



## Gender in CGIAR's research

### Purpose

This document provides a background to understanding the different aspects of integrating gender research within the One CGIAR research portfolio to support agenda item 9 on *Gender in the Research*.

### Action Requested

The System Council is requested to take note of these materials as an input into deliberations on gender in the research and opportunities to consolidate the gender research to ensure the CGIAR, as a collective, is able reach its impact targets.

<p><b>Document category:</b> Working document of the System Council. There is no restriction on the circulation of this document</p>
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## Overview

1. The gender research landscape within the CGIAR is dominated by three distinct, yet deeply interlinked, bodies of work, which collectively build up a portfolio of gender research in food, land and water systems. They are the GENDER Impact Platform, the Initiatives portfolio, and the Initiative on Gender Equality ('HER+'). The aim of this body of work is to leverage all parts of the CGIAR so that they can contribute to the impact area on Gender Equality, Youth and Social Inclusion.

2. **CGIAR GENDER Impact Platform**

Following the [Systems Council decision in 2019](#) to launch a gender platform, the Generating Evidence and New Directions for Equitable Results ([GENDER](#)) Impact Platform has been operational since 2020. With the declaration that it was [to transition into an impact area platform](#), the GENDER Impact Platform became the institutional home of the gender equality, youth, and social inclusion Impact Area of the CGIAR within the One CGIAR ecosystem.

As identified in the [2030 CGIAR research and innovation strategy](#), the GENDER Impact Platform, alongside the other four Impact Area Platforms, 'will strengthen the work of the Action Areas, improving their focus on scaling of innovation and impact from research. The Platforms will:

- ✓ Foster global critical thinking, use of evidence, and appropriate metrics around the impact Area;
- ✓ Increase internal capacity across the Action Areas through strengthening and sharing common tools, standards, data sets, cutting-edge science, and knowledge management;
- ✓ Advise management on the identification and performance management of CGIAR Initiatives; and
- ✓ Amplify CGIAR's external profile and voice, by engaging in and shaping global policy discourse, and by leading external communications plans to influence well beyond the agriculture and food sector.'

As the first Impact Area to be fully staffed and operationalized, the GENDER Impact Platform team organized and deployed technical assistance, advice, critical review, and practical guidance to the initiative design teams on the gender-specific elements of the 33 CGIAR Initiatives, with a view to harmonize *and* raise the standards for gender-intentional research across the One CGIAR research portfolio.

To fulfill the other Impact Platform functions, the GENDER Impact Platform will continue to direct the strategy and workflows of the impact area along the three modules through which it operates, namely **Alliances** (partnerships with downstream A4RD partners such as NARES, private sector, government, and now, CGIAR Initiatives), **Methods** (exploration, finetuning and scaling of gender research approaches and methods, standards, frameworks, metrics, and technologies through the CGIAR), and **Evidence** (science-based evidence and data to fill critical meta-level

research gaps, with a focus on use cases, testing, and real-world application of CGIAR research products and interventions).

The focus for the Gender Equality, Youth and Social Inclusion Impact Area (and by corollary, the GENDER Impact Platform) going forward is to continue ensuring that the CGIAR's authority as the leading source of gender research is strengthened and validated system wide. This is the only way to guarantee that gender truly acts a lens to guide the global research agenda of the CGIAR, steering it more strongly towards achieving real impact for women in agriculture. Resourcing, at system level, support on standards on indicators and researcher capacity are key elements to building and maintaining this authority. Critical to this aim, and a central tenet of the GENDER Impact Platform, is the support for high-level syntheses and original, groundbreaking research on gender for the CGIAR at institutional level. This original research agenda is aimed at either synthesizing individual research streams emerging from the Initiatives for the good of the entire portfolio *or* filling critical meta-level gender research gaps relevant to the entire CGIAR ecosystem; it is research that can only be done across the CGIAR and not in by a specific center or initiative.

### 3. The CGIAR Initiatives Portfolio

Over the course of 2021, the CGIAR transitioned into a One CGIAR. CGIAR scientists, working in teams with NARES partners, government, and private sector actors across the Global South, and with the steady guidance of long-time funding partners, undertook an overhaul of the global A4RD research agenda. The decades long CGIAR research programs came to an end, replaced by 33 CGIAR Initiatives designed to take the CGIAR Research and Innovation Strategy forward in a bold new way.

A win for gender: most, if not all, of the 33 CGIAR Initiatives have integrated gender to some degree. Establishing Gender Equality, Youth and Social Inclusion as one of [CGIAR's five dedicated Impact Areas](#) meant that expectations for gender in CGIAR research were higher this time around. And though many in the CGIAR initially viewed the need to contribute to the gender equality, youth and social inclusion Impact Area as just one more hoop to jump through in developing their initiatives, during the development process, most initiative teams came to see gender as an integral part of their work. It is fair to say, in fact, that there is a new momentum around gender in the CGIAR, with scientists willing to learn how, by enhancing gender equity and social inclusion in their impact pathways, they might effectuate change in the lives of women, men, and young people across the Global South. The GENDER Impact Platform and the CGIAR as a collective must continue to support and move quickly to capitalize on this momentum, to avoid letting it slip.

The Gender Equality, Youth and Social Inclusion Impact Area, via the GENDER Impact Platform, advised the initiative design teams on how best to integrate gender into Theories of Change and provided a formal evaluation of the Initiatives pre-submission drafts. The portfolio settled into a mix of (1) Initiatives that will contribute significantly to the impact area on gender with cutting edge critical thinking, (2) Initiatives that will contribute to the gender agenda, (3) Initiatives that

need support to leverage the work they are doing to have an impact on gender equality.

#### 4. **HER+ - the CGIAR Initiative on Gender Equality**

Of the 33 CGIAR Initiatives, [Harnessing Equality for Resilience in Agri-food Systems \(HER+\)](#) is the sole Initiative entirely dedicated to Gender Equality. HER+ was explicitly designed as an original research workstream that would operate independently of CGIAR's other gender efforts, including the GENDER Impact Platform. The role of the GENDER Impact Platform has been to supply the leadership of HER+ with the same knowledge, research, advisory, foresight, guidance, and technical assistance as the other CGIAR Initiatives.

HER+ pursues a specific research *theme*, namely the idea of women's resilience – resilience in the face of climate change, extreme poverty, institutional barriers and constraints, and exclusion from governance structures and decision-making. Thus, the aim of HER+ is to provide cutting edge public goods on research areas such as gender transformative approaches, creating socio-technical bundles with CGIAR innovations that lead to women's empowerment, giving women voice and protecting assets through making social protection programs more gender responsive.

#### 5. **Link between the initiatives and the GENDER Impact Platform**

Whereas the GENDER Platform will focus on meta-level research gaps and synthesis of research findings levelled at the One CGIAR as a *system*, the initiatives pursue a specific research *theme on gender* within the initiative subject matter (to varying degrees). In other words, a two-way flow of knowledge is expected to take place:

The CGIAR Initiatives, including HER+, feed research results, publications, and case studies back to the GENDER Impact Platform, which will synthesize findings and establish a system-level perspective on the impact of the CGIAR research agenda on gender equity and social inclusion.

The GENDER Impact Platform supplies the CGIAR portfolio, including initiatives and HER+, with original, meta-level research and research synthesis – plus research tools and metrics – that will be adopted and mainstreamed by the Initiatives, eventually contributing to Outcome-level changes to the knowledge, attitudes, skills, or practices of the actor groups the Initiatives are seeking to influence.

On a practical note, all of this work, whether through initiatives, HER+ or GENDER Impact Platform, is dependent on gender researchers and on the researchers working on gender within CGIAR centers. The initiatives and the Platform are dependent on this group of researchers to be able to ensure the CGIAR has an impact on gender equality. This means that the role of the centers is crucial in growing the portfolio and maintaining the gender expertise in the CGIAR.

## 6. Results for 2022 on Gender in Research

Data from the 2022 annual reporting exercise and found in the [CGIAR results dashboard](#) shows how initiatives and platforms tagged themselves on gender, using a scoring of whether a result targeted gender as a principal research area, had gender as a significant part of the research or whether gender was not specifically targeted.

The data shows that of the 3,368 results reported by the CGIAR portfolio:

- 316 (10%) results targeted gender as a principal research area. One third of these results (106) were reported by the GENDER Impact Platform
- 880 (26%) results included gender as a significant part of their research
- 2,172 (64%) results did not specifically target gender

Further quantitative results will be presented in the session after more extensive analysis of the dashboard. Aggregated analysis of the 2022 results at initiative level and initial gender scoring on the proposal will also be done to understand if there have been improvements in gender research. Results will also be presented from across the CGIAR, most of which are curated by the Platform in its [resource hub](#). The resource hub aims to be the one stop shop where many of these results are published and available for us by researchers within and beyond the CGIAR.

## 7. Strengthening gender in the research

Gender research, and specifically, on food, land and water systems, has been a calling card of the CGIAR since it agreed to invest in gender on a larger scale from 2012. Building on this legacy, the initiatives, the GENDER Impact Platform and HER+ are entry points into how the CGIAR can deliver on its global goal of closing the gender gap for 500 million women collectively with partners.

Additionally, the GENDER Impact Platform engages with the portfolio of bilaterally and W3-funded gender research within the CGIAR in three main ways: first, by cultivating a vibrant community of [gender researcher](#) coordinators to share good practices on gender responsive and transformative approaches, second, by convening [communities of practice](#) that facilitate learning exchange on emerging insights and innovative methods, tools, and best practices; and third, by providing [top-up grants](#) that leverage existing bilateral and W3-funded projects to strengthen their gender focus and incentivize the use of rigorous methods and tools .

Based on the GENDER Impact Platform's progress towards planned outcomes to date, and on the expected results from the forthcoming Independent Advisory and Evaluation Service (IAES) evaluation, there are several points that the CGIAR and partners collectively will need to work on to translate the outstanding gender work being done into a coherent body of work that will help the CGIAR achieve its impact targets. For instance:

- 1) Improve the quality of, and monitoring mechanisms for, gender indicators across

the CGIAR. This should include monitoring of resources for gender research.

- 2) The CGIAR collectively, with support of the Platform, should continue to support the present initiatives and future initiatives in integrating gender and making them gender responsive so as to reach the potential of CGIAR research to empower women and reach gender equality.
- 3) Ring fence resources to maintain gender researchers within the CGIAR and to grow the pool of gender researchers (presently there are 30 gender researchers in a staff of 1000, i.e., 3% of staff).

#### **8. Link between gender in the research and gender in the workplace**

In light of the SC meeting in which gender in the workplace was mentioned, it is important to have a clear understanding and appreciation that having a vibrant workplace that respects diversity and inclusion support the CGIARs ability to deliver on the gender research agenda. CGIAR has been visionary, and follows standard practice of organizations such as FAO, of developing and resourcing the tracks of gender in the workplace and gender in the research separately. This is necessary because each track requires different expertise (one requires HR training, the other research training) and different infrastructures. In other words, a gender researcher does not have the expertise or power (to set hiring policies, for instance) to do the work of an HR expert, or vice versa. It is therefore essential that CGIAR's People & Culture function continues to be resourced and supported appropriately to further this agenda

#### **Background and Further reading**

[CGIAR GENDER Platform website](#) = contains all the gender work of the CGIAR as it is published

CGIAR GENDER Platform

2020 [Annual Report](#)

2021 [Annual Report](#)

2020 [Proposal and impact pathway \(annex 5\)](#)

Quarterly [newsletters](#)

[HER+ website](#)