



# Gender Equality in Agricultural Trade

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**THE STATUS  
OF WOMEN  
IN AGRIFOOD  
SYSTEMS**

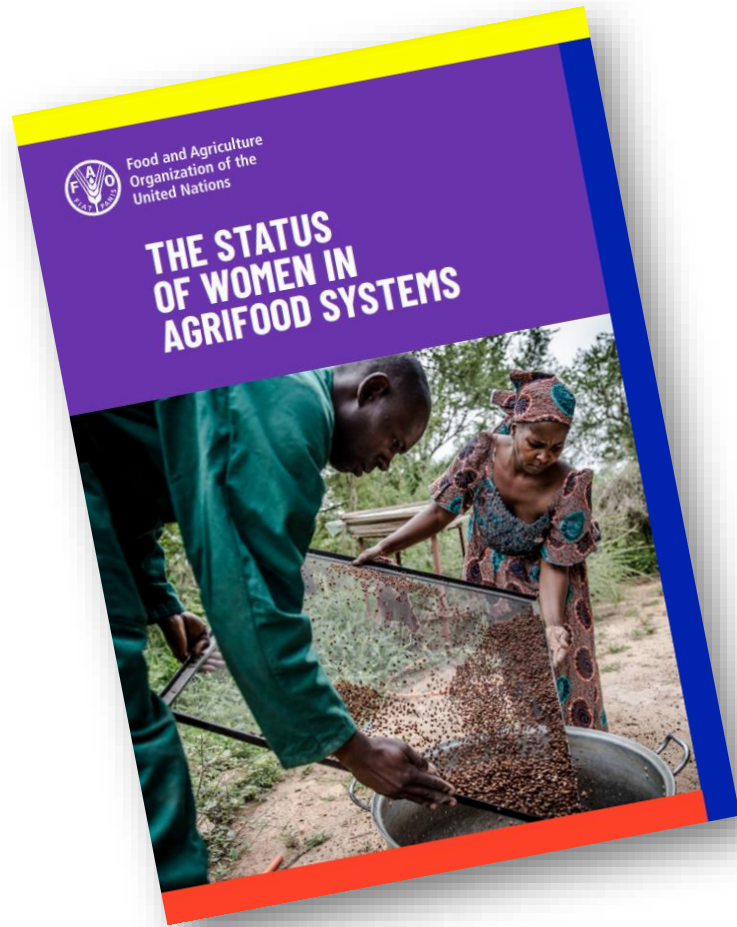




# Outline

- Rationale
- Guiding framework, implementation mechanisms and priority areas for FAO's gender work
- Gender and trade work at FAO





## This report

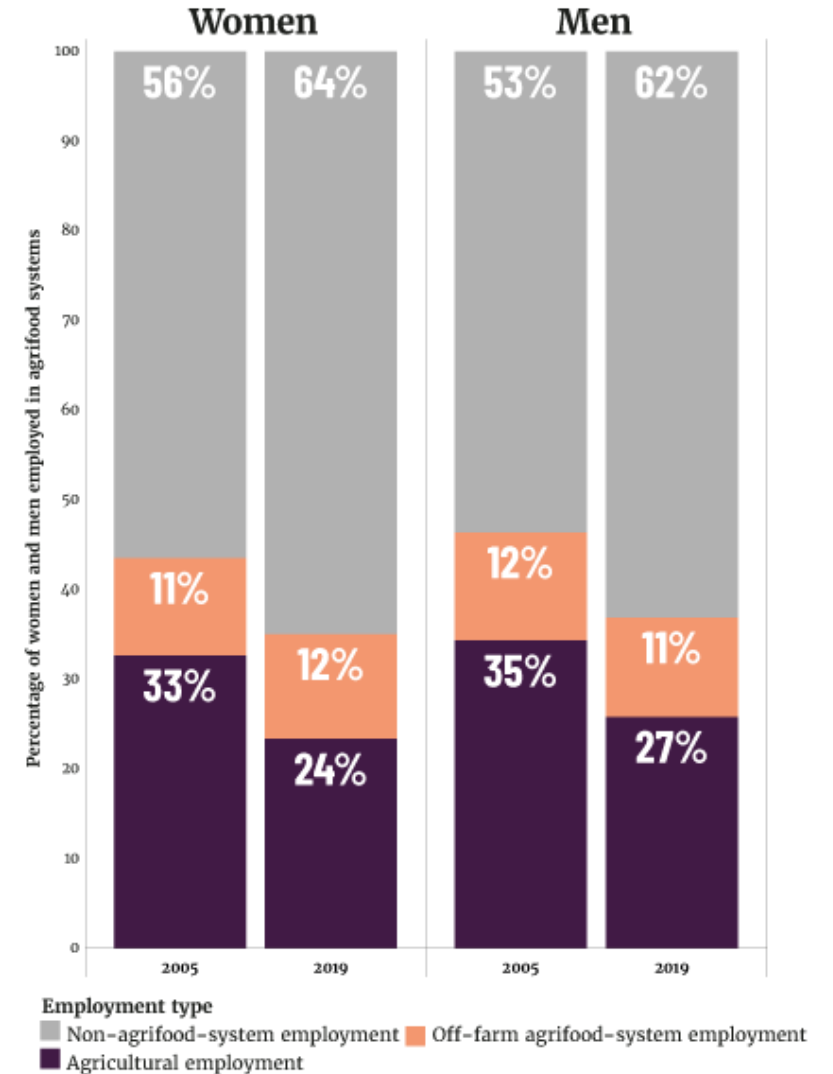
- Provides a comprehensive, global view of the status of women in agrifood systems (AFS), beyond agriculture
- Highlights how different segments of AFS are conditioned by structural inequalities linked to gender and intersecting social and economic differentiation
- Places gender equality and women's empowerment as an objective in and of itself, and as a means to improve broader welfare in AFS
- Reflects evolution from a focus on closing gender gaps to promoting gender-transformative change



# 1 Agrifood systems are a major employer of women and men

- Globally, 36% of working women are employed in agrifood systems, along with 38% of working men
- Agrifood systems are a greater source of livelihoods for women than for men in low- and middle-income countries
- 66% of working women in sub-Saharan Africa and 71% of working women in southern Asia are employed in AFS

Graph Source: Costa, V. et al (forthcoming). *Women's employment in agrifood systems*. Background paper for The Status of Women in Agrifood Systems report, 2023.





# 2 Fewer women are engaged in the more profitable wholesale trade

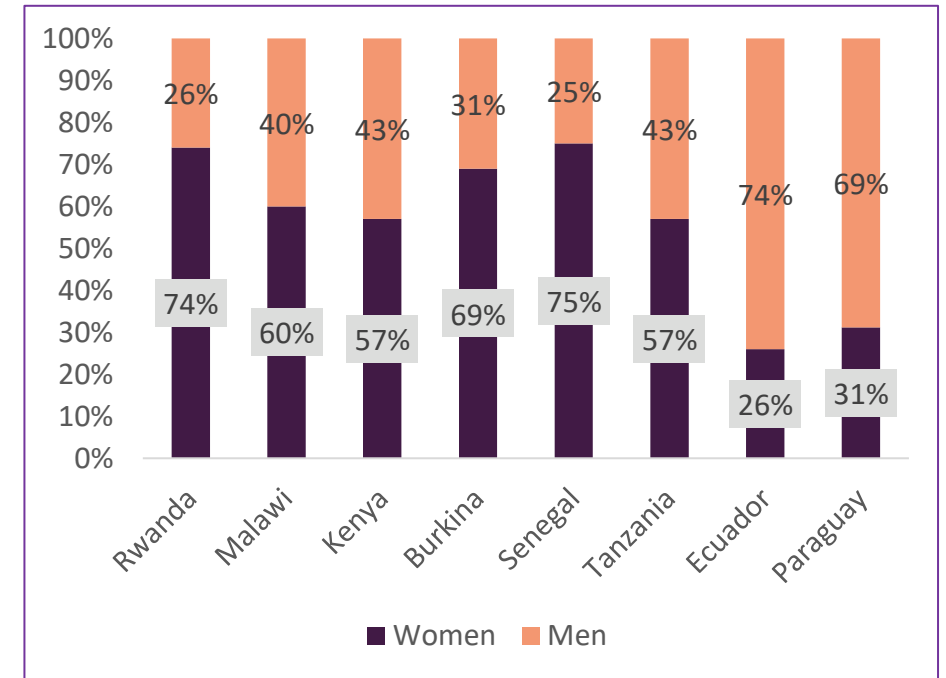
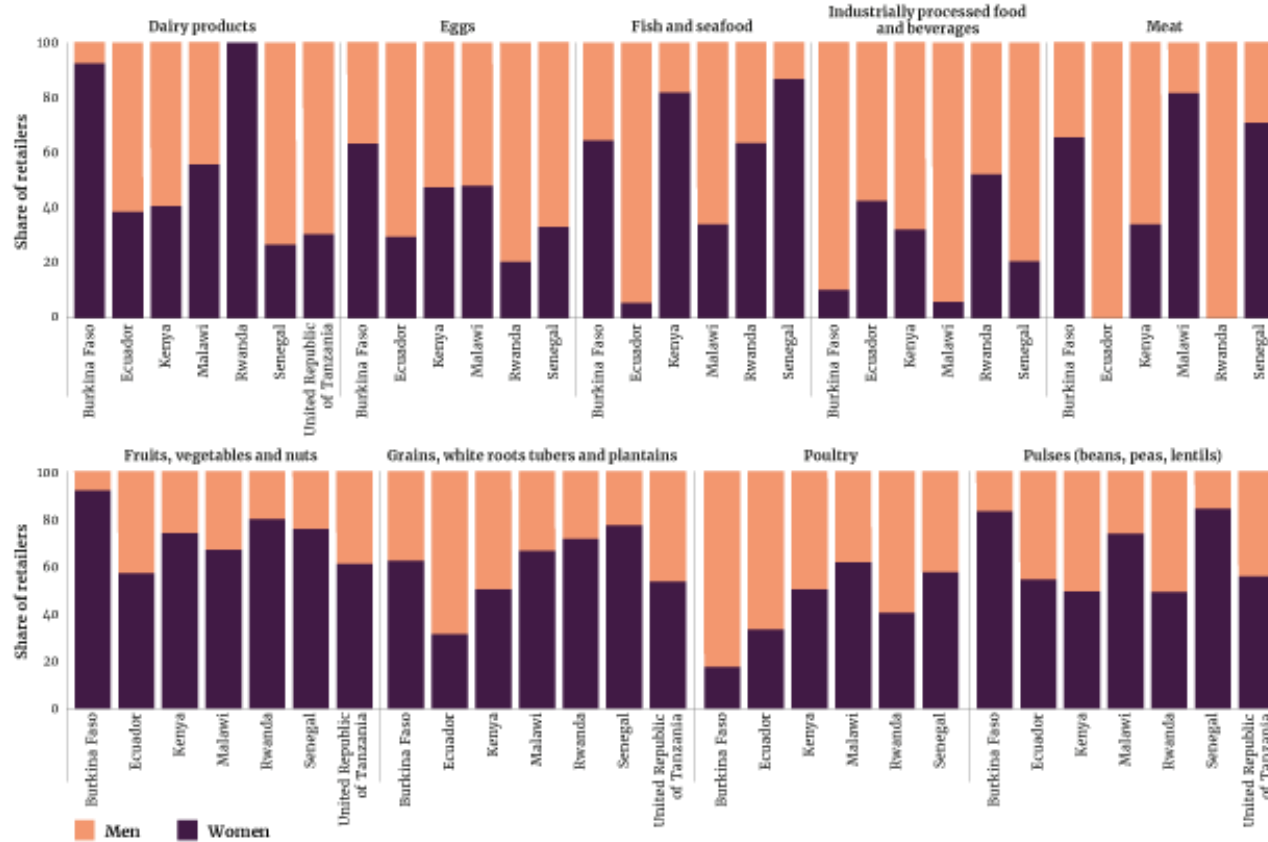


Categories	ISIC Divisions	ISIC Rev.4 2-digit codes	Share of women, detailed	Share of women
Food processing and service	Manufacture of food products	10	44%	51%
	Manufacture of beverages	11	29%	
	Food and beverage service activities	56	55%	
	Undifferentiated goods- and services-producing activities of private households for own use	98	41%	
Manufacture of non-food agricultural products	Manufacture of tobacco products	12	47%	38%
	Manufacture of textiles	13	51%	
	Manufacture of leather and related products	15	42%	
	Manufacture of wood and of products from wood and cork, except furniture	16	19%	
	Manufacture of paper and paper products	17	28%	
Trade	Wholesale trade, except of motor vehicles and motorcycles	46	35%	50%
	Retail trade, except of motor vehicles and motorcycles	47	53%	
Transportation	Land transport and transport via pipelines	49	8%	15%
	Water transport	50	14%	
	Air transport	51	44%	
	Warehousing and support activities for transportation	52	24%	
	Postal and courier activities	53	32%	

Source: Costa, V. et al (forthcoming). *Women’s employment in agrifood systems*. Background paper for The Status of Women in Agrifood Systems report, 2023.



# 3 Women retailers are more likely to trade in less lucrative agrifood products and achieve lower profits



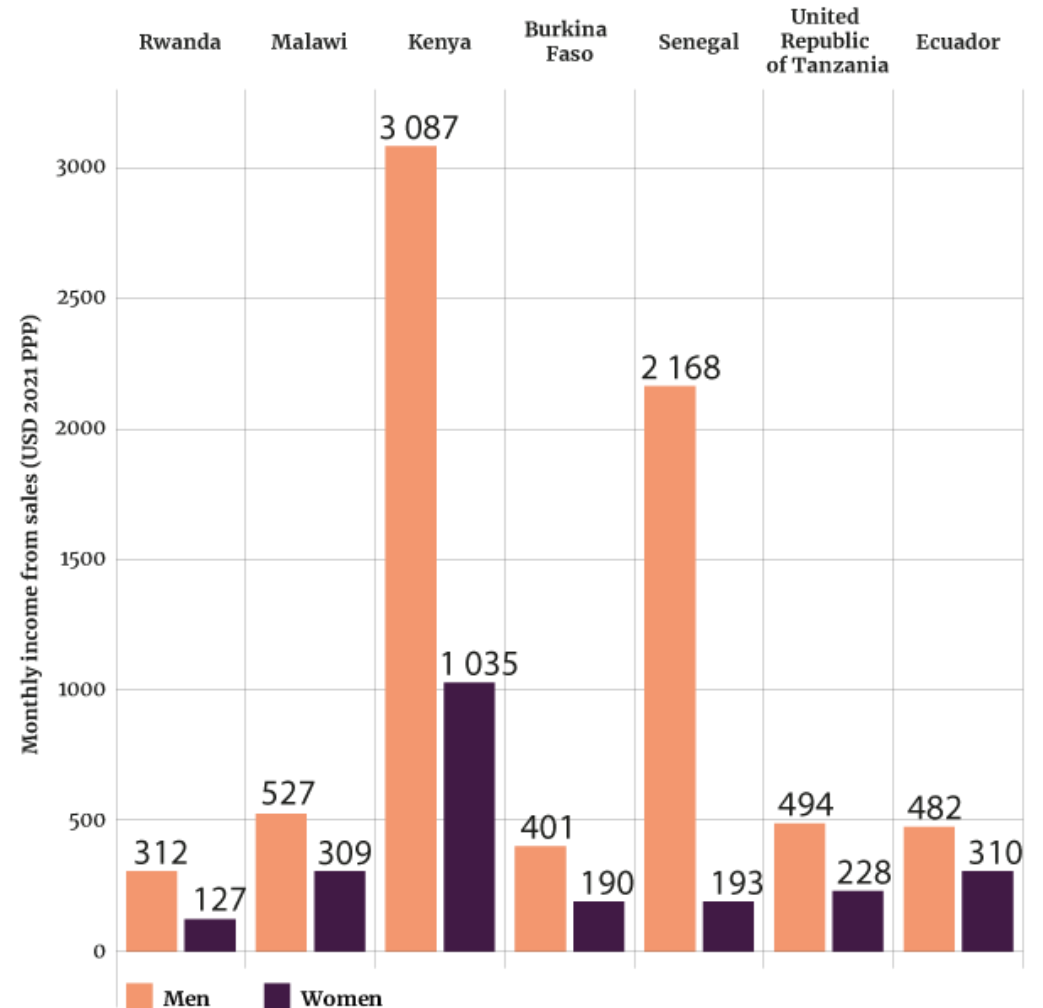
NOTE: Grains, white roots, tubers, plantains, pulses and certain fruits, vegetables and nuts are often less lucrative than eggs, meat and industrial processed foods and beverages.



## 4 The profit of female retailers is on average 2 to 3 times lower

- Compared to male retailers, women retailers report significantly lower monthly profits.
- In five out of the seven countries, men's profits are at least more than two times higher than women's profits.
- In general, across all countries, women retailers sell lower volumes of food products than men retailers
- Women are commonly more involved in informal than formal markets

**Source:** Own calculations based on FAO. 2022. Mapping of territorial markets – Methodology and guidelines for participatory data collection. Second edition. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb9484en>  
Country-level reports are available at: <https://www.fao.org/nutrition/markets/territorial-marketsinitiative/en/>





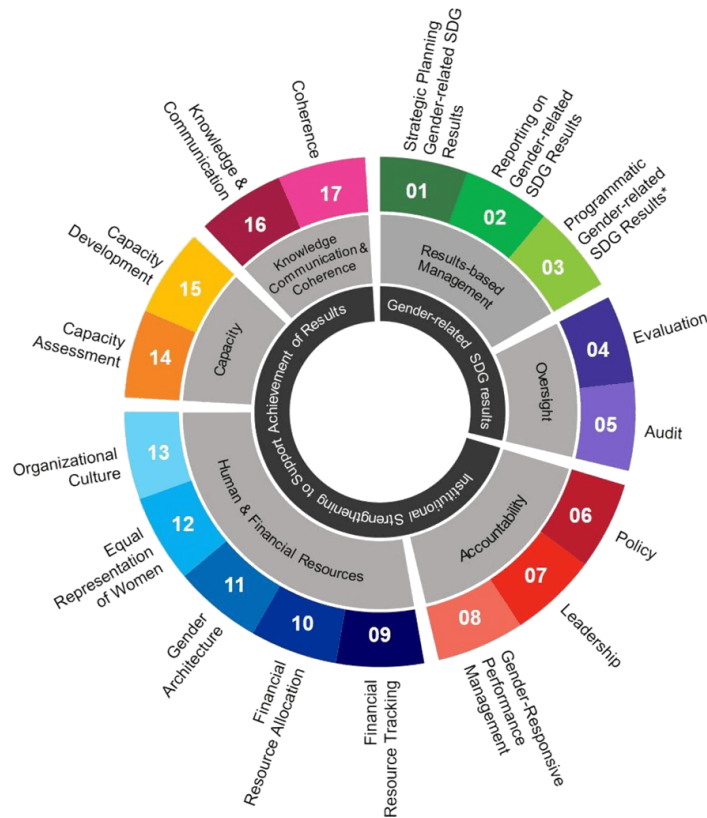
## Calls to action

- 1 Invest in high-quality research and data disaggregated by sex, age and other dimensions of social and economic differentiation
- 2 Intervene at scale using proven approaches which close asset and resource gaps: doing so could increase global GDP by **1%** and provide food security for **45** million people
- 3 Interventions must be intentional and focus on empowerment – doing so could increase the incomes of an additional **58** million people and the resilience of an additional **235** million people





# Guiding Framework for FAO's Gender Work



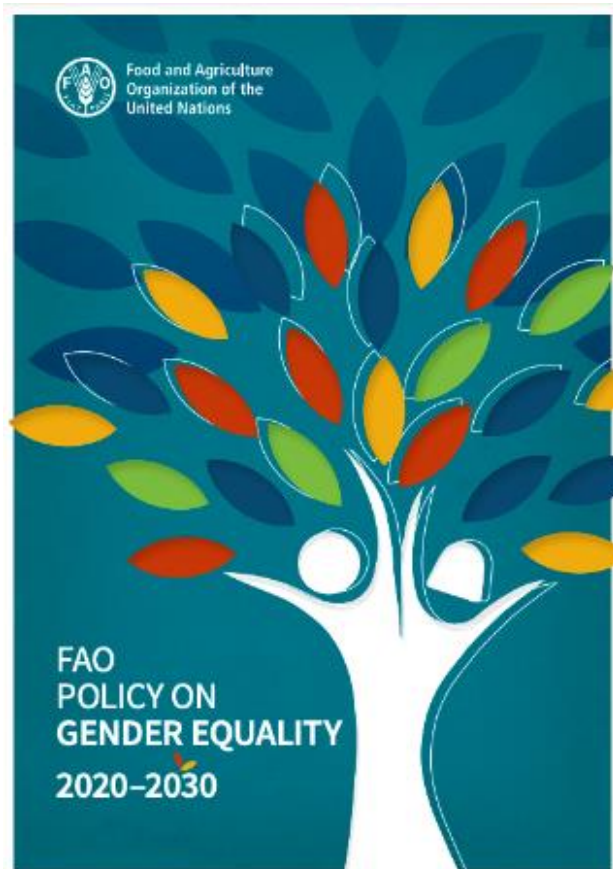
## UN SWAP 2.0

- 17 performance indicators
- In 2022, FAO met or exceeded 88% of all
- UN SWAP Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)





# Guiding Framework for FAO's Gender Work



## FAO Gender Policy

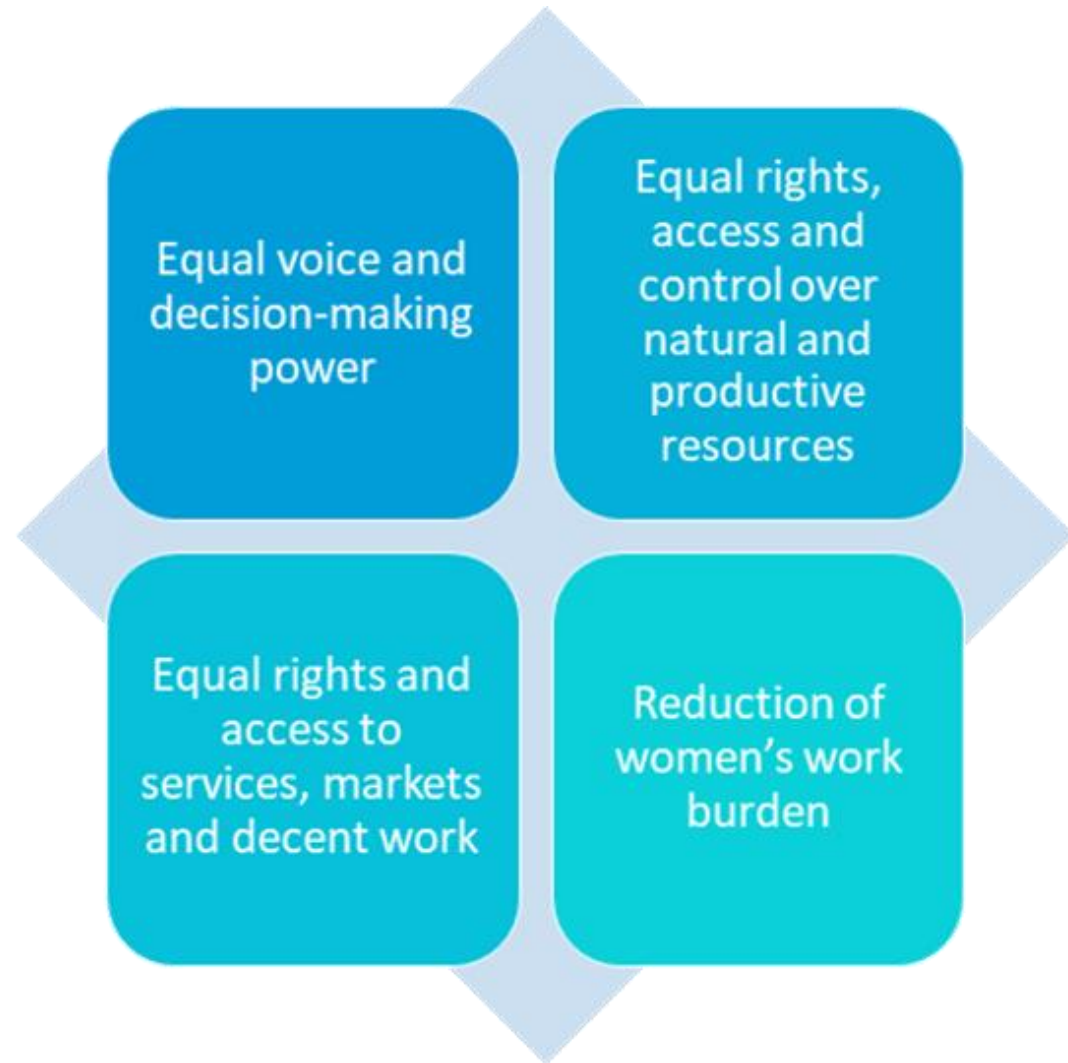
- 17 minimum standards
- Gender Focal Points Network → Accountability Framework and implementation modalities

## Strategic Framework 2022-2031

- Dedicated Programme Priority Area (PPA) on gender (Better Life 1)
- Gender is cross-cutting in the 19 PPAs



# FAO Gender Policy 2020-30





## Headquarters

### ESP Gender Team

- **Overall coordination**
- **Technical function**  
Policy advice  
Capacity development  
Knowledge generation
- **Gender mainstreaming function**  
Strategic planning  
Support to institutional mechanisms  
Staff learning  
Monitoring and reporting

### HQ GFPs

- Gender mainstreaming
- Delivery of technical work

## Decentralized Offices

### 5 Regional Gender Officers

- **Regional level coordination of GFPs**
- **Technical function**  
Policy advice  
Capacity development  
Programme implementation
- **Gender mainstreaming function**  
Produce gender-related evidence –  
CGAs  
Staff learning  
Monitoring and reporting

### Sub-regional/Country GFPs

- Gender mainstreaming
- Delivery of technical work

## Dedicated groups



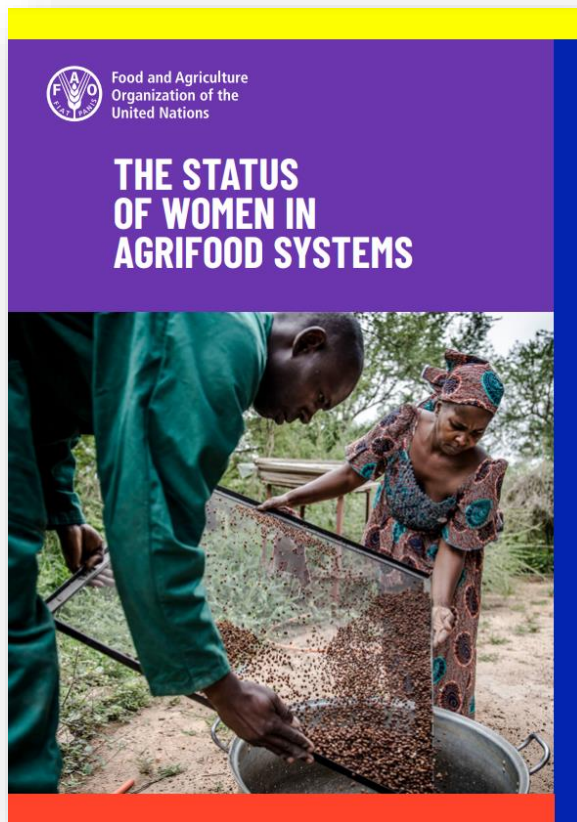
Technical  
Network  
on Gender

Network  
of GFPs

*More than 250 GFPs and alternates across the organization*



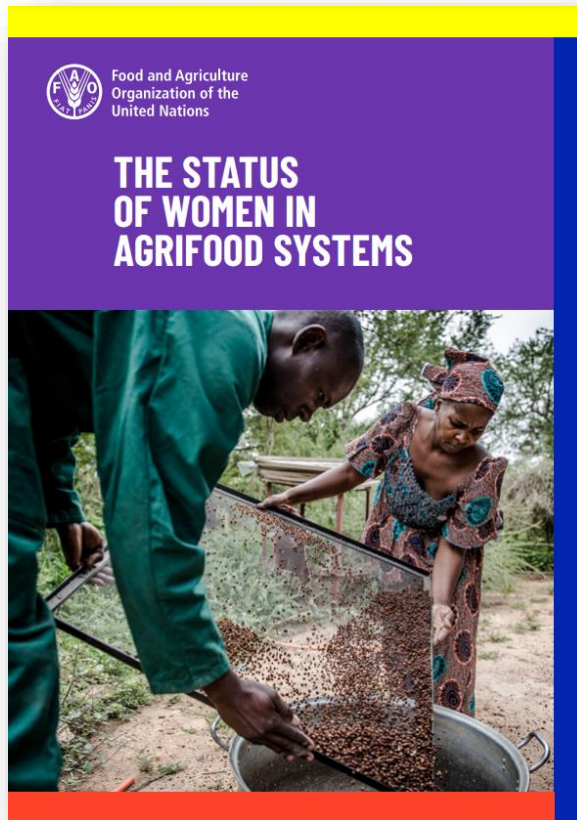
## Gender and Trade at FAO: gender stats and analytical work



- [The Status of Women in Agrifood Systems \(2023\)](#)
  - Provides a comprehensive, global view of the status of women in agrifood systems, beyond agriculture
- [Trade policy technical notes: Agrifood trade and gender equality: exploring key linkages \(2023\)](#)
  - Presents key features of the interplay between trade and gender equality in agrifood systems, with a focus on the dimensions of employment, market participation and entrepreneurship



## Gender and Trade at FAO: gender stats and analytical work



### Seizing the opportunities of the African Continental Free Trade Area for the economic empowerment of women in agriculture (2021)

- Analyzes how **the** operationalization of the AfCFTA agreement can ensure that future trade practices and regulations promote gender equality and support women to seize the new opportunities created by the AfCFTA in agriculture

### Exploring policy pathways for empowering women in agri-food trade in Kenya (upcoming)

- Explores how women traders and women-led MSMEs could benefit from gender provisions in trade agreements and national agricultural and trade policies



## Making agricultural investments work for women and men

A TECHNICAL GUIDE TO FOSTER GENDER EQUITABLE SUPPLY CHAINS



## CFS Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems (RAI)

- Systematization of promising approaches and good practices on gender and agricultural investments (land, employment, access to markets and business models)
- E-learning modules: [Making agricultural investment and supply chains work for women and men](#) (2023)

## Engagement with the Network of Parliamentarians on Gender Equality and Investments in Agriculture

- Aiming for gender responsive legislation, policies and investment plans
- Model Law on Gender and Agrifood Systems

## World Banana Forum and [its Gender Equity Task Force](#)

- Multistakeholder platform (producers, retailers, NGOs, private sector, etc.) to ensure that banana production and trade are sustainable from the environmental, social and economic perspectives



# Gender and Trade Work at FAO: AfCFTA

## FAO efforts for a more inclusive AfCFTA and trade environment

- Joint FAO-AU Framework for boosting intra-African trade in agricultural commodities and services (2021)
- FAO-AfCFTA Secretariat Regional Technical Cooperation Project: Support to inclusive agricultural value chain and trade development for effective AfCFTA implementation (2022 – 2024)
- FAO-ITC Project: Empowering women and boosting livelihoods through agricultural trade (EWAT): Leveraging the AfCFTA Programme (2021 – 2023)
- FAO Technical Assistance on Expansion Programme for Women in Agro-Processing and Agribusiness (EPWAA) in South Africa







Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

# FAO-ITC EWAT Programme

Phase I: Dec 2021 – Dec 2022

Phase II: Jan 2023 – Dec 2023



**Objective:** Enhanced competitiveness of women producers, processors, and traders through an enabling and inclusive business and policy environment within the AfCFTA, and through women's strengthened knowledge, skills and linkages with financial institutions.

**6 countries:** Ghana, Nigeria, Malawi, South Africa  
+ **Senegal and Tanzania (Phase II)**

**4 areas of work**

- Capacity building
- Policy dialogues
- Value chains

+ **Access to finance (Phase II)**

**Target participants**

- Agripreneurs and traders
- Women-led MSMEs in the agrifood sector
- Women business associations

**Stakeholders**

- Regional Economic Communities, AfCFTA Secretariat, African Union Commission, Capital providers, Trade negotiators



# Fostering entrepreneurship of women traders in AFS through value chains

## Capacity development

Strengthening the productive and entrepreneurial capacities of women operating along selected value chains through tailor-made training and improved service provision.

## Institutional support

Reinforcing institutional capacities to develop efficient, gender-sensitive and climate-resilient agri-food value chains at local, regional and national level.

## Tools and approaches

Documenting and sharing promising practices and successful approaches across regions to increase knowledge on gender and food systems.

### Products:

- [\*Developing Gender-Sensitive Value Chains: A guiding framework\* \(2018\)](#)
- [\*Developing gender-sensitive value chains Guidelines for practitioners\* \(2018\)](#)
- *E-learning course: [\*Developing gender-sensitive value chains\*](#) (2020)*

*\*Currently value chain development in at least 12 countries (fisheries, tourism, poultry, honey, sea moss, etc)*



Thank  
you!

