



RESEARCH PROGRAM ON
**Climate Change,
Agriculture and
Food Security**



Checklist

Gender Considerations for Climate Services and Safety Nets

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“Climate services” refers to the “production, translation, transfer, and use of climate knowledge and information in climate-informed decision making and climate-smart policy and planning.”²⁰ Climate services can be a critical means of resiliency-building for smallholder farmers. However, due to gender-related factors, women and men can face differing challenges and opportunities to access climate-related information as well as using it to improve management and benefitting from those improved management decisions. To ensure equal distribution of benefits and promote gender equality, it is critical that food security and climate-resiliency initiatives take into account gender considerations from the earliest planning stages.

CAAFS has developed a checklist to guide the consideration of gender issues in climate services projects. The left-hand column details key issues to consider during project design, while the right-hand column provides good practices to follow to address those issues. Practitioners may vary in their capacity to implement the recommendations, depending on whether they are leading a research project or providing technical support to partners. However, the list can also provide key talking points to share and discuss with partners for their consideration. The references given at the end should also be used for further reading and examples of the points addressed.

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	Have you considered. . . ?	Good practices to follow
<p>Barriers to access groups and extension</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Sociocultural norms concerning meeting participation and cross-gender interactions in public can limit women's access to trainings.^{1, 2, 3} ❑ Specific membership requirements (i.e. membership fees, land ownership, head of household, etc.) can prevent women from participating in farmers' groups and cooperatives.^{1, 4} ❑ Agricultural extension officers may be challenged to reach women, especially in socio-cultural contexts where they are not allowed to approach women without their husband's consent.⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Partner with women's groups, which are useful for disseminating information directly to women and enhancing their learning capacity.⁶ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ They can serve as intermediaries between formal institutions (extension services, NGOs) and local women.⁶ ◆ They can provide a familiar, accessible option for assistance, in comparison to male-dominated groups.^{1, 6} ❑ Schedule training/information sessions to accommodate women's limited mobility and work schedules.^{4, 5} <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To maximize the likelihood of women's attendance, invitations should be extended to them directly and/or through other women.⁵ ◆ It can be necessary to hold sessions within the village or near beneficiaries' homes.⁴ ◆ Women should also be given enough advanced notice so that they can coordinate with their daily work and household responsibilities.⁵
<p>Differing access to communication channels</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Women's childcare and household responsibilities can restrict their access to information sources located within the village.^{1, 4, 6, 19} ❑ Women are more likely to lack financial resources needed to purchase communication assets.^{4, 9} ❑ Due to differences in level of education and literacy, men can be more able than women to interpret seasonal forecasting, which often contains dense technical information.^{1, 10} ❑ Women's household care work can limit their time available to listen to agricultural education programs on the radio.¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Develop information delivery channels suited to men's and women's preferences by taking advantage of different types of locally relevant sources and formats available (i.e. SMS messaging, radio, meteorological blackboards, influential people).⁷ ❑ It can be helpful to identify key contacts in the community for example, women who own their own cell phones can share information received with female family members and friends.¹¹ ❑ Make sure that use of information and communications technologies (ICTs) or media devices fits with women's existing livelihood activities and/or saves time.¹²

	Have you considered. . . ?	Good practices to follow
<p>Differences in relevance of climate information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Sociocultural norms concerning labor roles can influence the resources and decisions under women’s and men’s control. For example, research in Kaffrine, Senegal, shows that women farmers can tend to plant late because they labor on men’s plots before their own and must often wait to use men’s farming equipment.⁷ ❑ This affects the types of weather and climate information that are useful to women and men.^{13, 14, 15} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Target information and services to each gender’s specific needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ If women’s crop cultivation occurs later in the season than men’s, information about seasonal onset is rendered less useful. In these situations, women farmers can instead prefer information concerning cessation and dry spells, while information on seasonal onset and total distribution can be of greater interest to men.^{7, 13} ◆ A study in Mali found that women had greater decision-making control over their own small gardens, which were hand-irrigated and predominantly contained subsistence crops.¹⁴ ❑ Equally, ensure that timing and crop relevance of insurance products are suited to women’s and men’s needs.
<p>Differences in capacities to act on climate information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ <i>Due to resource control:</i> Studies in Tanzania and Senegal have found that men more than women can tend to own necessary farming equipment, livestock and land.^{7, 8} ❑ <i>Due to decision-making roles:</i> Entrenched sociocultural norms about agricultural and household roles and responsibilities can prevent women from participating in climate-sensitive decision-making.^{5, 9} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Acknowledge prevalent sociocultural norms that influence gender roles and responsibilities.^{10, 16} <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Including how issues related to gender dynamics influence men’s and women’s ability to participate in and benefit from a project. ❑ Partner with local organizations who are already engaged in social change processes.¹⁷ ❑ Collaborate with women’s groups, which can serve as vehicles to enhance women’s self-confidence and agency. Such initiatives can also contribute to local-level shifts in men’s (and women’s) perceptions of women’s abilities and proper roles in the public sphere.^{6, 18}

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