



Strategy and plan of action to mainstream gender in ILRI

ILRI works to enhance the role livestock play in pathways out of poverty. ILRI research products help people in developing countries enhance their livestock-dependant livelihoods, health and environments. Gender equality is a key way to achieve impact through better livestock systems, health, productivity and marketing.

In the past, ILRI initiatives on gender and livestock have not generated as much impact as we hoped. To address this, ILRI management recently decided on a more systematic 'mainstreamed' approach to achieve gender equality across the institution and in its research. Such mainstreaming means that ILRI integrates a gender perspective and gender analysis into all stages of the design, implementation and evaluation of its projects, policies and programs.

In March 2012, ILRI published a strategy and action plan on gender mainstreaming. This document summarizes the key elements of that strategy; the full document can be downloaded from <http://mahider.ilri.org/handle/10568/16688>.

Objectives of the gender strategy and plan of action

This strategy and action plan defines the role that ILRI will play in stimulating and facilitating efforts, both in-house and with partners, to overcome constraints and take advantage of opportunities to promote gender equality. It reflects the increasing awareness that gender equality is an important prerequisite for agricultural growth and sustainable development. It has three main objectives:

- To promote equality of opportunity and outcomes between women and men in the livestock sub-sector

at local, national, regional, and global levels;

- To increase the quality, efficiency and impact of ILRI's work in livestock development; and
- To ensure that human equality and rights are respected across gender, that there is good gender representation in ILRI staffing, decision-making positions and there is active and balanced participation by both women and men in ILRI's work.

Why mainstream gender?

The business case

Gender equality is a core development objective in its own right. It is also smart economics. Greater gender equality can enhance productivity, improve development outcomes for the next generation and make institutions more representative. Nothing illustrates this better than the recent FAO report on the state of food and agriculture which argues that closing the gender gap in agriculture would generate gains to agriculture and society as a whole (www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2050e/i2050e00.htm).

An opportunity not to be missed

Livestock play a critical role in farming systems, nutrition, incomes, and as a ladder for asset accumulation. Both men and women are involved in the livestock sector. They are involved in different ways, and face different constraints. An estimated two-thirds of poor livestock keepers are women. They have important roles in managing dairy cattle, poultry and other small ruminants often being involved in feeding,

Objectives of the ILRI gender strategy

1. To promote equality of opportunity and outcomes between women and men in the livestock sub-sector at local, national, regional, and global levels.
2. To increase the quality, efficiency and impacts of ILRI's work in livestock development
3. To ensure that human equality, equity and rights are respected across gender, that there is good gender representation in ILRI staffing, decision-making positions and there is active and balanced participation by both women and men in ILRI's work



Systematically integrating gender in projects, programs and activities undertaken by ILRI and partners

Generating and disseminating new evidence on gender and livestock to inform policy and practice

Mainstreaming gender into ILRI's work and organizational culture

Engaging partners in gender and livestock research and development

watering and milking animals reared close to home such as in intensive and mixed systems and in processing and marketing of livestock products.

Key areas to mainstream gender in ILRI

Gender-responsive change in ILRI:

- Systematically integrates gender in projects, programs and activities;
- Generates and disseminates evidence to inform policy and practice;
- Engages partners in gender and livestock research and development;
- Mainstreams gender into ILRI's work and organizational culture.

Integrate gender in programs

Integration should use the project cycle to ensure that gender is integrated in all key aspects of the project. Gender aspects should be an integral part of the problem analysis, project goals and objectives. It should be systematically and practically included in the operational plan by translating it into concrete activities and relevant indicators. Apart from activity oriented indicators, which show that a certain activity has taken place, performance indicators should be well defined in line with the objectives and expected results or outputs. Proper monitoring to changes in gender relations within and among households should be worked out in all planning stages.

Key areas to integrate gender in projects are:

Problem and context analysis

The problem statement, introduction and justification should present convincing and clear evidence-based arguments to address gender. Projects should identify men's and women's needs, constraints, opportunities, preferences for technologies, with regard to the issue of focus, from literature review, expert opinions, pre-project consultations and other sources of data.

Where demographic data are used in the problem statement to characterize the target population, these should be disaggregated by age and sex (not only sex of head of household but men and women farmers).

Identifying priorities, setting goals and objectives

A gender-blind priority-setting process is not likely to yield a gender-balanced project portfolio. Addressing gender issues in priority setting requires examining which crops and animals, which markets are selected for research and what women's roles and potential benefits from these are. If priority setting processes are done with stakeholders, both men and women should be involved in the process. Projects should define gender responsive goals and objectives.

Gender blind objectives lead to gender blind activities and implementation approaches. Making objectives or research questions gender responsive goes beyond adding such statements as 'including women, or especially women' at the end of the objective.

Research and development approaches

The R&D research plan should articulate how empirical gender analysis will be undertaken and used in project design, implementation and M&E.

This should be at several levels:

- Involving men and women as actors—farmers, traders, and so on;
- Integrating gender strategies based on gender analysis. This may involve strategies targeted at men and women, or targeted at women only. Targeting of women is sometimes necessary to address existing gender imbalances; and
- Involving men and women in project implementation.

The implementation process should focus on equality in access to technology, inputs, services, and markets as well

as on opportunities for participation, leadership, and representation.

Work planing

The work plan should describe all the activities that will be carried out to deliver the gender objectives and strategy. It is not enough to have gender responsive goals and objectives if these are not followed by activities to achieve them. Project teams should ask themselves whether the gender specific activities are sufficient to deliver on the goals and objectives. If the objective is to increase women's access and adoption of a technology, what are the gender specific activities that will make this happen, if it is to increase men's and women's income, what are the specific activities that will lead to women's management of income?

Budgeting

The specific costs allocated to gender activities should be clearly specified and allocated. This ensures that gender is not an add-on activity. In a research for development project at least 5% of the budget should be dedicated to gender activities.

Monitoring and evaluation

Present a plan for a gender-responsive M&E system and articulate clear plans how the results will be systematically used to: (1) set research priorities; (2) design and develop programs and technologies; (3) disseminate and adopt innovations; and (4) assess impact. All data for baseline, monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment should be disaggregated by gender where appropriate. This should go beyond male and female headed households to reflect disaggregation within households. Reports should reflect gender specific results.

Building capacities to integrate gender

Staff and senior managers need be gender aware and to develop capacities to promote gender equality. Trainings should include general gender awareness training as well as focus on specific issues such as gender and monitoring and evaluation, gender and value chains etc. All staff developing and implementing projects need skills to effectively integrate and use gender transformative approaches.

Generate and disseminate evidence on gender and livestock

It is vital that ILRI generate evidence on gender and livestock and disseminate this information to inform policy and practice. Areas of focus include:

- Gender and value chains
- Gender and assets
- Gender, livestock and nutrition and health
- Gender and climate change

Engage partners

Collaboration with others to achieve gender equality is key. Often, civil society groups, non-governmental organizations and government departments are in a better position to identify gender-responsive actions that are culturally appropriate. Such partners can also use evidence on gender and livestock from ILRI research programs to inform policy and development action at country or regional level. In countries with active women's advocacy groups or women's and gender studies units in research or educational institutions, partnering with these groups in analytical work or project design will enhance the quality of the work.

Mainstream gender into ILRI

The organization needs to properly address gender equality in its procedures, staffing, institutional capacities, job responsibilities, staff development and related equal opportunity policies.

The Board of ILRI, the Director General and Senior Management and other top representatives must demonstrate strong leadership on the topic of gender equality in the research programs and in ILRI's organizational culture and policies.

Political commitment to gender equality should translate into adequate resources to support the strategy and the plan of action.

Gender focal points should be appointed from across the organization—they should be both women and men. The gender focal points should devote time to the promotion of gender equality, provide support to the staff of their division or office, and monitor the execution of the Gender Plan of Action, and participate in the gender task force meetings, help review policies for gender integration, and monitor progress and challenges encountered.



Gender mainstreaming is the responsibility of each and every ILRI staff member and will require widespread commitment. This should be included in staff performance contracts and evaluation procedures. Successful accountability should be accompanied by rewards and incentives. The ILRI management should develop a system of incentives for compliance and sanctions for non-compliance with the gender strategy and the plan of action.

ILRI job advertisements should include ILRI's commitment to gender and diversity while recruitment committees should be gender balanced. Policies should be reviewed to ensure equality. ILRI should adopt work-life balance policies to ensure retention of both male and female staff. ILRI should target a 50% men and women representation in the board, senior management, professional staff and all other staff categories.

Key concepts

Gender refers to the socially constructed roles and status of women and men, girls and boys. It is a set of culturally specific characteristics defining the social behaviour of women and men, and the relationship between them. Gender roles, status and relations vary according to place (countries, regions, and villages), groups (class, ethnic, religious, and caste), generations and stages of the lifecycle of individuals. Gender is not about women; it is about the relationship between women and men.

Gender equality allows all human beings, both men and women, to freely develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles, or prejudices. Gender equality means that the different behaviours, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally. It does not mean that women and men have to become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female.

Gender equity means fairness of 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.

Gender analysis is a set of tools to help strengthen development planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and to make programmes and projects more efficient and relevant. Gender analysis should go beyond cataloguing differences to identifying inequalities and assessing relationships between women and men. Gender analysis helps us to frame questions about women and men's roles and relations in order to avoid making assumptions about who does what, when and why. The aim of such analysis is to formulate development interventions that are better targeted to meet both women's and men's needs and constraints.

Empowerment implies people—both women and men—taking control over their lives by setting their own agendas, gaining skills (or having their own skills and knowledge recognized), increasing their self-confidence, solving problems, and developing self-reliance. It is both a process and an outcome. Empowerment implies an expansion in women's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them.

Gender mainstreaming is a strategy to make women's, as well as men's, concerns and experiences an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.

Gender-neutral approaches do not account for the differences between women and men and do not consider how women and men may be marginalized and harmed or may not benefit from research, programs and policy. Gender aware (or responsive) approaches are designed to meet both women's and men's needs. These approaches ensure that both women and men will benefit, and neither will be harmed by research, programs and policy, such as, for example, by exacerbating their work burdens.

Gender transformative approaches actively strive to examine, question, and change rigid gender norms and the imbalance of power as a means of achieving development goals as well as meeting gender equality objectives. These research, programmatic and policy approaches challenge the distribution of resources and allocation of duties between men and women.

The development of this strategy was led by Jemimah Njuki and benefited from extensive inputs by the ILRI gender task force.

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