



PHOTO DAVID BRAZIER

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## 3 EQUITY AND GENDER Balancing the scales of decision-making

### IMPORTANCE

Equity in development strives for the fair and impartial treatment of all people, based on the belief that food, water and energy are the fundamental elements that determine a person's quality of life. Inequality exacerbates malnutrition and poverty. Access to land and water are increasingly seen as critical factors in poverty reduction, food security and sustainable management of natural resources.

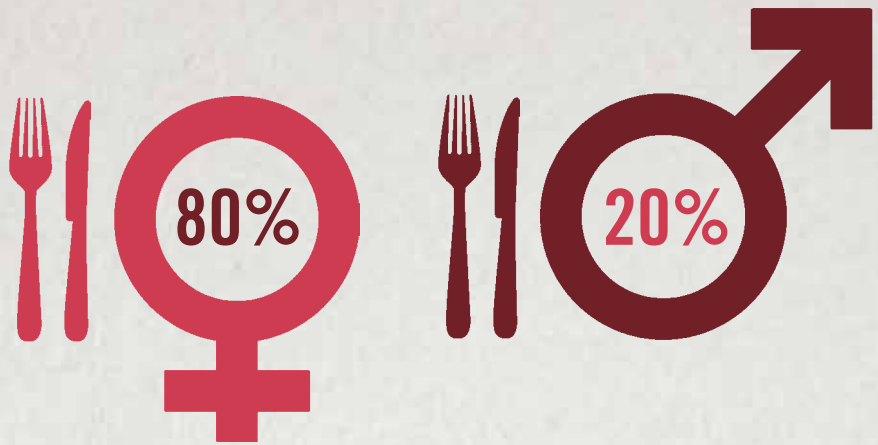
### PROBLEM

Inequity is rising across the world. Gender inequity plays a special role within agriculture, as women are often pivotal to ensure household food security. Yet they are often not given access to resources or have little decision-making power. Improving equity means allowing those affected by development to have a say in how resources are used. It also means helping decision makers to guarantee policies promote fair access to agriculture and natural resources.

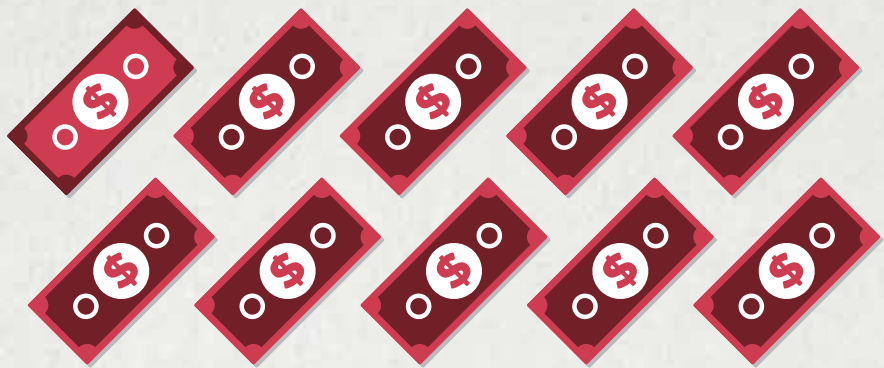
“Equity is a central theme to WLE's work. It is based on the belief that in order to improve the management of natural resources both women and men have to be involved in the decision-making processes.”

LINDIWE SIBANDA, WLE STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBER AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY ANALYSIS NETWORK

In sub-Saharan Africa, **women produce up to 80%** of food for households and markets



A study of farm credit schemes in Africa found that **women's share of loans was just 10%**



## WHAT WLE IS DOING

WLE's gender research identifies where, when and how women can gain equitable access to water, land and other natural resources. WLE's vision of sustainable agriculture rests on the premise that enhancing the decision-making power of women over natural resources can improve agriculture production, enable household food security and ensure long-term sustainability. WLE has created a Gender, Poverty and Institutions theme to drive this agenda throughout its research program.

### Expected Outcomes

#### By 2017

Decision makers in at least two Sub-Saharan African countries are using WLE research to enhance gender equity within agriculture and natural resource policy making, and decision

makers in at least four countries are using WLE investment recommendations to increase women's access to water and ecosystems.

#### By 2025

- Decision makers and investors in WLE's four focal regions (Ganges, Greater Mekong, Nile-East Africa and Volta-Niger) are using WLE research to target women and resource-poor farmers.
- Investments in regenerating agro-ecosystems, influenced by WLE research, are benefiting 2 million farmers (40% are women).
- Innovative mechanisms to more equitably share benefits from natural resource management are in place in at least 2 focal regions.

Sources WLE, FAO

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