

Agriculture and rural development



Relevance of gender in the policy area

Agriculture is one of the most widespread activities in the world and has a crucial role in food production, environmental protection, landscape preservation, rural employment and food security. Agriculture is not uniform throughout, there are different elements such as:

- the scale of farming
- crop and livestock combinations
- intensity of farming
- ways and means of disposal of farm produce
- the level of farm mechanisation (small-scale farmers/informal small-scale agriculture,

commercial farming/plantation agriculture, self-sufficient farming, organic farming etc.).

From a gender point of view, there are significant gaps between women and men. For example, women farm holders have significantly smaller farms than men farm holders. Moreover, the share of female farm holders is particularly high on farms with no clear specialisation in livestock rearing or crop production. Indeed, 71% of EU farms with livestock are run by male farm holders, and only 27% by female farm holders (the remainder belongs to legal persons). Organic farming is practised by around 2% of all EU farm holders, regardless of gender. In 2013, women represented 24% of EU farm holders in organic farming, and they occupied 13% of the EU area devoted to organic farming.

While agriculture is the major food-producing sector, rural development is related to the promotion of the vitality of the countryside and the well-being of rural communities. Rural areas provide food, raw materials, jobs and a wide range of environmental goods and services such as cultural landscapes, biodiversity, carbon storage, water and soils. More than half of the EU's land area is classified as being predominantly rural (51.3% in 2012), whereas 22.2% of the European population is living in these areas.

Participation of women in employment and economic growth is crucial for reaching the EU 2020 strategy goals, and in this respect agricultural and rural areas could make a contribution. In 2014, in the EU-28, agriculture was the seventh largest employer of women (3.3%). For men, agriculture is slightly more important in terms of providing employment (5.2%). However, these data may be misleading as they do not cover the informal rural economy, in which women are still involved. Women play a key role in rural families, communities and economies, and they are also important as farmers. In addition to paid farm work, women still assume the main share of unpaid responsibilities involved in the running of families and communities.

There is also under-reporting of women's work, as women tend to classify and report themselves as not in employment, particularly when undertaking unpaid agricultural work. In fact:

Women provide a large proportion of the labour of agricultural production, even though official statistics based on census and survey instruments often underestimate women's work and its contribution to national wealth. Problems persist in the collection of reliable and comprehensive data on rural women's work in agriculture and other productive sectors because of: 1) invisibility of women's work; 2) [the] seasonal and part-time nature of women's work; and 3) unremunerated family (mostly women and children) labour.

Nevertheless, rural areas are crucial for the attainment of the Europe 2020 headline target of reaching an employment rate of 75% of the population aged 20 – 64. Predominantly rural regions generate 22% of total employment in the EU-28, but the employment rate in these areas is lower than in other types of regions. This is especially the case among women, older people and low-

skilled workers. Generally speaking, this is mainly due to the lower level of employment opportunities and the lower level of education among the workforce in rural areas.

Development of entrepreneurship and self-employment in agriculture and rural areas is also crucial for the improvement of women's employment situation. The contribution of women in the rural economy may be promoted through self-employment and small businesses. According to the European Commission, women can be at the forefront of innovation and diversification in rural areas by developing new activities, production lines and services. For example, women can develop agro-tourism activities, artisan food and drink production, craft enterprises, and telecommunication and caring services. Women often have the added advantage of an awareness and knowledge of local needs, and specific interpersonal and communication skills.

Women are a driving force for the maintenance, conservation and development of rural areas, both in cultural and economic terms. They contribute to the preservation of a rich and diversified cultural heritage and the transmission of traditions. They also represent a considerable proportion of the workforce in agriculture and contribute to the development of the rural sector in the face of constant depopulation. Unfortunately, women in rural areas are also an invisible force as their presence and role are not accurately reflected in statistics. Many of those who are involved in agricultural work do not receive a separate income from their husband or other male members of the household. By assisting their farmer husbands and other self-employed men, they are not entitled to social security in their own right and often do not hold property rights to land or farms. To overcome this latter aspect, gender-sensitive initiatives such as shared-ownership of farms and agricultural enterprises are being implemented in some European countries.

The development of rural areas requires the creation and development of new economic activities in the form of new farms and diversification into non-agricultural activities. This may include the provision of services to agriculture and forestry, and the development of activities related to healthcare, social integration and tourism. Furthermore, the diversification of farmers into non-agricultural activities and the establishment and development of non-agricultural small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in rural areas could be promoted. This measure may also encourage entrepreneurship among women in rural areas.

The advancement of gender equality in agriculture and rural areas faces some major obstacles. For example, the unequal participation of women and men in agriculture and rural development, and the under-representation of women in farm ownership and agricultural decision-making.

Issues of Gender Inequality in the policy area

Unequal participation of women and men in agriculture and rural development

Agriculture was one of the first sectors of the economy (following coal and steel) to receive the attention of EU policymakers. Persons worked regularly in EU agriculture totalled 22.2 million in 2013, which corresponds to 8.7 million average working units (AWU).

Approximately 91% of this was regular family labour (expressed in persons), where the sole holders and his/her family members together make up the family labour force.

However, in most Member States employment in agriculture has been declining over the last 50 years, and ageing of the existing workforce is another challenge. In the EU-28, 58.2% of the total labour force (expressed in persons) is masculine. The 'visible' contribution of women in the agricultural labour force is less pronounced than for men, as the share of agricultural jobs in female employment is around 41%.

Ageing and masculinisation of rural areas

Population growth in rural regions continues to be more limited compared to urban population growth. Only 15.6% of the new population could be seen in rural regions, amounting to just 3.3 million people moving from urban areas to rural regions over the period 2000 – 2008. The negative net migration in EU-12 rural regions is a particular concern, as about 1.2 million people have left the rural regions of these countries in just 8 years (a decline of 2.8% compared to 2000). On the contrary, in the EU-15, the number of rural newcomers reached 4.5 million in 2008, accounting for a population increase of 6.4% compared to 2000. The average proportion of women in the total EU population is around 51% and has been declining over the last decade. However, the proportion of women in rural regions is lower than in urban or intermediate regions. This difference has been widening since 2007, with the decline in rural regions starting to appear in 2005. In 2009, there was a 0.8% difference between urban and rural regions, which is the largest recorded disparity in this area in the last decade.

Women's participation in formal economic activities in rural areas within the EU still lags behind that of men. Unemployment among women is generally higher in rural areas, and over the last 15 years there has been no conspicuous progress in reducing existing gaps between female and male unemployment. In 2011, women represented slightly less than 50% of the total working age population in the rural areas of the EU. However, this was only 44% of the total economically active population, so a lower percentage of women than men were working or looking for a job.

In rural areas in recent decades, women were more likely to opt for part-time work than in

urban areas. In 2010, women represented 53% of total part-time employment in agriculture. Looking at part-time employment by sex, the percentage of women in part-time work is around 33% of the total employment in agriculture, compared to 16% of men. This might be due to inadequate care services for children and elderly people, transport facilities and the inaccessibility and scarcity of training centres in rural areas. The enhancement of employment opportunities and the improvement of infrastructure and services is needed to attract and retain women in rural areas. This should ensure the sustainability of rural communities and facilitate women's participation in economic activities in rural areas.

Invisibility of women's role

While women are active in rural communities, their multiple roles and responsibilities are not well recognised. They often receive lower remuneration for their work than their male colleagues. Women represent a significant share of the farming labour force, but mostly in the lowest paid, most insecure jobs. The time burden of unpaid household activities can significantly limit women's involvement in the labour market.

Furthermore, in the agricultural sector women occupy few managerial positions. Their role is often linked to farming within the context of household production or unpaid support to the work of men, and is therefore not included in the value chain. The vast majority of the EU's farms are relatively small family-run holdings, and often only family members provide labour. Thus, they may not be registered in the statistics as salaried workers carrying out an economic activity.

Under-representation of women in farm ownership and agricultural decision-making

Women's contribution to local and community development is significant, but rural women are in a minority in decision-making and planning. While this phenomenon is significant in all economic sectors, it is particularly present in the agricultural sector. This is due partly to their multiple roles and workload, but also to the persistence of traditional views about women's and men's roles in society. For example, this is often seen in land ownership and control – in 2007, only 28.7% of farm holders were women.

Farms run by women are generally smaller than those run by men. In terms of physical and economic size, the farms of men farm holders are more than twice the size of those of women farm holders. As beneficiaries of EU payment schemes, women have as yet been disproportionately under-represented. It is now widely recognised that ownership and control over assets such as land and housing provide direct and indirect benefits to individuals and households. These include a secure place to live, a livelihood, protection during emergencies and collateral for credit that can be used for investment or consumption

emergencies and collateral for credit that can be used for investment or consumption.

Recent studies suggest that assets are important in terms of reducing poverty and cushioning vulnerability to natural disasters, illness or financial crises. At the macro level, a growing literature finds that asset equality is positively correlated with economic growth. Furthermore, female farm holders are slightly older than the male farming population (46.1% of women working in agriculture were 55 years or older in 2005, compared to 43.6% of men). The low share of young women in the family-farm labour force can be taken as a sign of the low attractiveness of agricultural careers among women.

Gender equality policy objectives at EU and international level

EU level

The Commission, the European Parliament and the Council reached a political agreement on the reform of the common agricultural policy (CAP) on 26 June 2013, contributing to its design.

European Commission

Article 39 of the Treaty of Rome on the EEC (1957) set out the objectives for the first common agricultural policy (CAP). This was focused on increasing agricultural productivity as a way to ensure a fair standard of living for the agricultural community. As well as this, it included topics such as stabilising markets and ensuring security of supply at affordable prices for consumers. The objectives of the CAP have remained unchanged since the Treaty of Rome came into force. Since then the CAP has set the conditions in order to allow farmers to fulfil their multiple functions in society the first of which is to produce food. At the moment, Article 39 TFEU sets out the specific objectives of the CAP:

- to increase agricultural productivity by promoting technical progress and ensuring the optimum use of the factors of production, in particular labour
- to ensure a fair standard of living for farmers
- to stabilise markets
- to ensure the availability of supplies
- to ensure reasonable prices for consumers

Alongside the specific objectives of the CAP set out in Article 39 TFEU a number of Treaty

Alongside the specific objectives of the CAP set out in Article 39 TFEU, a number of Treaty provisions lay down other objectives which are applicable to all EU policies and measures. On that basis, the following are becoming objectives of the CAP in their own right:

- promoting a high level of employment (Article 9)
- environmental protection to promote sustainable development (Article 11)
- consumer protection (Article 12)
- animal welfare requirements (Article 13)
- public health (Article 168(1)) and economic
- social and territorial cohesion (Articles 174 to 178).

The policy deals not only with agriculture but also with rural areas, in particular, the European agricultural fund for rural development (EAFRD). The fund supports multiannual rural development programmes implemented either at national or regional level.

In December 2006 the Commission adopted its Communication to the Council and the European Parliament, Employment in rural areas: closing the jobs gap. The Communication identified the significant challenges for employment in rural areas in Europe and called for efforts to close the jobs divide between rural and urban areas. It also pointed to the lack of opportunities for women (and young people) in rural areas. The Communication stated, in particular, that:

the situation of women and young people in rural areas remains precarious, often resulting in the out-migration of females and youngsters in economically active age groups. In some rural areas, the lack of training infrastructure and appropriate childcare facilities prevent entry or upskilling in the labour market.

In the years following that discussion, the EU faced changes in its economic development, borne out by the continuing financial and economic crisis.

In 2009 the Commission launched a call for a study on employment, growth and innovation in rural areas. The working paper pays special attention to women and young people in rural areas as well as to local initiatives, cooperation, partnership approaches and local business development. A separate chapter looks into the value added by EAFRD support to innovative areas, such as the following:

- renewable energy
- tourism

- skills
 - young farmers and agricultural development
 - rural business and stimulating entrepreneurship among rural women
 - collective trade behaviour
 - food processing and short supply chains.
-

European Parliament

In 2011 the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development approved a motion for a European Parliament Resolution on the role of women in agriculture and rural areas. Underlining the importance of rural development and the role of women in rural areas and economies, the Resolution:

- points out that the promotion of gender equality is a core objective of the EU and its Member States and stresses the importance of incorporating this principle into the CAP as a way to promote sustainable economic growth and rural development
- points out the efforts that are needed to create living conditions in rural areas which correspond to those in urban areas while reflecting the realities of the countryside, in order to offer women and their families reasons for staying and making a successful life there
- stresses the importance of a viable, dynamic rural environment with a diverse population and, relatedly, emphasises the importance of adequate development opportunities and challenges for young women
- calls for framework conditions to be provided in rural areas that will enable women of all generations to remain in their own immediate environment and contribute to its revival and development
- calls for electronic forms of enterprise, such as e-business, which make it possible to do business irrespective of the distance from large urban centres, to be promoted and supported among women in rural areas
- points out that, as in urban areas, it is crucial to improve the quality and accessibility of infrastructure, facilities and services for everyday life in rural areas in order to enable women and men to balance their family and professional lives and to preserve communities in rural areas
- calls for the new EAFRD Regulation to provide for specific measures to support women in the 2014 – 2020 programming period as this would have a beneficial

women in the 2014 – 2020 programming period, as this would have a beneficial impact on women's employment in rural areas

- calls on the Commission and the Member States to contribute to an informative database on the economic and social situation of women and their involvement in business in rural regions, and to optimise the use of data already available (e.g. from Eurostat) for the purposes of tailoring policy measures
- considers it desirable to work towards the creation of a European rural women's network (or a network of women's associations) and draws attention to the successes achieved through CAP second-pillar measures
- calls for women's entrepreneurial spirit and initiatives to be encouraged, in particular through the promotion of female ownership, networks of women entrepreneurs, and provision in the financial sector for facilitating access of rural businesswomen (including individually self-employed women, part-time self-employed women with low earnings, and young women) to investment and credit
- takes the view that, as part of the forthcoming reform of the CAP, the needs of women in rural areas and the role of women working in agriculture should be taken into account and given priority as regards access to certain services and aid, in line with territorial needs in each Member State.

The European Parliament had a central role, together with the Council of the European Union, in the approval of the common agricultural policy (CAP) 2014 – 2020 reform. The CAP reform 2014 – 2020 promotes more sustainable EU agriculture as well as innovation and bridging the gap between science and practice. It comprises 2 pillars. Pillar 1 supports farmers' income through direct payments and market measures and is entirely financed from the European agricultural guarantee fund. Pillar 2 supports the development of rural areas in the form of rural development programmes, and is co-financed through the European agricultural fund for rural development. The reform offers new opportunities in its aim to increase competitiveness and sustainability over the long term for the agricultural sector in the EU Member States. It is based on a comprehensive approach, which is better targeted, more equitable and 'greener'. Through the national rural development programmes a focus on gender mainstreaming could improve the competitiveness and sustainability of the agricultural sectors, and contribute to the achievement of the CAP objectives.

CAP 2014 – 2020

The CAP reform 2014 – 2020 is based on new legislative instruments that aim to simplify the rules of the CAP. In particular, it involves Regulation (EU) 1305/2013 of the European

the rules of the CAP. In particular, it involves Regulation (EU) 1305/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on support for rural development by the EAFRD.

EU Regulation No. 1305/2013 provides rules and articles to address gender issues in the policy area, as summarised below.

- Article 7: Thematic sub-programmes – states may include within their rural development programmes thematic sub-programmes that address specific issues and are especially related to, inter alia, young farmers, small farmers, mountain areas, short supply chains, climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity and women in rural areas.
- Article 9: Ex-ante conditionalities: general ex-ante conditionalities shall apply to the EAFRD programmes. Among them, the ex-ante conditionality on gender which should ensure the existence of administrative capacity for the implementation and application of Union gender equality law and policy in the field of ESI funds.

Furthermore, rural development measures might target women as a beneficiaries through the use of selection criteria where duly justified.

Council of the European Union

The Agriculture and Fisheries Council adopts legislation (in most cases together with the European Parliament) in a number of areas relating to the production of food, rural development and the management of fisheries.

Areas under agricultural policy include:

- the common agricultural policy (CAP)
- rules on the internal market for agriculture, forestry, organic production
- quality of production
- food and animal-feed safety.

Measures relating to the CAP aim to:

- increase agricultural productivity
- ensure a fair standard of living for the agricultural community
- stabilise markets
- assure the availability of supplies

- ensure that supplies reach consumers at reasonable prices.

Within the framework of the CAP the Council of the European Union, together with the European Parliament, establishes the regulation on support for rural development by the European agricultural fund for rural development (EAFRD).

In the context of the discussion surrounding the Commission Communication Employment in rural areas: closing the jobs gap, the conclusions of the Agriculture and Fisheries Council of March 2007 the important role of EU rural development policy under the CAP was confirmed, in terms of increasing employment in rural areas. It underlined that the creation and preservation of jobs and employment must be one of the priority objectives of rural development programmes. The Agriculture and Fisheries Council also stressed the need to further develop the CAP's second pillar as a key instrument to accompany CAP reform and the accelerated restructuring of agriculture. In addition, it stressed the need to implement the Lisbon and Gothenburg strategies in light of new region-specific challenges in regions with different socioeconomic structures. This would lay the foundations for an overall improvement in rural living conditions. It was also considered crucial to develop adequate family-friendly infrastructures within reasonable distances of places of residence and work, to encourage women and young people to remain in rural areas.

In light of these policy developments, in 2009 the Commission launched a call for a study on employment, growth and innovation in rural areas (SEGIRA). This document complemented the impact assessment report on the reform of the CAP and responded to the Agriculture and Fisheries Council's request for an updated report on employment in rural areas. It also served as input in the current debate on the future of EU rural policy , particularly the rural development policy proposals for the post-2013 period.

International level

Council of Europe

One of the legal approaches to the gender equality issues in rural areas at the EU level was the Council of Europe Recommendation No. 1321 (1997) on improving the situation of women in rural society. This document calls on governments to take up actions in order to increase women's participation in decision-making and make an integrated approach to equality a primary concern. In addition, it called for equal access to social services and cultural revival, and to increase women's participation in the economy. With this document, the Assembly called on governments to take the following steps in order to make an

integrated approach to equality a primary concern:

- ensure a gender perspective is incorporated into the mandates and activities of organisations through the development of concerted action plans and programmes
- disseminate information among the organisations/institutions on the situation of rural women, their concerns, and the required strategies to be taken for their advancement
- develop methodologies that allow the particularities of each sex and the needs of rural women to be taken into account in the planning processes at all levels
- provide training and awareness-raising programmes for decision-makers, as well as for staff of those ministries/governmental bodies dealing with rural issues, on the experiences and needs of women in rural areas and the importance of recognising gender in rural development policies and planning.

In its Resolution 1806 (2011) on rural women in Europe, the Parliamentary Assembly stated that, considering that women are a driving force for the maintenance, conservation and development of rural areas, they can contribute to the agriculture workforce and the preservation of tradition in rural areas. Nevertheless, women still face discrimination in the labour force and economic activities that represent further challenges in the achievement of gender equality.

The Resolution calls on the Member States of the Council of Europe to devise legal measures and policy specifically focusing on rural women. This should incorporate a gender-sensitive approach in the elaboration and implementation of policies having an impact on their situation. In particular, among others, the Assembly therefore calls on the Council of Europe Member States to:

- devise specific legal measures and policies focusing in particular on improving the situation of rural women and aimed at achieving progress in equal opportunities to create conditions which will enable women to remain in rural areas
- ensure a gender-sensitive approach in the elaboration and implementation of all policies that have an impact on the situation of rural women
- provide for the involvement of rural women in agricultural policy development at national, regional and local levels and in all decisions affecting them
- promote greater participation by rural women in decision-making, encouraging their presence in local political life, in the governing bodies of businesses, cooperatives, local agricultural boards and agricultural associations
- support information and communication networks between rural women and

- support information and communication networks between rural women and government institutions, with the help of professional organisations, civil society and the media, and apply gender budgeting
- improve statistical data and information and produce statistical studies on the impact of poverty and social exclusion in rural areas, including a gender impact assessment, in order to establish policies to tackle these problems.

United Nations

Article 14 of the Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW), a bill of women's human rights, specifically deals with rural women.

Article 14, in particular states that:

- 1 Parties shall take into account the particular problems faced by rural women and the significant roles which rural women play in the economic survival of their families, including their work in the non-monetised sectors of the economy, and shall take all appropriate measures to ensure the application of the provisions of the present convention to women in rural areas.
- 2 Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in rural areas in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, that they participate in and benefit from rural development and, in particular, shall ensure to such women the right to:
 - participate in the elaboration and implementation of development planning at all levels
 - have access to adequate healthcare facilities including information, counselling and services in family planning
 - benefit directly from social security programmes
 - obtain all types of training and education, formal and non-formal, including that relating to functional literacy as well as, inter alia, the benefit of all community and extension services, in order to increase their technical proficiency
 - organise self-help groups and cooperatives in order to obtain equal access to economic opportunities through employment or self-employment
 - participate in all community activities
 - have access to agricultural credit and loans, marketing facilities,

appropriate technology and equal treatment in land and agrarian reform as well as in land resettlement schemes

- enjoy adequate living conditions, particularly in relation to housing, sanitation, electricity and water supply, transport and communications.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) pays attention to rural women, considering the plight of women living in rural and remote areas who deserve special attention given the stagnation of development in such areas. In developing countries in particular, the majority of rural women continue to live in conditions of economic underdevelopment and social marginalisation. Actions could be taken to promote women's economic independence, including employment, and eradicate the persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women by addressing its structural causes. This can be through changes in economic structures, ensuring equal access for all women including those in rural areas as vital development agents to productive resources, opportunities and public services.

In several objectives, actions for improvement in the situation of rural women are suggested, in particular for combating poverty, eradicating illiteracy and facilitating access to resources:

- Strategic objectives A.3: Provide women with access to savings and credit mechanisms and institutions; encourage links between financial institutions and non-governmental organisations and support innovative lending practices, including those that integrate credit with women's services and training and provide credit facilities to rural women
- Strategic objectives B.2: Eradicate illiteracy among women; reduce the female illiteracy rate to at least half its 1990 level, with emphasis on rural women, migrant, refugee and internally displaced women and women with disabilities
- Strategic objectives B.4: Develop non-discriminatory education and training; provide non-formal education, especially for rural women, in order to realise their potential with regard to health, micro-enterprise, agriculture and legal rights
- Strategic objectives F.2: Facilitate women's equal access to resources, employment, markets and trade; enhance, at the national and local levels, rural women's income generating potential by facilitating their equal access to and control over productive resources, land, credit, capital, property rights, development programmes and cooperative structures.

Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)

Gender equality is central to the mandate of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations. This is to help achieve food security for all by improving agricultural productivity, levels of nutrition and the lives of rural populations. Working simultaneously towards gender equality and the empowerment of women as agricultural producers is central to the FAO to accomplish its goals. The FAO policy on gender equality serves as a framework to guide the FAO's work on gender equality, support women's roles in agriculture and mainstream gender equity in all its programmes.

For FAO, women make crucial contributions in agriculture and rural enterprises. Women play a key role in rural economies where the fight against hunger and poverty is most pressing, as this is where the majority of the world's poor live. They are also central to family food security and nutrition, as they are generally responsible for food selection and preparation, and the care and feeding of children.

FAO believes that progress towards eliminating hunger and poverty will result from:

- 1 | ensuring that its programmes and projects, as well as its normative work, reduce the gap between rural women and men in access to productive resources and services
- 2 | ensuring that women and men have the ability to influence programme and policy decision-making, and building institutional responsiveness and accountability (voice)
- 3 | ensuring that rural women and men can take up economic opportunities to improve their individual and household well-being (agency).

FAO's major contributions towards achievement of its gender equality goal and objectives will come from:

- generating and communicating the evidence base through the use of sex-disaggregated data to substantiate the importance of closing the gender gap for achieving FAO's overall mandate
- developing and sharing gender equality norms and standards for agricultural policies and programmes
- building and disseminating knowledge on rural women's needs and priorities in all of FAO's areas of work
- ensuring that gender analysis is incorporated in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of all field programmes and projects

- sharing comparative data on how effectively countries are closing the gender gap in different technical areas of agriculture and rural development
- ensuring that rural women's needs and priorities are documented, heard and addressed in all the processes that FAO leads and supports
- ensuring that none of FAO's efforts perpetuate gender inequality or worsen discrimination against women
- working with partners to learn how FAO's support for gender equality in agriculture can be made more effective
- developing internal structures and systems that promote gender equality, and ensuring equal participation of men and women in decision-making in FAO.

In the framework of the sustainable development goals (SDGs), transforming our world: the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, a set of aspiration goals with 169 targets was established. Goals and targets specifically devoted to sustainable development and gender equality were defined

Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

- 1 | By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round
- 2 | By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons
- 3 | By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment
- 4 | By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality

- 5 | By 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional and international levels, and promote access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilisation of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, as internationally agreed
- 6 | Increase investment, including through enhanced international cooperation, in rural infrastructure, agricultural research and extension services, technology development and plant and livestock gene banks in order to enhance agricultural productive capacity in developing countries, in particular least developed countries
- 7 | Correct and prevent trade restrictions and distortions in world agricultural markets, including through the parallel elimination of all forms of agricultural export subsidies and all export measures with equivalent effect, in accordance with the mandate of the Doha Development Round
- 8 | Adopt measures to ensure the proper functioning of food commodity markets and their derivatives and facilitate timely access to market information, including on food reserves, in order to help limit extreme food price volatility.

Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

- 1 | End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere
- 2 | Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation
- 3 | Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation
- 4 | Recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate
- 5 | Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life
- 6 | Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences
- 7 | Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as

access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws

- 8 Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women
 - 9 Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.
-
-

Policy cycle in agriculture and rural development

How and when? Education, training and the integration of the gender dimension into the policy cycle

The gender dimension can be integrated in all phases of the policy cycle. For a detailed description of how gender can be mainstreamed in each phase of the policy cycle [click here](#).

Below, you can find useful resources and practical examples for mainstreaming gender into agricultural policy. They are organised according to the most relevant phase of the policy cycle they may serve.

Practical examples of gender mainstreaming in agriculture and rural development

UK

A gender thematic working group in Northern Ireland

Within the Northern Ireland Rural Network financed during the 2007 – 2013 programming period, a thematic working group on women in rural development was established. The group explored the role of women in rural life and rural businesses. The main aims of the group were to:

- examine the current levels of female participation in the Northern Irish Rural

Development Policy (RDP)

- identify good practice projects implemented by women under the current RDP
- identify the best approaches and good practices in rural women's issues.

The group focused on a range of issues facing rural women and held events and activities to encourage women to become economically active.

Spain

Rural woman: employment and new technologies project

The project develops interregional cooperation in the framework of the National Rural Network financed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment. It involves the participation of 8 local action groups located in 5 Spanish regions (Andalusia, Asturias, Castile-La Mancha, Castile- Leon and Madrid). The initiative is part of the broader National Rural Network (NRN) which is a platform integrated by the most relevant agents in the rural policy field in order to reinforce alliance between them, disseminate good practices and network. National, regional and local administrations, professional associations and ecologist groups are represented.

The main objective is the promotion of women entrepreneurial initiatives, and employment-based social economy (cooperatives, worker-owned companies, partnerships). This uses information and communication technologies (ICT) in order to eliminate men and women differences in the access to labour market and business. As the network main results, 833 women have already participated in training courses and 43 new companies have been created and included in the virtual enterprise incubator. Moreover, 'employability agents' have supported and assisted around 1,000 women since 2010. The virtual enterprise incubator Web 2.0 is available. Project partners have also used the networking opportunity to create the Federation of Development Association for Gender Equality (FADIG).

National plan to promote equality between women and men in rural areas (2007 – 2010)

The National Plan to promote equality between women and men in rural areas (2007 – 2010) had as its starting point the fewer employment opportunities and lack of services for the population in the rural areas. It introduced and established general principles of gender mainstreaming and empowerment in the development of rural areas. It was aiming at the following main objectives:

- ensuring that women who live and work in rural areas do not suffer double

discrimination

- curbing the exodus of women from rural areas to urban areas, thereby helping to combat rural depopulation and ageing
 - ensuring that women contribute to the economic development of rural areas with their entry into the labour market.
-
-

Key milestones of the EU agricultural and rural policy

Treaty of Rome

Treaty of Rome setting out the objectives for the first common agricultural policy (CAP).

1957 - 1957

First common agricultural policy (CAP)

First common agricultural policy (CAP), focused on good prices for farmers. The goal is food security, which is met by increasing food production.

1962 - 1962

Supply management

Farms are so productive that they are producing more food than is needed. The surpluses are stored and lead to food mountains. Specific measures are put in place to align production with market needs.

1970 - 1990

The CAP shifts from market support to producer support.

The CAP shifts from market support to producer support. Farmers are encouraged to protect the environment.

1992 - 1992

The CAP focuses more on food quality

The CAP focuses more on food quality, and new policy measures to support farm investment, training, improved processing and marketing, including the protection of traditional and regional foods, and implementation of EU legislation on organic farming.

1994 - 1996

Council of Europe Recommendation No. 1321

Council of Europe Recommendation No. 1321 on improving the situation of women in rural society.

1997 - 1997

The CAP centres on rural development

The CAP centres on rural development – i.e. on the economic, social and cultural development of rural Europe.

2000 - 2000

CAP reform cuts the link between subsidies and production

CAP reform cuts the link between subsidies and production to make farmers more market-oriented. The CAP provides income support in exchange for respect for strict food safety, environmental and animal welfare.

2003 - 2003

Communication to the Council and the European Parliament on Employment in rural areas: closing the jobs gap

See more [here](#).

2006 - 2006

A new CAP reform

A new CAP reform seeks to strengthen the economic and ecological competitiveness of the agricultural sector, to promote innovation, combat climate change and support employment and growth in rural areas.

2011 - 2011

Council of Europe Resolution 1806 on rural women in Europe

See more [here](#).

2011 - 2011

Report on the role of women in agriculture and rural areas (2010/2054(INI))

[Report](#) on the role of women in agriculture and rural areas (2010/2054(INI)) Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development for a motion for a European Parliament Resolution on the role of women in agriculture and rural areas.

2011 - 2011

Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform 2014 – 2020

See more [here](#).

2013 - 2013

Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 of the European Parliament

[Regulation \(EU\) No 1305/2013](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on support for rural development by the European agricultural fund for rural development (EAFRD).

2013 - 2013

Current policy priorities at EU level

The Common Agricultural Policy reform 2014 – 2020

After a public debate about the future of the CAP at the end of 2013, reform was agreed for 2014 – 2020. This is reflected in [The CAP towards 2020: meeting the food, natural resources and territorial challenges of the future](#). It has a budget of €363 billion for the period 2014 – 2020. From 2015 onwards, the CAP will be introducing a new policy instrument in pillar1: the green direct payment, which will form 30% of the national direct

payment envelope.

The new CAP is placed in and shaped by [the overall Europe 2020 strategy](#), which indicates that the economic growth in the EU should be smart, sustainable and inclusive. The CAP reform includes economic, environmental and territorial challenges, and has 3 long-term policy objectives:

- viable food production
- sustainable management of natural resources
- climate action and balanced territorial development

EU Rural Development Policy (2014 – 2020)

Within the architecture of the EU RDP 2014 – 2020, pillar 2 of the CAP, 6 priorities are identified that need to be pursued to reach [the broader long-term objectives of the overall CAP](#). The RDP is implemented through national and/or regional seven-year rural development programmes, and should reflect the 6 EU priorities.

- 1 | fostering knowledge, transfer and innovation in agriculture, forestry and rural areas
- 2 | enhancing farm viability and competitiveness of all types of agriculture in all regions and promoting innovative farm technologies and sustainable management of forests
- 3 | promoting food chain organisation, including processing and marketing of agricultural products, animal welfare and risk management in agriculture
- 4 | restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry
- 5 | promoting resource efficiency and supporting the shift towards a low-carbon and climate-resilient economy in agriculture, food and forestry sectors
- 6 | promoting social inclusion, poverty and economic development in rural areas.

Want to know more?