Australian Government

Australian Centre for
International Agricultural Research

ACIAR Gender Guidelines for Project Proposals

Background

Research on gendered social relations is either a core focus or an aspect of ACIAR commissioned agricultural research. ACIAR is also committed to ensuring research processes and outcomes empower women. Projects must consider the implications of gendered social relations in research design, delivery and impact. ACIAR defines gender as *the socially constructed roles and responsibilities of women and men, including the relationships, roles and expectations of each in a particular setting*.

Gender does not refer to male and female, but to masculine and feminine[1]. People are born female or male, but learn to be women and men. Perceptions of gender are deeply rooted, vary widely both within and between cultures, and change over time. In all cultures, gender determines power and resources for females and males (FAO 2013).

ACIAR is committed to mainstreaming gender in its research:

> Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality. (United Nations Economic and Social Council 1997).

Integrating gender in agricultural research for development is good and sensible development as it addresses the needs of both women and men, while recognising and addressing the unequal access to resources and differential levels of productivity between women and men *(*Njuki 2016). Whilst it is usual to integrate gender in a research programme, how to do so it is not always clear.

There are many misconceptions about gender and gender equality; these misconceptions can hinder the effectiveness of a research programme. This document assists researchers in thinking through how they can be effectively incorporate gender research in ACIAR projects. In addition, it is recommended that all project leaders and research teams collaborate with a social scientist knowledgeable about gendered social relations during the project design and delivery phases. Such specialists are not substitutes for all project team members recognising, and understanding the relevance of gendered social relations in their projects. To build a gender equitable research project, it is vital to ensure everyone on the research project understand the relevance of gender equity in agriculture to work towards better gender practices.

In agricultural research and development programmes it is important to recognise the different roles of women and men as these different roles frequently incorporate distinct environmental knowledges, rights and responsibilities (Rocheleau et al 1996).

These different roles may result in different needs and constraints *(*Njuki 2016) as well as opportunities, therefore different research methods, tools and evaluation maybe required.

---

[1] Gender includes all people regardless of their preferred gender identity and ACIAR respects all people. Project teams should consider the gender preference of the people involved in the project.

Why embed gender in ACIAR Research Projects

ACIAR seeks to use gender relevant approaches that take into account the power relations between women and men, and supports positive changes that allow both women and men to equitably enjoy and exercise their human rights. Such gender approaches include gender-sensitive, gender-specific and gender-transformative methods[3].

An individual's vulnerability and capacity to adapt to change varies according to their age, sex, gender, ethnicity, class, education, social status, wealth and access to other strategic resources (e.g. information, finance and land). There is a high degree of diversity between and within groups, making some people more vulnerable, and some more adaptable, than others. This is why gender inclusive practices differ from project to project, hence there is no one gender specific model that suits all projects – one model does not fit all!

Often gender is inadvertently used as code for women. This is because women are frequently marginalised based on gender. Yet we know that the majority of smallholder farmers in the developing world are women and, globally, women provide 43% of agricultural labour (UN Women 2015); in South Asia 70% of the agricultural workers are women (Chatterjee and Laban, 2014, p.1). ACIAR is committed to ensuring women are not peripheral to ACIAR research projects. Whether through consultation, extension, training, decision-making, or technologically relevant development, women are to be afforded equitable access and decision-making authority.

Engaging both women and men at all levels of the project (including in-country partners and participants) ensures that research project teams are able to decide on strategies that are appropriate for their local context. Women and men have different abilities, knowledge, skills and talents to contribute to solutions. Therefore, by addressing gender at all stages of the project researchers strengthen their project's impact, minimise the potential for harm to different groups, help to alleviate poverty and build community and family capacity, as well as the country's GDP and GDI.

How to embed gender in ACIAR research projects

Gender is not just about women, but about women and men. Understanding the relationships, roles and expectations of each in a particular setting is important to the design, implementation and success of the project (Chambers, 2014).

Include women researchers as role models in projects. Equity in representation is important but enabling women in all roles to have a voice is vital. In some countries, inviting women to attend a meeting may not necessarily allow them to speak. Find ways that give voice to women in any culture. It is just as vital to ensure that all participants in the project have equitable workloads; consider women maybe overloaded with project responsibilities on top of family commitments.

There are various research models available to help researchers embed gender in their agricultural research projects. The following gender research cycle model (below) is one model designed to assist in considering gender in all stages of the research project (European Commission 2009: Njuki 2016).
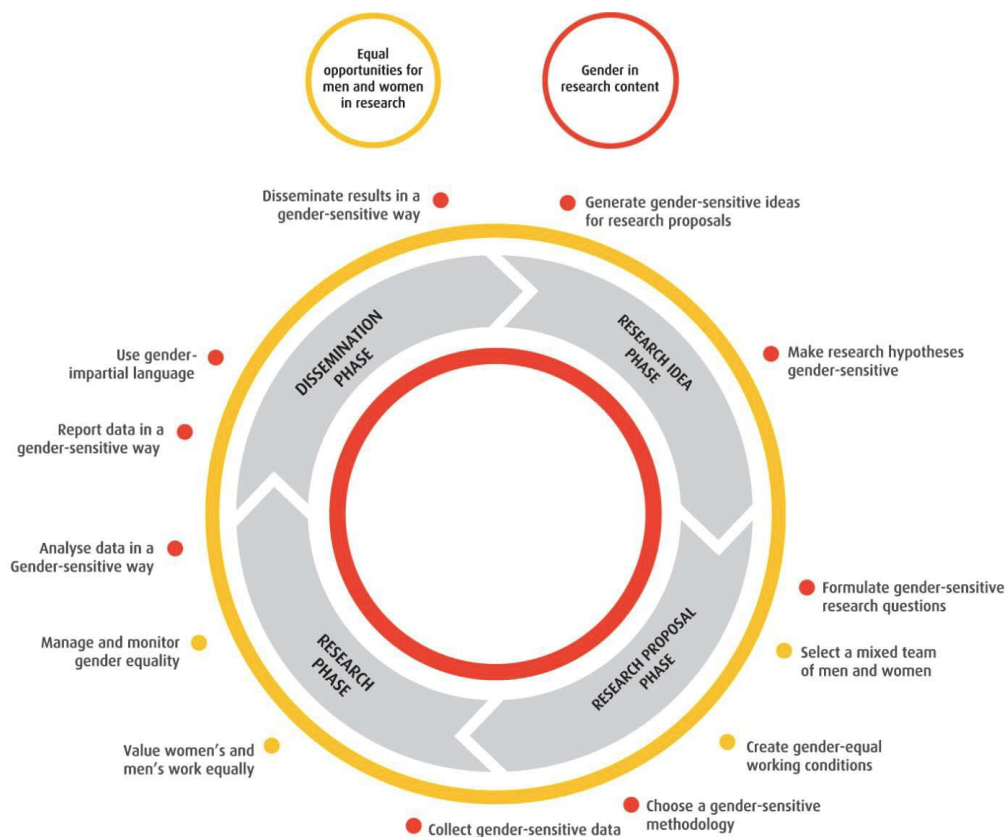
Njuki. J 2016. Practical Notes: Critical elements for integrating gender in agricultural research and development projects and programs. *Journal of Gender, Agriculture and Food Security* Vol 1, Issue 3, p106, 2016

An ACIAR research project can influence gender outcomes just by asking the right questions and modelling gender roles. This requires project teams to be cognisant of the cultural gender expectations before developing the project proposal.

The following comments/questions are designed to guide the research team to ensure the research proposal incorporates gendered social relations through its; aims, objectives, research activities, methods, capacity building activities and outputs. The depth of detail needed for Preliminary Proposal will be less than that needed in Full Proposal, however thinking through these comments/questions early will help to develop a gender inclusive project from the design phase rather than falling into the trap of attempting to adapt the project later in the development or delivery. They are designed to be read in conjunction with the ACIAR Project Proposal guidelines and the **ACIAR Gender Equity Policy & Strategy**

Ensure gender is deployed with substance.

Steps to build gender engagement within ACIAR projects

	Proposal Section
Structure the summary to incorporate the gender inclusiveness, participation, priorities, activities, monitoring and evaluation of the project. Questions to facilitate gender inclusiveness in research projects are outlined below to assist in addressing each section of the research proposal. The project summary can be written by consolidating the responses to these comment/questions.	**Project summary**
Considering gender at this stage of the project development will help to shape the rest of the application (if relevant). The justification should consider how the project can contribute to increased gender equality and women's empowerment: Has gender been considered? Is there a gender inequality/inequity issue? What is it and how big is the issue?	**Justification**
When considering past and current ACIAR projects in relation to your research, consider: whether gender was incorporated in and consider why and how – this could be an area of research for your project. If gender was/is considered in the past or current project consider: what the women's and men's, girl's and boy's involvement was and what the impact on women and men was – this could be an area of research to which your project can contribute academic outputs and development outcomes.	**Relationship to other ACIAR investments and other donor and partner-country activities**
Research questions should be clearly linked to the gender aspects of the justification and strategy sections. If the key objectives and activities are gender inclusive, the research methods and activities will also be gender inclusive. When designing the research questions consider: whether asking that question will address an issue that is a priority for both women and men how/why are the research questions gender sensitive	**Research Questions**
Consider what the potential is for the project to improve the lives of women involved in the project's agricultural community. Does the workload / training incorporate women's family/cultural requirements (avoid overloading women with farm labour if they also need to care for children, elderly or other family/community members, maintain the household, e.g. cook, clean, etc)? Are introduced technologies appropriate for use by both women and men or are adjustments required? Who will consult with the men on this project and who will consult with the women? What will the consultation process be – consider cultural expectations (in some countries it is inappropriate for men to be alone with women)	**Objectives and Research Design**

What is the gender balance of people involved in implementing specific project measures and policy or planning processes? What will be/is the communication contribution from women and men and what communications tools are best suited to their needs?	
Consider whether the project has a specific gender focus. If it does, describe the focus and why it is important. If the project has a gender focus this should be evidenced in the activities, results and impact pathway. If there is a gender focus, what are the risks to women and how will these be managed? If it does not, consider how incorporating a gender focus could enhance the project. If the research teams decide there is no gender focus then discuss why.	**Gender Focus**
Evaluation considerations differ depending on the phase of the project, therefore, the following questions are a starting point then built on during the life of the project. Both qualitative and quantitative monitoring and evaluations methods need to be explored to develop a thorough understanding of the different impact on women and men. Systematically documenting and discussing this data with a focus on gender outcomes, means inequality is addressed more effectively resulting in better outcomes for women and men. When monitoring and evaluating projects, consider Who will consult with the men for monitoring and evaluation purposes, and who will consult with the women? Discuss the number of women and men with e.g. increased income, food security and/or livelihood opportunities, and what process took place to bring about this number. How are women's and men's access to project relevant assets, resources, knowledge, participation and management changing? Did new gender related activities and/or opportunities emerge that were not foreseen at project design? How did the project identify, characterise and respond to these opportunities? Describe the change in men's and women's capacities to manage project outcomes/scale out. How do the project's outcomes advantage/disadvantage women and men? How the data is sex and age disaggregated. How will the project document gender-disaggregated statistics, tables, figures, descriptions and analysis? Discuss the number of policies, plans or programmes introduced or adjusted to incorporate gender equality (if relevant). Were there changes in stakeholders' awareness of gender issues and how did these affect change? Were there changes in stakeholders' (decision makers, communities, households, agencies) attitudes? If yes, what were the percentages of change disaggregated by gender? What were the changes and how do the changes impact women and men?	**Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning**

The design and process undertaken will help to determine the impact of the project. The proposed impact will also determine the design and process (all sections could be considered simultaneously). What steps will be taken to know that the gender-specific activities and outcomes that were targeted in the project design are realised? How are the expected roles and livelihoods of women and men affected as a result of the project to date (e.g. labour, income, role, decision-making)? What are the anticipated impacts on women's or men's other tasks and responsibilities (e.g. family, culture, religion)? Are there unexpected impacts on women's or men's other tasks and responsibilities (e.g. family, culture, religion)? If yes, what are these? What was the percentage change in the number of women and the number of men affected by project and how were they affected? How will the impact be sustainable without further action from outside researchers and project staff? What actions will the project team take to build sustainability?	**Impact**
Have you chosen partners who will draw out the nuances of gender social relations? What are the roles of women and men within the scope of the project? Is there a gender balance in lead/senior roles? Is your extension/training team gender inclusive (in some countries you may need to avoid male trainers for all female groups)? What steps does the project take to ensure an equitable balance of women and men researchers, participants and beneficiaries? What is the number of women and men represented on the project's steering committees? Consider the steps you have taken to ensure women are actively involved in the decision-making and that their voices are heard and respected. What is the gender balance of the project's Australian research team? Partner country/ies research team? Research participants? Are women's groups or organisations working in support of gender equality among the research partners? If yes, what will their role be (will they have a significant management role?). Is there a gender balance in the project's leadership teams? Do women and men's groups have an active voice and leadership roles in the project? Have project management aspects such as timing, duration and schedules for meetings or other work, accommodated the potentially different commitments of men and women involved in the project team or participating communities?	**Resourcing and Partnerships**
Monitor, evaluate and adapt capacity building interventions as the project progresses. Make sure this is captured in all project reporting.	Annual Reports

Cautions[2]

Integrating gender into policies, programs and projects can be a challenge especially if its emphasis and purpose is not well understood by everyone involved. Avoid the overuse of the word 'gender' throughout project documents as this may disengage people. A clever tactic is to use gender responsive terms without directly using the word 'gender' or 'gender equality'. These terms include:

- Accessible
- Appropriate
- Collaborative
- Equitable
- Empowering
- Engaging

- Fair
- Inclusive
- Participatory
- Responsive
- Sensitive
- Universal

Key Gender Definitions[3]

Gender refers to the socially constructed roles and responsibilities of women and men.

Gender analysis is a process of examining the roles, knowledge, capacity and assets of women and men. It is the first step in planning efficient strategies, programmes and projects that address both men's and women's needs, and reduce the inequalities that exist between them.

Gender blind is where a project or programmes is related to human activities but does not include a gender dimension, it is described as gender blind due to the risk of ignoring issues and needs of men and women.

Gender equality or equality between women and men refers to the equal enjoyment by men and women of all ages of rights, socially valued goods, opportunities, resources and rewards. Equality does not mean that men and women are the same but that their enjoyment of rights, opportunities and life chances are not governed or limited by whether they were born male or female.

Gender equity refers to fair treatment for women and men according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different but considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities. In the development context, a gender equity goal often requires built-in measures to compensate for the historical and social disadvantages of women, such as empowering women to bring them up to an equal playing field with men. Gender equity and equality must be pursued in a complementary manner where gender equality is the ultimate goal.

Gender inclusive is where the needs of both women and men are considered and addressed.

Gender mainstreaming refers to the process whereby needs and interests of both women and men are taken into account systematically across all programmes, projects and organisational structures.
Gender neutral is where a project or programmes is not concerned with human activities and has no effect on people, this is considered gender neutral.

---

[2] Adapted from the Pacific Gender & Climate Change Toolkit Tools For Practitioners

[3] Ibid

Gender planning refers to planning processes that are gender responsive and take into account the different roles, needs and priorities of women and men in the formulation of strategies and plans.

Gender roles are those behaviours, tasks and responsibilities that a society considers appropriate for men, women, boys and girls

Gender-sensitive policy or programme recognises gender inequality as an obstacle that may deprive women or men of equal opportunities and prevent them from getting equal benefits.

Gender-specific policy or programme explicitly focuses on one group – usually women – in order to address inequalities and bring women on to an equal playing field with men.

Gender-transformative policy or programme directly seeks to change – or as the name suggests, transform – conditions and practices that unfairly treat men or women.

Gender responsive is an approach that takes into consideration the differences and inequalities between men and women, and addresses these through specific interventions. Gender responsive approaches include gender sensitive, gender specific and gender transformative methods of addressing gender differences and inequalities.

Gender stereotypes are prejudices about the roles of men and women, how they should behave, and the type of relationships between them. These ideas are learned through social institutions like family, religious, community and the media.
Stereotypes often lead to the exclusion of women from community and political affairs, and conceal women's contributions within the public and private spheres. Examples of gender stereotyping include ideas that women should be seen and not heard, women belong at home and in the kitchen, and only women can be caregivers to children, the elderly and people with disabilities.

Gender transformative is a policy or programme that seeks to change conditions and practices that maintains unequal power relations between men and women.
Gender transformative policies or programmes place a strong emphasis on women's empowerment and men's engagement to achieve gender equity and equality.

Sex refers to biological differences between women and men. These differences exist for reproductive purposes and are essentially fixed.

Sex-disaggregated data is data that provides a breakdown of men's and women's activities and perspectives by collecting separate data on men and women. Data can also be disaggregated by age, location, ethnic group, education, income and other demographic variables to help understand the differences between groups and to effectively target interventions and solutions. (The Pacific Gender & Climate Change Toolkit Tools For Practitioners)

Bibliography – a starting point for research projects

Bertini, C 2014. Effective, efficient, ethical solution to feeding 9 billion people: Invest in women. Crawford lecture, Canberra, Australia

CARE 2012. Good Practices Framework: Gender Analysis https://www.care.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Good-Practices-Brief.pdf

CGIAR 2013. CIFOR Proposal Development Guidelines for Integrating Gender. http://www.cifor.org/library/4155/cifor-proposal-development-guidelines-for- integrating-gender-does-your-proposal-demonstrate-appropriate-attention-to- gender-issues/

Chambers, B 2014. *Working paper in gender in agriculture*, ACIAR

Chatterjee, K and Labana, S 2014. *Gender dimensions in ACIAR projects in South Asia,* New Delhi ACIAR Office, May 2014, p.1

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2015. Gender equality and women's economic empowerment in agriculture: Operational Guidance note.

European Commission, Directorate General for Research 2009. Tooklit for Gender in EU Funded Research. http://ki.se/en/research/tools-for-sex-and-gender-analysis-in- health

Food and Agriculture Organisation FAO 'Why gender' accessed July 2017 available at http://www.fao.org/gender/gender-home/gender-why/why-gender/en/

Feed the Future 2012. *Women's empowerment in agriculture index*. International Food Policy Research Institute

Kadel, L M. Lacey, J. Ahmad, F. Hayes, K. Gurung Goodrich, C. Cruz Lopez, D.,Milne, G. Darbas, T and Olsen, K 2017. *Making Gender Count: Leveraging M&E to mainstream gender. A project undertaken within the South Asia Sustainable Development Investment Portfolio (SDIP)*. CSIRO, Australia

Kanyi, M, Lawver, D. Ulmer, J and Murimi, R 2016. 'Attitudes and adoption of rainwater Harvesting: Influence of gender, awareness and social status'. Journal of International Agricultural and Extension Education. Vol 24:1.

Kilby, P and Crawford, J 2011. 'Closing the gender Gap: Gender and Australian NGOs'. *ACFID research in development series report no.2* Part of the ACFID – HIS working paper series.

Njuki. J 2016. Practical Notes: Critical elements for integrating gender in agricultural research and development projects and programs. *Journal of Gender, Agriculture and Food Security* Vol 1, Issue 3, pp104-108, 2016

Nyasimi, M and Huyer, S 2017. 'Closing the gender in agriculture under climate change'. Agricultural Development. 30 p 37 - 40.

Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1997 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

The Pacific Gender & Climate Change Toolkit Tools For Practitioners https://www.pacificclimatechange.net/sites/default/files/documents/Gender-CC-Toolkit_About-the-toolkit.pdf

United Nations Economic and Social Council 1997. Excerpt from A/52/3 Chapter IV, agreed conclusions 1997/2 http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/pdf/ECOSOCAC1997.2.PDF

Gender toolkits and resources

Agri-Pro Focus 2014. Gender in value chains (toolkit)
https://agriprofocus.com/upload/ToolkitENGender_in_Value_ChainsJan2014com
pressed1415203230.pdf

CARE Gender Toolkit http://gendertoolkit.care.org/weimi/introduction.aspx

Enhancing Resilience through Gender Equality https://www.care.org.au/wp-
content/uploads/2016/06/REPORT_Gender_Equality_Enhancing_Resiliance.pdf

Gender and aquaculture - https://genderaquafish.org/

Gender CARE. Gender Equality Framework and multiple gender toolkits and links to
other websites http://gender.care2share.wikispaces.net/

International Food Policy Research Institute, related resources
WEAI Resource Center http://www.ifpri.org/topic/weai-resource-center Gender
http://www.ifpri.org/topic/gender

Invisible Farmer Project (ARC research project) https://invisiblefarmer.net.au

Lagarde, C 2014. *The 3 'L's of women's empowerment*

Tarai, J 2016. *Rethinking the Fijian Man* TED Talk
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qh_ClbaSVTs

UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

UN Women 2015. Various helpful links and related literature
http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/intergovernmentalmandates.htm
http://www.unwomen.org/en/search-results?keywords=Agriculture
http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/economic-empowerment/facts-and-
figures
http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/economic-empowerment/rural- women
https://www.devex.com/news/the-3-l-s-of-women-s-empowerment-84263