Gender equality and women’s empowerment in food and agriculture

Kenya

Duration: September 2019 - December 2023
Funding: FAO Flexible Voluntary Contribution (FVC)
Target areas: Bomet, Nakuru, Nyandarua, Nandi, Kiambu and Kilifi counties
Implementing partners: Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (MoALF), Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs, Kenya Forest Services, Farm Forestry Smallholder Producers Association of Kenya (FFSPAK), Action Aid International Kenya (AAIK), PROCASUR Africa, Self-Help Groups (SHG) and World Vision Kenya
Target population: Rural women, men and youth

At a glance

The activities in Kenya are part of a multi-country Subprogramme that aims to contribute to closing the gender gap in agriculture. It seeks to enhance rural women’s social and economic empowerment and strengthen their leadership roles in rural development, decision-making and resilience building while contributing to the eradication of hunger and extreme poverty.

The initiative adopts holistic, integrated and transformative approaches to tackle deep-rooted causes of gender inequalities. It engages both women and men in sensitization, capacity development, dialogue, analysis, and action over gender equality, collective action, local issues and farm business for a better life.

Interventions

1. Promoting gender responsive policies and programmes in agriculture, food security and nutrition through technical advice, awareness-raising, capacity development and knowledge generation;
2. Establishing FAO’s Dimitra Clubs to strengthen rural people’s agency, voice and participation in local decision-making processes, through community engagement and collective action, with special focus on women and youth.
3. Piloting the Women’s Empowerment Farmer Business School (WE-FBS) approach and conducting gender-sensitive value chain analyses to identify opportunities for strengthening women’s roles in agri-food value chains, increasing their access to markets and challenging social norms biased against them.

Impact

The initiative promotes gender-responsive rural development policies and programmes that contribute to enhancing women’s agency and voice at the household, community and organization levels, targeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 1, 2, 5 and 10.
Lines of action

1. Technical support
2. Knowledge generation
3. Policy advice
4. Capacity development
5. Community engagement

Results

- 6 700 participants in the Subprogramme, among whom:
  - 6 043 farmers (3,613 women and 2,430 men) trained in WE-FBS through 332 farmer groups. The training improved access and control of productive assets for women and men, knowledge, and market opportunities for lucrative value chains such as chilies, poultry, and dairy.
  - 657 members (489 women, 41 youth, and 127 men) organized in 23 Dimitra Clubs in 20 villages of the Kilifi county. Their organization resulted in improved participation of women and men in local decision-making, dialogue and collective action carried out - e.g. water pipes connection for improving irrigation, etc.

- 33 Village Savings and Loaning Associations (VSLAs) formed as a result of the WE-FBS training in Bomet, Nyandarua, and Nakuru counties.

- 20 people from government branches, local NGOs, advocacy and youth groups trained in inclusive, integrated, and innovative public policies cycle for family farming under the framework of the UN Decade of Family Farming 2019-2028.

- Knowledge products to inform field activities and policy dialogues, including a baseline assessment on the status of rural women in the target communities, a gender analysis, a legal assessment of the SDG Indicator 5.a.2 using a methodology developed by FAO, and a video story.

Established collaborations

- Kenya Cereal Enhancement Programme-Climate Resilient Agricultural Livelihoods window (KCEP-CRAL): a project implemented by FAO and funded by the Government of Kenya, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, and the European Union

- Forest and Farm Facility (FFF): a partnership between FAO, the International Institute for Environment and Development, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, and Agri-cord to strengthen forest and producers organizations representing smallholders, rural women’s groups, local communities, and indigenous peoples’ institutions.

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