risk matrix, work plan and budget. For project implementation it is a good practice to have established baselines and indicators in the logical framework matrix, which will facilitate the effective management of the project as well as its monitoring, and will make it easier to produce reports. A mid-term review of gender-related activities can help to define corrective actions, as showcased in the example in the box.

Box 13. How project monitoring can improve implementation

In the Africa region, a food company processes chillies for sale in national and international markets. Women cultivate chillies in small gardens while men deliver the crops to the processing plant and collect payment. Shortly after the purchase of the first crop, supplies of chillies decreased, which led to an inquiry about on-farm production methods to identify any constraints.

A quick assessment was carried out. It was found that married women had abandoned chili production because they were not receiving returns for their labour, since their spouses were retaining the proceeds. To increase incentives for women to produce chillies, the food company reviewed its payment system, to include both cash and non-cash rewards: a pound of sugar (a desired household commodity) was delivered along with cash payments.

Phase 4 has a specific gender-related requirement, which is to:

Assess the implementation of gender work

In order to do this, project implementation progress reports and terminal reports require the Project Task Force to review its gender work for possible adjustments and to fill out a specific gender scorecard to evaluate overall gender-related achievements.

Assess the implementation of gender work

In the **progress report** template, the guidance for the Overview section specifies to describe how the project has achieved gender equality and its effect on beneficiaries (e.g. men, women, boys and girls), supported by specific evidence. The review of the logical framework, should highlight the specific progress towards gender-related targets at the output and outcome levels. If any of the expected project results are likely to be either delayed or not achieved, the project task force needs to provide an explanation and an action plan to address it. If any of the expected project results are likely to be either delayed or not achieved, the project task force needs to provide an explanation and an action plan to address it.

In the **terminal report** the requirement is embedded under the sustainability section and a checklist (table 3) is provided to help the lead technical officer to assess the implemented gender work.

Table 3. **Terminal report: checklist to assess gender-related work**

Gender equality	A	B	C	D	NA
Have the activities met the needs and priorities of women and men beneficiaries/ stakeholders as identified at the design stage?					
Provide a small narrative text to support the score					
Have women and men equitably benefited from the results achieved by the intervention?					
Particular attention should be given to whether the project contributed to the achievement of one or more objectives of the FAO Policy on Gender Equality (equitable participation in decision-making; access to and control over decent employment, income, land and other productive resources, goods, services and markets; and reduction in women's work burden).					
Provide a small narrative text to support the score					



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Guide to mainstream gender in the FAO project cycle

This guide provides project formulators with practical guidance and tools to implement the gender related requirements established in the different phases of the FAO project cycle, and to support the formulation of projects and programs that contribute to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in agrifood systems, as foreseen by FAO's mandate.

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