

IOE



Investing in rural people

Independent Office of Evaluation



125th
Evaluation
Committee

Thematic Evaluation of IFAD's support to gender equality and women's empowerment

Presentation of the evaluation report

19 June 2024

The evaluation assessed the development effectiveness and contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) of IFAD interventions.



The TE generates lessons and recommendations to enhance IFAD's future policies, strategies and interventions.

Scope: 2012-2023 (focus from 2016)

IFAD corporate environment; resources and operations

GEWE outcome trends
(RIDE, UNSWAP, ARRI...)

Further analysis and
primary data collection

Deep dives

74 projects including household
methodologies

16 PDR with high gender rating
(8 of them GT-validated)

Climate change and gender

Eleven country case studies
(19 COSOPs and 46 projects)

Additional desk review: 12 grants; 3
supplementary-funded programmes; 25
COSOPs approved since 2016

29 completed projects (QCA applied) –
all approved since policy

Evolution of IFAD
GEWE strategic
approach

Organizational fit-for-
purpose assessment

Interviews

Electronic
survey

Literature review

GEWE in other
organizations

External
environment –
global GEWE
theory and practice



- IFAD's Gender policy and Action Plan are aligned with **global strategies** for gender equality and with those of other **comparators**, and are coherent with the **Fund's broader priorities**;
- The gender strategic objectives is well aligned with **SDG 5 targets**, but equitable **access/control to land** and **policy engagement on GEWE** is less developed at IFAD to-date;
- The move in programming to tackle the root causes of gender inequality is highly relevant to **IFAD's mandate** and is aligned with **international efforts**;
- Additional **corporate GEWE commitments** are not fully included in the policy, e.g. gender transformative programming, interplay of gender with other socio-economic variables and IFAD mainstreaming themes.

- **Emphasis on GEWE in COSOPs** increased over the years, but room for improvement remains (e.g. rural women portrayed as vulnerable, limited links with national legislation);
- Quality and coherence of **gender strategies in project designs** remains variable (dilution in SECAP compliance procedures, overstretched staff);
- There is over-use of **quotas of men/women**;
- There are other promising **strategies identified** (e.g. gender gaps studies along value chains, rural women financing windows, females as local service providers, family referrals used in non-sovereign operations).

- **Mixed performance** around the strategic objectives of the gender policy:


SO1
Economic empowerment
Enable rural women and men to have equal opportunity to participate in, and benefit from, profitable economic activities



SO2
Decision-making & representation
Enable women and men to have equal voice and influence in rural institutions and organisations

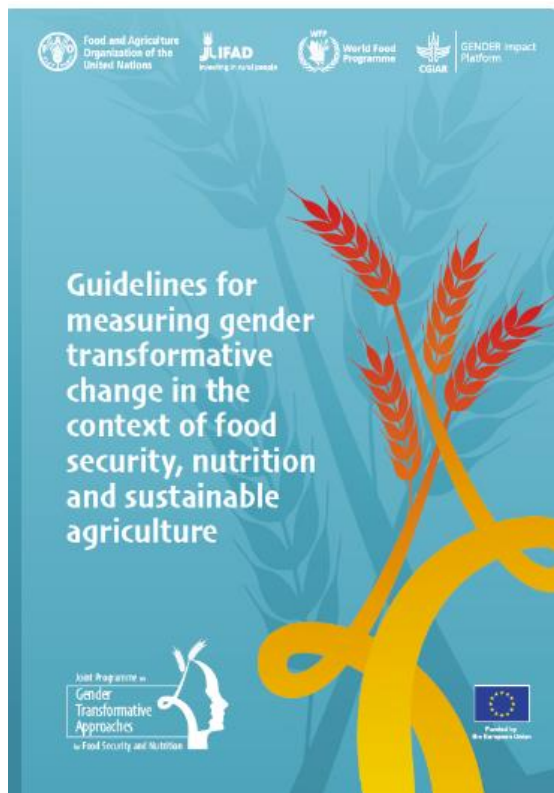


SO3
Equitable workload balance
Achieve a more equitable balance in workloads and in the sharing of economic and social benefits



- economic empowerment as a good entry point but lack of guidance to map contributions;
- promoting men/women quotas in rural organizations leads to token participation;
- equal benefits/workload as an objective stands out from comparators, but no clear metrics.

- Combinations of **practices to address root causes of gender inequality**, tailored to local contexts, contribute to household and community-level GEWE results, some examples:
 - **Gender Action Learning System (GALS)**, but over-reliance without cost and benefit analysis;
 - catalysing **access of rural women to land** without working at national level;
 - targeted **training for rural women** (e.g. functional skills, leadership);
 - importance of **engaging with rural men / local leaders**.
- Conceptual and operational challenges in project design reports and during early implementation of **Gender Transformative projects** (gender transformative programming).



- **Partnership with Rome-based agencies** and others have been useful to conceptualize gender transformative programming and wide dissemination;
- **Challenges to articulate** NLA on GEWE with IFAD country programmes;
- COSOPs and GT project design reports are not fully leveraged for **policy engagement on GEWE / promotion of scaling up**;
- Promising recent **GALS upscaling efforts** in Nepal, Malawi, Uganda and Rwanda, supported by a series of grants (and loans).

- **Accountability mechanisms** provide insufficient strategic guidance;
- **High-level gender-related indicators** focused on outreach numbers;
- **Staff incentives** skewed towards compliance, despite high motivation;
- Increase in **human and financial resources**, but also rise in workload; **gender training** for staff/consultants not sufficient;
- Many **changes in approaches and guidance**, not compiled in a consolidated package in all languages;
- **Limited gender M&E** to guide implementation and report results;
- **Capacity building efforts to implementing partners** are not enough;
- Workforce **diversity** is improving, but not enough done on **gender parity** in all categories and at all levels.

1

Update gender policy and gender action plan.

2

Strengthen effectiveness of IFAD's interventions through a shared understanding and buy-in among relevant stakeholders of IFAD's guidance related to GEWE.

3

Enhance human resources with capacities to address GEWE priorities.

4

Establish high-level robust metrics for IFAD's GEWE goals.