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Gender Responsive Agriculture Systems Policy (GRASP) Fellowship

Policy Innovation Projects

Led By Policy Fellows in the First Cohort

Contents

About the Gender Responsive Agriculture Systems Policy (GRASP) Fellowship6

About the Policy Innovation Projects.....6

Top 10 PIPs Supported with Top up CGIAR GENDER IMPACT PLATFORM Grant (\$3000+\$4000).....8

Evidence based policy advocacy and Institutional Capacity building for Gender Responsive agricultural extension services in Siaya county, Kenya 10

Evidence based policy advocacy and Institutional Capacity building for Gender Responsive climate change and agricultural policies in Machinga district, Malawi 12

Enhancing Institutional Capacity for Gender Responsive agrifood System Transformation 14

Enhancing Climate Resilient Agriculture and gender responsiveness in Nigeria through institutional capacity building and a G-SMART Monitor 16

Improving Women Agricultural Productivity through Gender-responsive Access to Credit in Uganda 18

Transforming gender Inclusivity in Nigeria’s Cassava Seed Entrepreneur Policy Guidelines 20

Integrating Gender Responsive Adolescent Nutrition considerations in the National Policy of Food and Nutrition in Nigeria 22

Empowering Women in Edo State’s Fisheries and Aquaculture Value Chain:

Data –Driven Policy Advocacy for Sustainable Change 24

An integrated Gender and Policy Analysis of the Nigerian Aquaculture Value Chain for Inclusive Smallholder Livelihoods 26

Enhancing Food Safety through Gender-responsive Policies in Uganda ... 28

Other PIPs Supported Only With AWARD Catalytic Fund \$3000 31

Breaking the Silence: Using Digital and Social Media Tools to Unmask and Address Gender-Based Violence Among Smallholder Farmers in Nigeria . 32

Integration of Gender Responsive Post-Harvest Handling of Horticultural Crops into National Food and Nutrition Policy in Nigeria 34

Improving Access to Credit for Smallholder Women Farmers through Policy and Action in Nigeria 36

Empowering Women Agri-food Entrepreneurs for Assuring Safe and Nutritious Foods in Zambia 38

Promoting Women’s Empowerment in Agricultural Value Addition: A Pathway to Sustainable Development 40

Equitable Access to Fertilizer Subsidy Using a Gender Responsive Approach 42

Gender Responsive Food Safety Policy Implementation: A case of Small and Medium Food Processors in Zambia 44

Enhancing Resilience of Women Fish Value Chain Actors through Gender Responsive Climate Change Strategies and Policies in Malawi 46

A Gender-Responsive National Seed Strategy and Investment Plan for the Ghana Seed Industry 48

Promoting equitable adoption of smart-hybrid solar drying technologies through Gender responsive value addition provisions in Kenya’s agriculture policy 50

Creating Awareness for Development of Gender responsive Agricultural Technologies in Chongwe District, Zambia 52

Enhancing Access to Phytosanitary Information on Plants and Plant Products for Women and Youth Involved in Small Scale Cross Border Trade in Zambia 54

Enhancing Gender responsive and Inclusive Access and Adoption of Climate-Smart Cultivars in Zambia 56

Towards Gender- Responsive Digital Agriculture guidelines/policies: A policy Analysis and advocacy 58

Enhancing Operationalization of Ghana’s National Climate Change Policy among Smallholder Agricultural Systems – Why Gender Matters! 60

Championing Youth and Women Producers Active Engagement in the New EU Regulations and directive (EUDR and CS3D) Compliance in Uganda .. 62

Gender-Food-Waste Nexus: Advancing Equality through Gender Responsive Food Waste Management Policies and Strategies in Kenya 64

Enhancing Gender Responsiveness of Climate Change and Agricultural Policies in Homa bay County, Kenya 66



About the Gender Responsive Agriculture Systems Policy (GRASP) Fellowship

The Gender Responsive Agriculture Systems Policy (GRASP) Fellowship is a career development program that targets African women in the policy field to catalyze the design and implementation of gender-responsive agricultural policies across Africa.

An initiative of African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD) funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the GRASP Fellowship is fostering policy change across regional, sub-regional and national levels for gender equality and women's empowerment.

About the Policy Innovation Projects

The Policy Innovation Projects (PIPs) are policy solutions designed by Policy Fellows to address or contribute to addressing identified policy issues/

problems around gender inequality

A PIP can focus on continental, regional, country, state or county level depending on the geographical area governed by the policy of interest

PIPs will not only enhance women's empowerment but also foster system-level change processes to improve livelihoods of men, women, youth, children in society.

They should yield tangible and sustained benefits in agriculture and agri-food systems decades after the GRASP Fellowship programme ends.

Why PIPS? –The PIPs are GRASP flagship interventions which provide an excellent opportunity for hands-on experience in forging collaboration and practice on gender-responsive policy development in the agricultural sector.



The AWARD Policy Fellows, their Mentors, and Fellows' Mentees will be supported to form coalitions to work on Policy Innovation Projects (PIPs).

Each AWARD Policy Fellow will receive modest catalytic funding to design and deploy gender-responsive PIPs to support an inclusive policy-making approach within the African agricultural context.

This publication features 26 Cohort 1 AWARD Policy Fellows who presented their PIPs outlining their innovation projects to address different pressing gender gaps from extension services, climate change, nutrition, aquaculture, and financial inclusion to digital inclusion and their short- and long-term policy solutions.

Top 10 PIPs Supported with Top up CGIAR GENDER IMPACT PLATFORM Grant (\$3000+\$4000)





Evidence based policy advocacy and Institutional Capacity building for Gender Responsive agricultural extension services in Siaya county, Kenya

Dr. Romana Mbinya
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Kenya

Kenya’s agricultural extension services are guided by the National Agricultural Sector Extension Policy (NASEP 2012), the Kenya Agricultural Sector Extension Policy (KASEP 2022), and the Guidelines and Standards for Agricultural Extension and Advisory (2017).

While these policies recognize the impact of gender norms and rigid gender roles on agricultural participation, they do not adequately address these issues or provide targeted actions for overcoming them.

Consequently, Agricultural extensionists often lack expertise in gender issues, leading to gaps in effectively addressing the unique needs of men and women in agricultural extension services.

This project will analyze existing agricultural extension policies and other supportive frameworks to identify existing gender gaps and provide evidence-based insights into how gender norms impact on extension service delivery and access by women and men.

The project will engage farmers, extensionists and other stakeholders to understand gender consideration in extension policy, and gender based constraints in extension service delivery.

It will also enhance the capacity of extension staff through hand-on training to better integrate gender-responsive practices in agricultural extension and agri-food systems.



Planned activities between June 2024-April 2025

- Stakeholder mobilization and advocacy to address the gender gaps in extension service delivery.
- Develop a training manual on gender responsive agricultural extension services and pilot it by training extension staff and farmer leaders in Siaya County.
- Publish the training manual for open access by other counties in Kenya and other countries.
- Review existing agricultural extension policies to identify opportunities and gaps for gender integration.
- Conduct a case study to investigate how gender influences extension service access and delivery to farmers.
- Develop and publish policy brief highlighting gaps and recommendations for gender responsive agricultural extension services.



Evidence based policy advocacy and Institutional Capacity building for Gender Responsive climate change and agricultural policies in Machinga district, Malawi

Ms. Grace Chilongo
Lecturer
Share World Open University
Malawi

In Machinga District, gender disparities in agriculture are pronounced, with women's contributions often undervalued and their access to resources limited.

Current policies do not adequately address challenges posed by gender-specific issues to climate-smart agriculture, exacerbating inequalities, and limiting adoption of sustainable practices.

The project aims to provide evidence-based recommendations, advocacy and enhanced institutional capacity for promoting gender-responsive climate-smart agriculture in Machinga District.

By analyzing key agricultural policies and engaging stakeholders, the project will identify barriers and opportunities for equitable adoption of climate-smart practices.

The project will produce a stakeholder action plan, advocacy materials, and a policy brief designed to enhance gender responsiveness in climate smart agricultural policies.

Theory of Change: If stakeholders are equipped with technical capacity, evidence-based strategies and gender-responsive policy recommendations, then gender disparities in climate-smart agriculture will be reduced, leading to increased adoption of sustainable practices by women farmers and improved agricultural outcomes, contributing to greater gender equality and resilience in the region.

From June 2024 to April 2025, the policy will;

- Analyze the key agriculture and climate change policies for gender gaps

- Conduct stakeholder consultations with female and male farmers, representatives from government, NGOs, and community organizations.
- Produce a policy brief, reports on policy analysis, stakeholder consultations, and a baseline assessment.
- Disseminate the policy brief with key findings and recommendations to enhance gender responsiveness in agricultural policies.
- Conduct stakeholder consultations with female and male farmers, representatives from government, NGOs, and community organizations.
- Produce a policy brief, reports on policy analysis, stakeholder consultations, and a baseline assessment.
- Disseminate the policy brief with key findings and recommendations to enhance gender responsiveness in agricultural policies.





Enhancing Institutional Capacity for Gender Responsive agrifood System Transformation

Ms. Aisha Aliyu Muhammad Hadejia
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Nigeria

Nigeria's National Gender Policy in Agriculture (NGPA) introduced in 2019 aims to bridge the gender gap and promote equality in the agricultural sector. This lack of awareness and persistent systemic institutional capacity gaps hinder women's contributions to agricultural productivity, food security, and rural development.

Despite its potential, gender inequality persists across agricultural value chains, particularly in Adamawa State, where many women smallholder farmers remain unaware of the policy. The Policy Innovation Project seeks to address these challenges by enhancing the gender awareness and technical capacity of policymakers in Adamawa State.

By empowering these actors, the project aims to ensure the NGPA's provisions are effectively implemented, resulting in more state resources allocated to gender-responsive programs that uplift rural women farmers.

From June 2024 to April 2025, the project will:

- Analyze existing agriculture policies to identify gender gaps
- Develop a policy brief
- Develop and disseminate advocacy materials to promote compliance with the NGPA
- Develop and deliver a training package on gender-responsive programming and budgeting to Adamawa State Ministry of Agriculture staff
- Provide ongoing technical support to enable policymakers cascade the training to other states.
- Conduct a peer review of the manual and publication





Enhancing Climate Resilient Agriculture and gender responsiveness in Nigeria through institutional capacity building and a G-SMART Monitor

Dr. Chinwoke Clara Ifeanyi-obi
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Nigeria

Nigeria, identified as a climate hotspot, faces significant challenges in its agricultural sector which is highly dependent on weather, making it vulnerable to climate change impacts.

The sector is predominantly composed of women who are most affected by climate risks, partly due to gender inequalities.

Despite the existence of gender-supportive climate policies, there is a concerning gap between policy enactment and actual implementation.

This is partly due to inadequate technical capacity in gender responsive policy implementation.

To bridge the gap between policy and practice, this project will enhance institutional capacity in gender and develop a G-SMART monitor.

The tool will utilize a SMART framework with defined key indicators to provide real-time assessment and tracking of implementation of gender commitments in climate change-related policies within Nigeria's agricultural sector.

By doing so, the project aims to enhance gender responsiveness and support successful climate change adaptation efforts.

Key activities:

- Assessment of selected agriculture and climate change policies to identify gender provisions and gaps
- Literature review to identify drivers of gender disparity in climate adaptation
- A stakeholder dialogue to obtain consensus on key indicators of successful policy implementation

- Development of the G-SMART monitor
- Development and dissemination of knowledge and advocacy products
- Development of a training manual on gender responsive agriculture and climate change policy design and implementation
- Pilot the manual by training policy makers and selected researchers in Nigeria.
- Publish the training manual for open access by other counties in Nigeria and other countries





Transforming gender Inclusion in Nigeria's Cassava Seed Entrepreneur Policy Guidelines

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Nigeria

The recent revision of Nigeria's National Agricultural Seed Policy (NASP) 2023 has highlighted the need to address the vulnerabilities of women and marginalized groups within the seed production system.

The cassava seed producers (CSPs) initiative represents the outcome of this laudable policy implemented by National Agricultural Seed Council (NASC) in partnership with key stakeholders (research institutes, farmer groups, NGOs etc.) in Nigeria.

However, CSP eligibility criteria and accreditation guidelines, such as minimum land size and financial capital, disproportionately disadvantage women, youth, and migrant farmers.

Women's joint and low ownership of land and other agricultural productive resources, limits their participation as CSP members and contribution to food

security and sustainable livelihoods.

This project will produce evidence-driven recommendations to inform revision of the cassava seed producers' eligibility and accreditation guidelines from a gender-responsive perspective.

It seeks to ensure equitable access to seed and increase participation of women, youth, and migrant farmers as CSPs in Nigeria.

Key activities from April 2025 include:

- Qualitative case study involving key informants and focus groups to understand gender-based constraints affecting operationalization of the guidelines
- Development and communication of findings using peer reviewed digital policy brief, factsheets, poster, and blogs

- Organizing policy advocacy engagement and conducting validation and learning workshops with stakeholders involved in NASP-CSP implementation
- Development of a peer reviewed and stakeholder endorsed user-friendly mandatory gender-intentional guide to identify, map and involve women and marginalized groups as certified cassava seed entrepreneurs.





Integrating Gender Responsive Adolescent Nutrition considerations in the National Policy of Food and Nutrition in Nigeria

Dr. Patricia Ogechi Ukegbu
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Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike
Nigeria

Adequate nutrition is a prerequisite for human growth and development and is fundamental for socio-economic growth and development of a country.

Nigeria's National Policy on Food and Nutrition (NPFN) (2016) primarily targets malnutrition among children under five, and women of reproductive age (15-49 years), but largely overlooks the nutrition needs of younger female adolescents (10-14 years) and male adolescents (10-19 years).

This exclusion creates a significant gap in addressing the nutritional requirements of adolescent who represent the future generation, and play a critical role in breaking the intergenerational cycle of malnutrition.

The lack of gender-responsive adolescent nutrition guidelines within the policy exacerbates these issues, leaving a vital population segment underserved.

The project aims to generate evidence-based data to increase awareness among policy actors and stakeholders, and influence the inclusion of clear priorities, guidelines, strategies and delivery platforms for adolescent nutrition in Nigeria's national policy framework.

During the period June 2024 to April 2025, the Fellow will:

- Review relevant policies and literature to identify gender gaps

Conduct key informant interviews and Focus group discussions with relevant policy actors and stakeholders to understand adolescent nutrition needs and issues

- Based on the findings, develop knowledge products to influence policy actors' commitment to inclusion of adolescent nutrition guidelines in the NPFN in Nigeria
- Conduct multi-media advocacy policy engagements targeted at policy actors, program planners, implementers and stakeholders to influence inclusion of adolescent nutrition guidelines in the NPFN.





Empowering Women in Edo State's Fisheries and Aquaculture Value Chain: Data-Driven Policy Advocacy for Sustainable Change

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In Nigeria, men and women engage in fisheries and aquaculture value chains (FAVC) with distinct roles, needs and contributions. Nigeria's National Aquaculture Strategy fails to address these disparities, as it overlooks the distinct roles and specific needs of actors within the value chain.

There is unequal participation and resource allocation with women disadvantaged and reaping less benefit from FAVC compared to men. This gender-blind approach exacerbates the unequal participation and resource allocation in FAVC, undermining women's contributions and limiting their benefits from the sector.

The PIP aims to recommend an agenda for integration of gender considerations into the FAVC in Edo State's Fisheries Law.

This will be achieved through utilization of evidence-based data on gender gaps within the FAVC for awareness creation and advocacy efforts.

The following activities will be rolled out from June 2024 to April 2025:

- Analyze selected FAVC Policies and Legislation to identify gender gap.
- Conduct Gender Gap Assessment and Analysis in the FAVC
- Conduct Validation Workshop/ Meeting among stakeholders.
- Develop knowledge products and materials for awareness and advocacy.
- Conduct a policy dialogue to advocate for gender integration into FAVC policy and framework for women's empowerment.





An integrated Gender and Policy Analysis of the Nigerian Aquaculture Value Chain for Inclusive Smallholder Livelihoods

Dr. Temitayo Adenike Adeyemo
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Nigeria

Nigeria's aquaculture sector potential is hindered by gender-blind policies, including the Nigerian Fisheries and Aquaculture Strategy (2008) and the National Gender Policy in Agriculture (2019), which lacks specific provisions for gender inclusion in the aquaculture value chains.

This results in non-inclusive labor participation along the aquaculture value chain, leading to sub optimal production levels.

This project provides evidence to answer the following questions: are there differences in the competitiveness and efficiencies of men and women along the aquaculture value chain? At which node are men and women actors more competitive along the aquaculture value chains?

What drives the competitiveness of women and men along the aquaculture

value chains given the available technology and policy contexts?

Gender and policy analysis tools of the Women Empowerment in Agrifood Governance (WEAGOV) (<https://www.ifpri.org/interactive/weagov/>) and the Policy analysis Matrix (PAM) developed by Monke and Pearson, 1989 will be used to answer these questions.

By conducting an integrated gender and policy analysis of the aquaculture value chain, the project seeks to identify gender-specific benefits, opportunities, and constraints, and recommend pathways for more inclusive policies.

he period, spanning June 2024-April 2025, will include the following activities

- Development of a gendered structure of the aquaculture value chain, showing

showing benefits, opportunities and constraints for men, women, and youth;

- Collaboration with stakeholders to develop feasible pathways for gender transformative policies for aquaculture
- Dissemination of results, consensus and strategies through policy briefs and stakeholder engagement to inform policy design.

This project will produce a peer reviewed evidence-based policy brief and stakeholder policy convening report outlining a strategic framework for a gender transformative aquaculture policy.





Enhancing Food Safety Through Gender-responsive Policies in Uganda

Dr. Monica K. Kansiime
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Uganda

Food-borne illnesses impose significant economic and social burdens globally. In Uganda, over 60% of these illnesses arise from consuming fresh and perishable foods often sold in both formal and informal market channels.

This challenge persists despite existing food safety policies like the Food and Drug Act (1964), the National Food and Nutrition Policy, and the Agriculture Policy.

Uganda government is currently in the process of renewing scrutiny of agrifood systems policies to better address food safety risks.

However, gender considerations within these policies remains insufficient.

Often, policies that are perceived as gender-neutral can have unequal impacts on men and women, limiting effectiveness and equity.

Understanding the distinct roles, access to resources, and decision-making power of diverse men and women is crucial for the successful implementation of the agrifood policies.

This Policy Innovation Project (PIP) aims to address gender gaps within Uganda’s food policies, particularly focusing on urban fresh fruits and vegetable markets.

By incorporating gender perspectives into food safety policy analysis, the project will contribute to a more equitable and effective food safety framework that better serves all members of society, particularly women, who are often disproportionately affected by food safety issues and have less access to resources and decision making

During the period June 2024 to April 2025, the Fellow will undertake:

- A gender analysis of existing agri-food policies food safety provisions to identify gaps in gender equality.
- Analysis of selected agri-food policies using the Women Empowerment in Agrifood Governance (WEAGOV) framework (<https://www.ifpri.org/interactive/weagov/>) to understand the opportunities, gaps and inconsistencies in policy narratives and intervention strategies.

- A diagnostic study to explore gendered access to food safety resources and knowledge among SMEs in urban fresh fruits and vegetable markets.
- Packaging of evidence generated in policy briefs and blogs
- A stakeholder engagement for diverse perspectives and to influence use of evidence in development of Uganda’s National Food safety policy.





Improving Women Agricultural Productivity through Gender-responsive Access to Credit in Uganda

Dr. Rosemary Emegu Isoto
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Uganda



Agriculture is crucial to Uganda's economy, with 72% of the labor force engaged in the sector, of which 77% are women. Women often lack collateral to secure loans which limits their ability to access the technologies and inputs needed for higher productivity.

Despite this, investment in agriculture remains minimal, and significant gender disparities exist in access to financial resources. This gap in the finance policy contributes to suboptimal productivity among women in agricultural compared to their male counterparts.

The proposed project aims to advocate for a gender-responsive finance policy in Uganda that will encourage financial institutions to develop targeted financial products for women.

By addressing the gender gaps in access to credit, the project seeks to contribute to improvement of agricultural productivity among women.

It is therefore enhancing their livelihoods and contributing to overall economic growth.

During the period June 2024 to April 2025, the fellow will:

- Develop a policy brief
- Organize a dissemination workshop that brings together rural women, financial institutions, and policy makers

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- Analyze existing finance policies in Uganda to identify gender gaps
 - Collect primary data from men and women rural producers, key informants in banking institutions and policy actors to understand gender based barriers to credit and gaps in existing financial products and policy and gaps in existing financial products and policy

Other PIPs Supported Only With AWARD Catalytic Fund \$30000





Equitable Access to Fertilizer Subsidy Using a Gender Responsive Approach

Dr. Augustina Quaynor
Assistant Program Officer
Foundation for Security and Development of Africa
Ghana

Ghana's fertilizer policy is gender blind, failing to address the unique needs of rural women farmers and use of age and sex-disaggregated data for effective policy assessment.

This oversight leads to inadequate access to subsidized fertilizer by women, which undermines their productivity and income, thereby weakening the effectiveness and impact of the subsidy program.

This project aims to assess the fertilizer policy and subsidy program through a comprehensive national survey, focusing on young rural women beneficiaries from diverse societal backgrounds (patrilineal and matrilineal) across various agricultural ecological zones in Ghana.

Project activities for June 2024 to April 2025:

- Analyze fertilizer policy and other relevant agricultural policies for gender gaps
- Evaluate the implementation of the Ghana National fertilizer platform and other initiatives with a gender lens through national survey.
- Produce a research report and policy brief and use them to engage stakeholders on the magnitude of the impact of the gender gaps and policy issues identified.
- Raise awareness about gender gaps in policy through the conventional and social media platforms.





A Gender-Responsive National Seed Strategy and Investment Plan for the Ghana Seed Industry

Ms. Comfort Yelipoie
Agricultural Officer
Ministry of Food and Agriculture
Ghana

The Ghana National Seed Strategy and Investment Plan, developed in 2015, is outdated and has been critiqued for its gender-blind approach.

The 2022 zero draft didn't address the specific needs of men and women farmers, treating them as a homogenous group.

This oversight limits smallholder women farmers' access to and utilization of quality seeds, impeding their agricultural productivity and economic opportunities.

The project aims to influence revision of the National Seed Strategy and Investment Plan to make it gender-responsive.

This involves integrating gender-specific needs and challenges into the strategy, ensuring that interventions are tailored to both men and women farmers' needs.

The revision that will also enhance gender budgeting and address disparities in seed access and utilization.

Key activities:

- Conduct gender analysis of the national seed policy and plan using the GAPo and WEAGOV framework (<https://www.ifpri.org/interactive/weagov/>)
- Conduct a field survey in some selected districts
- Develop and publish evidence based policy briefs and factsheet(s) to inform policy
- Collaborate with consultant drafting the National Seed Strategy and Investment Plan to incorporate the evidence and ensure the plan is gender-responsive





Enhancing Operationalization of Ghana’s National Climate Change Policy among Smallholder Agricultural Systems – Why Gender Matters!

Dr. Portia Adade Williams
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Science and Technology Policy Research Institute (CSIR-STEPRI)
Ghana

Climate change affects men and women differently emphasizing the need to include a gender perspective in all aspects of climate adaptation.

In Ghana, despite the existence of gender-responsive policies and initiatives like the National Climate Change Policy (NCCP), Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda, and National Gender and Children’s Policy, there is limited evidence on how these policies are implemented from a gendered perspective.

Women, particularly in smallholder agricultural systems, continue to face challenges such as limited adaptive capacities due to unequal access to resources, less involvement in decision-making processes, and insufficient access to climate adaptation information.

These challenges hinder the effective implementation of the NCCP, limiting its potential to address gender disparities and promote inclusive development.

The proposed project therefore seeks to strengthen the operationalization of Ghana’s National Climate Change Policy among smallholder agricultural systems by focusing on gender inclusivity.

By building robust evidence on the dynamics of climate adaptation among women in smallholder farming, the project seeks to influence policy, enhance farmers’ access to adaptation solutions, and ensure that the NCCP effectively addresses gender gaps.

During the project implementation period from June 2024 to May 2025, the Fellow will:

- Analyze Ghana’s National Climate Change Policy (NCCP)
- Conduct a robust desk review complemented with a rapid field assessment to generate evidence on the dynamics of climate adaptation among women in smallholder farming
- Produce knowledge products including policy briefs for advocacy and engagement with policy makers
- Organize a policy dialogue with relevant stakeholders to influence gender responsive climate change policy design and implementation in Ghana





Promoting Women's Empowerment in Agricultural Value Addition: A Pathway to Sustainable Development

Ms. Ann Mumbi Gichure
Lecturer,
Maasai Mara University
Kenya

Kenya's agricultural sector is crucial to its economy, yet significant gender disparities persist, particularly in value addition processes. Women are critically underrepresented and lack access to key resources such as land, finance, and technology. This inequality restricts their full participation in value addition, undermining their economic contributions and weakening the resilience of agri-food systems.

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With women holding just 1% of land titles and receiving only 10% of agricultural credit (FAO, 2018; World Bank, 2019), the productivity of smallholder farms and the sustainability of the entire agricultural sector are at risk.

The Policy Innovation Project seeks to bridge these gender gaps by advocating for evidence-based policy changes that

promote women's empowerment in agricultural value addition.

The initiative will conduct a thorough policy analysis, engage stakeholders to understand women and men's needs, develop targeted policy recommendations, and push for the adoption of gender-responsive policies.

In the long term, the project will focus on capacity building to ensure sustained advocacy and effective policy implementation.

Activities from June 2024 to June 2025 will be phased as follows:

- Conduct a desk review and policy analysis to identify gender gaps
- Stakeholder consultations through focus group discussions and surveys to understand the value addition needs of women and men

- Develop evidence-based policy recommendations and produce policy communication products
- Advocacy through workshops and dialogues





Promoting equitable adoption of smart-hybrid solar drying technologies through Gender responsive value addition provisions in Kenya's agriculture policy

Dr. Dorcas Nzasu Kalele
Research Fellow
African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS)
Kenya

The Kenya's Agriculture Policy (2021) aims to boost productivity and profitability in agri-value chains and includes some gender considerations.

However, it lacks targeted support for incentivizing the development and adoption of low-cost and sustainable processing technologies for women and men owned small-medium enterprises (SMEs) hindering their potential for growth and economic impact.

The project seeks to influence integration of gender-responsive incentives into the Agriculture Policy to promote the adoption of smart-hybrid solar drying technologies.

By fostering gender inclusivity in policy and providing targeted support, the policy would equitably reduce post-harvest losses, enhance agribusiness development, and increase value addition in Kenya's agro-processing sector.

Key activities during the period June 2024-April 2025:

- Analyze agricultural policies for gender gaps, barriers and opportunities for agro-processing
- Develop advocacy materials to influence policy actors to integrate gender aspects in the Agriculture Policy (2021)
- Hold forums to sensitize policy actors on integration of gender-responsiveness in agri-food policies





Enhancing Gender Responsiveness of Climate Change and Agricultural Policies in Homa Bay County, Kenya

Ms. Maxmillah M. Malongo
County Assistant Director of Agriculture
Homa Bay County Government
Kenya

Climate change poses a significant threat to Kenya's agriculture sector, particularly in its Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs), which make up 80% of the country.

This environmental challenge exacerbates gender inequalities, with women in rural areas being disproportionately affected.

Despite their vital role in building climate resilience, women, especially female-headed households, face barriers in accessing key resources such as water, which is critical for climate adaptation.

While Kenya Climate Change Act, 2016 and related frameworks like the National Adaptation Plan, and Nationally Determined Contributions outline actionable priorities for climate resilience, they often lack sufficient focus on gender inclusivity.

This gap leaves many smallholder female farmers in Homa Bay county vulnerable,

with limited access to productive resources, climate information and knowledge.

The policy innovation project seeks to address these gender disparities by enhancing the inclusivity of agro-adaptation policies and actions within Kenya's agri-food systems, particularly in Homa Bay County.

The following activities will be carried out from June 2024 to April 2025:

- Analyze the key agriculture and climate change policies for gender gaps.
- Conduct stakeholder consultations with female and male farmers, representatives from government, NGOs, and community organizations to get their perspectives on gender

- issues affecting climate change adaptation of smallholders.
- Produce a policy brief, reports on policy analysis, stakeholder consultations, and a baseline assessment.
- Disseminate the policy brief with key findings and recommendations to enhance gender responsiveness in agricultural policies.





Gender-Food-Waste Nexus: Advancing Equality through Gender Responsive Food Waste Management Policies and Strategies in Kenya

Ms. Rebeccah Wanjiru
Urban Food System Expert
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Kenya

The Kenya postharvest management strategy for food loss and waste reduction (2024-2028) recognizes the country's inadequate strategies and legislation for effective food waste management. The "Status of women in agrifood systems report (2023) indicates that bridging existing gender gaps in food systems can bring about positive and lasting improvements in women's welfare.

Although the strategy proposes different interventions, it is silent on the opportunities that exist for women's empowerment through these interventions. Therefore, it is important for the strategy to provide clear and explicit actions for women's empowerment through food waste management initiatives.

The Policy Innovation Project, seeks to increase awareness and capacity of policy implementors in Kenya to integrate gender-responsive actions into the implementation of the food waste management strategy.

This project will also support the development of gender responsive county strategy implementation plans, ensuring that food waste management initiatives contribute to the empowerment of women and promote gender equality.

During the period June 2024 to April 2025, the fellow will:

- Develop a fact sheet on gender issues in the food waste sector.
- Hold stakeholder sensitization and dissemination meeting to share the findings.
- Support the development of a resource material for awareness creation and sensitization of actors on gender responsive food waste management actions

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- Map ongoing food waste centered initiatives including the stakeholders involved, their role and identify opportunities for women, men and youth.
 - Desk review of existing policies, strategies, and programmes on food waste management to identify gender issues





Enhancing Resilience of Women Fish Value Chain Actors through Gender Responsive Climate Change Strategies and Policies in Malawi

Ms. Carolyn Chinguo Munthali
Principal Fisheries Officer/Improvement Center (CIMMYT)
Ministry of Agriculture
Malawi

In Malawi, climate change and natural disasters are severely impacting aquatic systems and the livelihoods dependent on them.

Women involved in the fish value chain are particularly vulnerable due to their low adaptive capacity and lack of support.

The fisheries sector lacks a dedicated climate change adaptation strategy, undermining its contribution to the National Adaptation Plan, and sustainable fisheries management and aquaculture development, as envisioned in the development blueprint for the country, Malawi 2063.



The project aims to collect evidence and advocate for a sector-specific, gender-responsive climate change adaptation strategy for the fisheries sector.

This strategy will enhance the resilience of women fish value chain actors, improve their adaptive capacity, and the sector's reporting and contribution to the National Adaptation Plan.

This strategy will enhance the resilience of women fish value chain actors, improve their adaptive capacity, and the sector's reporting and contribution to the National Adaptation Plan.

During the period June 2024 to April 2025, the Fellow will:

- Conduct a survey to understand the gender gaps in the implementation of climate change adaptation in the fisheries sector
- Conduct policy analysis of relevant climate change related strategies through a gender lens

- Conduct policy analysis of relevant climate change related strategies through a gender lens
- Develop and disseminate the gender analysis report on climate change adaptation for the fisheries sector
- Develop policy research products and engage actors through policy dialogues



Towards Gender- Responsive Digital Agriculture guidelines/policies: A policy Analysis and advocacy

Dr. Linda Chinangwa
Project Manager - Poverty Environment Action for Sustainable Development Goals Project
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
Malawi

Building women’s needs into programs from the start is critical to achieving gender equity in sustainable agrifood system transformation (Food Systems Malabo agreement 2023). However, these policies lack clarity on how they facilitate an enabling environment for women to engage with and benefit from digital agriculture innovations.

Therefore, as digitalization of agriculture gains momentum, there is a need for socially inclusive policies that support adoption and promotion of digital technologies among farming communities. Without intentional gender-focused strategies, the potential of digital agriculture to empower women within smallholder value chains remains untapped.

Malawi has made positive developments with regards to inclusion/promoting digital technology in the country’s agriculture development agenda, through the national ITC and Digitalization Policy (2022). The policy innovation project aims to address these gaps by analyzing how selected agricultural policies in Malawi can be enhanced to support women’s participation in digital agriculture.

Furthermore, the agriculture sector in Malawi is guided by other key policies including the Agriculture Extension Policy (2000).

Activities under this project to be implemented from July 2024 to April 2025 include:

- Analysis of selected agriculture policies in Malawi to identify gaps and opportunities for women’s participation in digital agriculture technologies

- Study to understand women’s current engagement with digital agriculture technologies, identifying barriers and facilitators to their participation.
- Development of evidence-based, gender-responsive digital agriculture policy guidelines
- Stakeholder workshop to validate the guidelines and advocate for their adoption by policy actors





Breaking the Silence: Using Digital and Social Media Tools to Unmask and Address Gender-Based Violence Among Smallholder Farmers in Nigeria

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Gender-based violence (GBV) is a prevalent public health concern and a global issue that disproportionately affects women and children.

Within Nigeria's agrifood systems, where power and resource disparities between men and women are pronounced, GBV remains largely unaddressed despite its widespread occurrence.

This neglect undermines the productivity and welfare of women and marginalized men in the agricultural sector. Although Nigeria's National Gender Policy in Agriculture (2019) advocates for gender equality and women's empowerment, it overlooks the recognition and mitigation of GBV within agrifood systems.

This oversight is significant as GBV hinders the sector's inclusivity, the protection of vulnerable groups, and safeguarding of their rights.

The Policy Innovation Project (PIP) aims to illuminate and make a case for incorporation of GBV concerns into Nigeria's National Gender Policy in Agriculture.

It utilizes digital narratives to highlight individual experiences and amplify the voices of women smallholder farmers to drive policy reforms and initiatives.

Indicative Timelines:

- Phase 1 (6 months): Undertake a policy analysis to identify gaps in addressing GBV
- Rapid assessment of GBV in smallholder agriculture
- Stakeholder validation workshop.
- channels.

- Phase 2 (6 months): Train farmers in digital storytelling and produce "The 36 Stories" a documentary on GBV in agrifood systems from 36 States, and disseminate them through multiple





Integration of Gender Responsive Post-Harvest Handling of Horticultural Crops into National Food and Nutrition Policy in Nigeria

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Nigeria faces significant post-harvest losses, estimated at over \$9 billion annually, with fruits and vegetables accounting for more than 50% of these losses.

Women, who account for 75% of Nigeria's farming population, are disproportionately affected by these losses due to their low productivity and capacity across the different nodes of the agricultural value chains.

Despite the critical role of women in Agriculture, the current National Food and Nutrition Policy (NFNP) does not adequately address gender-specific challenges in post-Harvest handling of horticultural crops.

There is a need to integrate gender-responsive strategies into the policy to reduce post-harvest losses and improve food security.

The project aims to generate evidence to make a case for integration of gender-responsive post-harvest handling practices for horticultural crops into Nigeria's National Food and Nutrition Policy.

This integration will focus on enhancing women's participation and capacity in post-harvest activities, thereby reducing losses and improving food and nutrition security in the country.

The following activities will take place between the period of June 2024 to April 2025:

- Review and analysis of the NFNP and related documents to identify gender gaps related to post harvest handling.
- Conduct a field study targeting different stakeholders, gender experts, and horticultural farmers through focus group discussions and key informant interviews to identify gender issues affecting postharvest handling of horticultural crops

- Conduct a stakeholders Validation Workshop
- Production of a position paper and policy brief based on the findings with recommendations on how to incorporate gender responsive post harvest handling of horticultural crops in the NFNP





Improving Access to Credit for Smallholder Women Farmers through Policy and Action in Nigeria

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Smallholder women farmers who contribute about 70% of food production in Nigeria, face barriers to accessing formal credit.

This hampers their ability to contribute effectively to agri-food systems transformation.

Despite several government credit schemes introduced since 1973, none have been gender-responsive, leaving 77% of Nigerian women in the agri-food systems without access to essential financial resources.

The project aims to advocate for integration of gender considerations into Nigeria's National Agricultural Development Fund to enhance access to credit for smallholder women farmers.

This integration seeks to address the economic disparities faced by women and promote their empowerment and participation in sustainable agri-food systems.

Over the period of June 2024 to April 2025, the Fellow will implement various activities on:

- Review and analysis of relevant policy documents to identify gender gaps and issues in credit access by smallholder agriculture producers.
- Development and dissemination of policy communication products
- Advocacy for a gender-responsive National Agricultural Development Fund as well as increased access to credit for smallholder women farmers through catalytic financing mechanisms.





Championing Youth and Women Producers Active Engagement in the New EU Regulations and directive (EUDR and CS3D) Compliance in Uganda

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Uganda's National Action Plan, supported by the International Trade Centre, aims to ensure compliance with the new EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) and Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CS3D).

While the plan outlines general capacity-building initiatives for coffee value chain actors, it fails to address the barriers women and youth face.

These barriers include limited access to resources, cultural norms, and lacking targeted support mechanisms like financial assistance or gender-specific training programs.

As a result, women and youth remain underrepresented and unable to fully benefit from the coffee sector, hindering their active engagement in compliance with the new EU regulations.

This PIP initiative aims to empower women and youth within Uganda's

coffee value chain to engage actively in the country's compliance with EUDR and CS3D. By integrating gender-specific initiatives into the National Action Plan, the project will address the socio-economic barriers limiting participation and ensure that women and youth are fully included in the compliance journey.

During the period June 2024 to April 2025, the project will:

- Analyze the national action plan for assess gender gaps
- Identify relevant stakeholders and initiate collaboration modalities Engage 20 youth and over 100 women to enlighten them on the new regulations and support them to occupy spaces of advocacy through a collaboration with International Women's Coffee Alliance (IWCA)

- Organize policy information sessions for youth and women on EUDR and CS3D.
- Develop policy social media awareness campaigns geared towards compliance
- Develop and disseminate a position paper targeting additional technical and financial support to scale the project nationally
- Conduct review sessions with the team as part of tracking progress





Empowering Women Agri-food Entrepreneurs for Assuring Safe and Nutritious Foods in Zambia

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African countries, including Zambia, have faced costly trade rejections in international markets and losses due to the sale of unsafe food.

Failure to recognize gender inequality and absence of targeted support for women-led SMEs, especially those funded by the Constituency Development Fund (CDF), has contributed to persistent non-compliance with food safety standards.

This has resulted in the trade and consumption of unsafe foods, contributing to health risks, economic losses, and unrecorded foodborne illnesses.

To address these challenges, the project seeks to enhance gender-responsiveness of the CDF, the forthcoming Food Safety Policy, and the Food Safety Act.

Between July 2024 and April 2025, the project will:

-
- Conduct gender analysis to identify barriers to women agri-food entrepreneurs' implementation of food safety practices in agri-trade/agribusiness.

- Conduct policy analysis to identify gender gaps
- Engage stakeholders to raise awareness on how gender affects adoption of food safety practices, gender gaps in policy and advocate for policy reform



Gender Responsive Food Safety Policy Implementation: A case of Small and Medium Food Processors in Zambia

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In Zambia, women play a significant role in the food processing industry, frequently operating within informal settings that can constrain their opportunities for growth and broader impact.

Despite the national agriculture policy acknowledging gender-based constraints—such as limited access to land, credit, services, and training—these issues persist.

As a result, women face difficulties formalizing their businesses and complying with food safety standards, hindering their ability to fully benefit from opportunities in the industry and impacting the overall effectiveness of food safety measures.

This project seeks to analyze the food safety policy implementation process with a gendered perspective.

By examining the roles, resource access, and decision-making power of women compared to men, we aim to identify gender gaps and barriers in policy compliance.

The goal is to create a more gender-inclusive food safety policy that addresses these disparities and supports women in formalizing and growing their food processing businesses.

The main activities will be:

- Collecting data on the gender gaps in the food safety policy implementation process through desktop research, surveys, focus group discussions, and expert interviews
- Preparation of a research report

- Validation exercise to incorporate feedback from policy actors and other stakeholders
- Development and dissemination of an evidence-based policy brief through a policy dialogue





Creating Awareness for Development of Gender responsive Agricultural Technologies in Chongwe District, Zambia

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Zambia's National Agricultural Policy (NAP) is gender blind, particularly the agricultural research and extension aspects.

This has contributed to widening agricultural productivity gap between male and female headed farms, negatively impacting women farmers.

The lack of gender-specific considerations in the design and planning of agricultural technologies hampers their adoption by women, thereby affecting their productivity and overall agricultural outcomes.

The project aims to enhance awareness of gender gaps in agricultural technology planning and design.

By spot lighting these gaps, the initiative seeks to promote the development and adoption of gender-responsive agricultural technologies, improving productivity for women and youth

farmers in Chongwe District.

Increased gender awareness among policy actors will trigger more inclusive and effective agricultural policies and technology designs.

During the period July 2024 to April 2025, the Fellow will:

- Analyze the NAP for gender gaps
- Conduct a desktop review on productivity and technology adoption gaps between men and women farmers.
- Conduct an institutional and expert survey.
- Develop evidence based policy briefs
- Engage policy actors on identified gender gaps to raise awareness and advocate for gender responsive policy reforms.





Enhancing Access to Phytosanitary Information on Plants and Plant Products for Women and Youth Involved in Small Scale Cross Border Trade in Zambia

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Ministry of Agriculture
Zambia

The Government of Zambia's National Agriculture Policy (NAP) 2012-2030 recognizes the vital role of women in agriculture but lacks a specific implementation strategy to address gender inequalities.

One significant gap is the limited access to phytosanitary information for women and the youth involved in Small Scale Cross Border Trade (SSCBT).

The gap hinders their ability to comply with phytosanitary standards affecting their participation and success in cross-border trade. The Policy Innovation Project (PIP) aims to enhance access of women and youth to crucial phytosanitary information improving their compliance to standards and contributing to a more gender responsive implementation of the NAP



From June 2024 to March 2025, the PIP will;

- Conduct a study to generate evidence on the design and implementation gaps of the NAP and other related policies, strategies and programmes regarding access to plant and plant products phytosanitary information.
- Engage the women, youth, key stakeholders and policy actors to understand the policy gender gaps
- Develop an evidence based policy brief on the policy design and implementation gaps regarding access to plant and plant products phytosanitary information.
- Establish a Technical Working Group that will develop a phytosanitary information dissemination package.
- Pilot a phytosanitary information kiosk at one of the busiest border posts and generate lessons to inform policy.

- Package the lessons in a policy brief on good practices for youth inclusive and gender responsive access to plant and plant products phytosanitary information.



Enhancing Gender responsive and Inclusive Access and Adoption of Climate-Smart Cultivars in Zambia

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Despite the objectives of Zambia's National Seed Policy (NSP) and the Second National Agriculture Policy (SNAP) 2012-2030 to foster agricultural diversification, commercialization, and inclusive growth; women in Zambia continue to face significant gender-based limitations.

These include unequal access to services, land, credit, and involvement in policy and decision-making processes.

These constraints have notably hindered rural women's ability to access and adopt climate-smart seed varieties, which are crucial for addressing productivity and nutritional challenges exacerbated by climate change.

The proposed project aims to develop policy recommendations that ensure gender equality and inclusivity in the

access and adoption of climate-smart seed varieties.

This involves identifying gaps in existing policies and advocating for reforms that empower rural women in agriculture, thus enhancing their participation in climate-smart practices.

The activities from June 2024 to April 2025 include;

- Analysis of the SNAP and NSP design and implementation to identify gender gaps in access and adoption of climate smart seed and entry points for reforms
- Package findings in a policy brief
- Stakeholders' workshop for increased awareness and advocacy for gender responsive access to climate-smart seeds

- Provide capacity building programs to policy makers for enhanced gender responsive governance and leadership in agriculture.





African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD) envisions transformative change toward gender-responsive solutions that will catalyze lasting impact for equitable agri-food systems for women and men smallholders. We are investing in women's leadership to foster equality in AR4D, equipping AR4D professionals to integrate gender in their work, strengthening institutions to adopt gender-responsive policies and practices, and impacting the enabling environment to enhance gender responsiveness.

For more information, visit www.awardfellowships.org

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