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Are Food Policies Empowering Women?

Framework, Measurement, and Empirical Evidence from India and Nigeria

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INTERNATIONAL FOOD POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

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Abstract

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) emphasize equal participation and empowerment of women in all levels of decisionmaking, yet frameworks and tools to measure and strengthen women's empowerment in policy spaces remain limited. Focusing on agrifood systems, this paper introduces a framework, metrics, and scoring method to track women's empowerment in policy processes (WEAGov) and presents findings from pilot applications in India and Nigeria. The pilots draw on novel surveys with more than 200 agrifood organizations and policy experts across the public sector, private sector, civil society, and research communities in both countries. Across both countries, we find that agrifood policy documents incorporate gender priorities on paper but fall short in budgeting, implementation, and evaluation. Prevailing social attitudes and limited awareness of policies, regulations, and legal rights remain major constraints on women's ability to engage meaningfully in policy processes. Women participate as staff and mid-level managers in agrifood organizations, but their representation at higher decision-making levels are limited. Expert assessments also highlight disconnects between formal roles and the actual influence women can exert over policy decisions. Gender-responsive budgeting processes are absent in Nigeria and weakly-institutionalized in India, where compliance has become procedural rather than transformative. These patterns reveal persistent bottlenecks in translating gender commitments into practice. By systematically tracking barriers and identifying entry points for reform, the WEAGov framework offers governments, researchers, and civil society organizations a practical tool to diagnose gaps in women's empowerment in agrifood policy processes and to strengthen their inclusiveness and accountability.

Keywords: Women's empowerment, women's leadership, agrifood system, policy, governance, measurement

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1. Introduction

Gender equality is increasingly recognized as central to transforming agrifood systems and achieving multiple Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs). Many countries now embed gender commitments within national agricultural strategies or adopt gender quotas for political and organizational leadership. Yet progress on women's political empowerment remains slow: it is the least improved domain in global gender gap indices (World Economic Forum, 2024), and existing policies often fall short of meaningfully elevating women's voices in decisions that shape agrifood system performance. This matters because agrifood policies govern resource flows, institutional mandates, and the incentives that structure farmers' and firms' behavior and because women's voices within decision-making over agrifood systems have been linked with food security, nutrition, and climate resilience (Sraboni et al., 2014; Malapit et al., 2015; Bryan et al., 2024; Morgan et al., 2024).

Despite extensive policy dialogue and academic research highlighting the need to elevate women's voices in policymaking, there remains limited practical understanding of what women's influence within agrifood policy process looks like in practice, how it can be measured, and where the principal bottlenecks to gender-responsive governance arise. Commonly used metrics like the share of women in parliament are informative but incomplete, particularly for sector-specific policy systems, and there is a lack of tools for measuring and tracking gender equality in national- or state-level governance (ElDidi et al., 2021; Quisumbing et al., 2023, 2025; Ragasa et al., 2022). These indicators rarely capture informal institutions, organizational norms, power dynamics within bureaucracies, and the translation of gender commitments into budgets and implementation. They also overlook the diverse ways women can exert influence beyond formal political office, including through civil society advocacy, technical leadership within line ministries, or engagement in policy implementation and evaluation. As a result, policymakers and practitioners lack tools to diagnose where gender inclusion breaks down along the policy cycle and to identify actionable entry points for reform.

This paper asks: *How gender-responsive are national agrifood policy processes in practice, and what are the major bottlenecks and entry points for strengthening women's participation, voice, and influence?* To answer this, we develop the Women's Empowerment in Agrifood Governance (WEAGov) framework—an assessment instrument designed to measure women's voice and empowerment across agrifood policy processes. WEAGov is grounded in two complimentary bodies of literature: theories of policy process and public administration (Fox and Reich, 2013; Kaufman and Nelson, 2004; Resnick et al., 2018) and theories of women's voice and empowerment (Alkire et al., 2013; Kabeer, 1999; Hannah et al., 2021; Morgan et al., 2024; Quisumbing et al., 2023; Rowlands, 1997). Two core insights from these literatures underpin the framework. First, policymaking is a multi-stage process—spanning agenda setting, policy design, policy implementation and evaluation—and women's empowerment may vary systematically across these stages. Second, women's empowerment involves the ability to make meaningful choices and collectively influence key agrifood system policy outcomes, not just formal participation.

Drawing on these insights, WEAGov identifies nine core indicators that capture critical dimensions of women's participation, voice, leadership, and influence across the policy cycle. These indicators were distilled through an iterative process that combined theoretical mapping, synthesis of existing measurement tools, and extensive expert consultation. Specifically, the framework was refined through consultations with more than 40 policymakers and researchers working in agrifood systems, who helped prioritize indicators that are both conceptually grounded and feasible to measure across diverse policy contexts. Each indicator is operationalized through a set of underlying measures that assess formal rules, informal practices, organizational norms, and perceived influence within policy process.

We empirically apply WEAGov using novel pilot data collected from more than 400 agrifood policy experts and organizations across government ministries, private sector agrifood actors, civil society organizations, and research institutions at both the federal and state levels in India and Nigeria. These data provide key insights into gender dynamics within national agrifood governance structures. Four main findings emerge. First, gender considerations are frequently articulated in policy documents, but commitments weaken substantially during budgeting, implementation, and evaluation. Second, women

participate actively as staff and mid-level managers, yet their representation and influence in high-level decision-making is limited. Third, experts consistently identified a disconnect between women's formal rights and their actual influence, driven by prevailing social norms, limited awareness of how to engage with the policy process, and weak mechanisms for consultation and accountability. Fourth, gender-responsive budgeting is absent in Nigeria and weakly-institutionalized in India, where compliance often becomes a procedural exercise rather than a strategic mechanism for shaping resource allocation.

The paper contributes to three strands of literature. First, it advances research on women's political empowerment by shifting focus from legislative representation to agency and influence within sector-specific policy systems. Second, it contributes to agrifood systems scholarship by providing a structured method to assessing gender inclusion in policy processes—a dimension that remains under-measured despite its importance for inclusive agrifood system transformation. Third, it adds to governance and policy process literature by emphasizing voice and influence within each step of the policy process, rather than focusing on drivers of policy change or reform adoption.

The following section presents the theoretical underpinnings of our framework and indicators. Thereafter, we empirically apply WEAGov to agrifood systems policy processes in India and Nigeria. The discussion section compares the two countries' WEAGov results, provide policy recommendations, and offers lessons based on WEAGov applications. The conclusion offers broader reflections on WEAGov for comparative analysis of policy processes and for identifying entry points for strengthening inclusive governance.

2. WEAGov Framework and Measurement Tool

Policy processes and formal institutions are central arenas in which decisions about agrifood systems are made and where commitments to gender equality are translated (or not) into budgets, programs, and accountability mechanisms. WEAGov focuses on women's voice and empowerment within agrifood policy processes. A large literature on women's political empowerment documents both its intrinsic value and positive associations with development outcomes (Chattopadhyay and Duflo, 2004; Dahlum et al.,

2022; Imai et al., 2014; Sraboni et al., 2014; Swiss, Fallon, and Burgos, 2012). Global indexes such as the World Economic Forum's (WEF) Global Gender Gap and the Varieties of Democracy Women's Political Participation Index track progress primarily through women's representation in legislatures and executive office (WEF, 2024; Sundström et al., 2017). These efforts reveal three stylized facts: political empowerment is the slowest-moving domain of women's empowerment, progress is uneven across countries, and gains in economic empowerment do not necessarily translate into women's political empowerment.

Empowering women within decision-making systems requires that women not only have a seat at the table but that they have influence within these systems. Evidence shows that increasing women's representation in decision-making bodies does not automatically translate into influence (Franceschet et al., 2012; Hannah et al., 2021). Whether representation leads to influence can depend on factors like the overall share of women in deliberations (Clayton et al., 2025), cultural practices and beliefs about women's role in society (Robinson and Gottlieb, 2021), and prevailing gender norms and attitudes around women's leadership (Kyle and Ragasa, 2025). Existing global indicators therefore provide limited traction on deeper patterns of power, voice, and influence within sectoral governance systems. This paper contributes a holistic framework, set of indicators, and scoring method to measure and track gender consideration, women's inclusion, and women's leadership and influence in national agrifood policy processes.

2.1. Conceptual foundations of WEAGov

WEAGov draws from literature on policy process and public administration, as well as from theories of women's voice and empowerment, to inform a 3×3 conceptual framework (Figure 1) and a corresponding set of nine indicators (Figure 2). Governance can be understood as “the process through which state and non-state actors interact to design and implement policies within a given set of formal and informal rules that shape and are shaped by power” (World Bank 2017, 41). This definition highlights interactions among actors and the state's capacity to implement and deliver policies, emphasizing both procedural and capacity dimensions of governance (Fukuyama, 2013). Although it considers the interactions and influence of both

governmental and nongovernmental actors, it focuses on formal public policy rather than informal norms and rules.

While policy processes in the real world are nonlinear and complex, the policy process literature identifies analytically distinct stages, including agenda setting, policy design and adoption, implementation, and evaluation and reform (Fox and Reich, 2013; Kaufman and Nelson, 2004; Resnick et al., 2018). WEAGov therefore examines three broad stages of the national agrifood policy cycle: (1) policy design, including agenda setting, policy formulation, and policy adoption; (2) policy implementation, including budgeting and staffing; and (3) policy evaluation, including feedback, analysis, and reform.¹ This structure allows us to map where women’s voice, representation, and influence enter the policy cycle and where gaps persist.

Power underlies both governance and women’s empowerment. Many definitions of power implicitly emphasize “power over,” a zero-sum framework wherein the more power one individual or group has, the less power can be exercised by others. In a gender analysis of governance, this type of zero-sum thinking would imply that women gain power at the expense of men in political decision-making. However, literature on women’s empowerment emphasizes that power can also be understood through processes. Power is not about one group dominating another, but rather a group increasing its capabilities to set and achieve its own collective agenda. Rowlands (1997) conceptualizes this type of power into three main types—power within, power to, and power with—laying a foundation for understanding the types of power people can leverage to strengthen their own empowerment. *Power within* is defined as “one’s subjectivity, consciousness, and their sense of self-worth, self-awareness, self-knowledge and aspirations.” *Power to* is defined as “one’s access to and ability to use important resources (material, human, social) to employ greater control over key aspects of one’s life and realize their own aspirations.” Finally, *power with* is defined as “collaborative and collective power with others that occurs through mutual support, collaboration, and

¹ In theories of policy change, these may be broken up into five distinct stages of the policy cycle: agenda setting, design, adoption, implementation, and evaluation and reform. Because we are focused on understanding women’s roles in the policy cycle, we simplify it to three stages to capture the before, during, and after periods of the policy cycle.

collective action to recognize and respect differences.” Power is an essential cross-cutting dimension at each level (individual, household, community, subnational, national) because it can be expressed differently by each actor to influence the ways in which individuals can participate in and benefit from governance systems, and through this participation, realize their own choices and goals.

Women’s empowerment frameworks build on these notions of power as a multidimensional process involving resources, agency, and well-being outcomes (Kabeer, 1999; Alkire et al., 2013). The Reach, Benefit, Empower-Transform (RBET) framework, for example, highlights the distinction between targeting women with development policies and ensuring that women exercise meaningful choice within those policies (Johnson et al., 2018). Recent work further emphasizes transformative approaches that challenge underlying gender norms (both visible and invisible), structures, and power dynamics that create and reinforce inequalities (Mangubhai and Lawless, 2021; Quisumbing et al. 2023). Similarly, the Tinker-Tailor-Transform typology (Lawless et al. 2022) underscores that many gender-focused policy actions operate at the margins (“tinkering”), while fewer intentionally restructure systems or norms. These distinctions are crucial for diagnosing whether agrifood policy processes merely include women or create conditions for substantive influence.

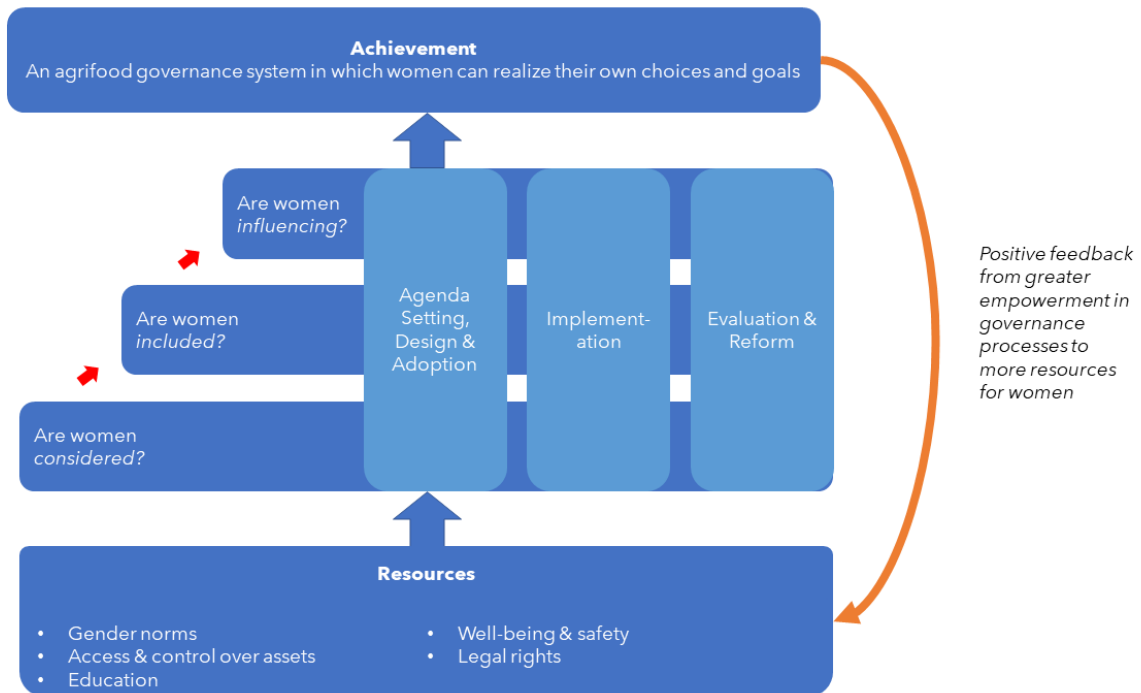
Consistent with these perspectives, the participation quality literature stresses that participation varies in depth and form. Women’s participation can be active and influential, but can also be passive, consultative, activity-specific, or nominal (Hannah et al., 2021). In the latter cases, women may be present without exercising meaningful choice. Similarly, tools such as the Women’s Empowerment in Fisheries Index emphasize that empowerment cannot be inferred from women’s presence alone; measuring the quality of participation is essential (Kleiber et al., 2019).

We draw three key insights from this literature. First, representation alone does not guarantee agenda-setting power or influence. Second, structural inequalities and power asymmetries shape women’s ability to engage in governance regardless of formal invitations to participate. Third, empowerment is multidimensional and nonlinear. Gains in “power within” or “power to” may precede or follow gains in “power with,” and empowerment across stages of the policy cycle does not follow a fixed sequence.

To translate these insights into a practical diagnostic tool, WEAGov asks three questions at each major stage of the agrifood policy cycle: Are women *considered*? Are women *included*? Are women *influencing*? These questions capture whether women’s needs and priorities are recognized in policy content, whether women have opportunities for meaningful participation, and whether women, from within the public sector or through civil society and private sector engagement, exercise leadership and influence within the policy process.

Although WEAGov focuses on policy and governance processes, it situates these processes within the broader enabling environment identified by Njuki et al. (2022). Structural inequalities within society and the agrifood system condition the space for women’s voice in governance. Thus, empowerment in agrifood governance is embedded in and interacts with inequalities at individual, household, organizational, and systemic levels.

Figure 1. Process of women’s empowerment in agrifood governance



Source: Authors.

Figure 1 offers a heuristic tool for mapping women’s empowerment within agrifood system governance. The top of the diagram points to women’s empowerment within agrifood governance as the

ultimate outcome of interest, defined here as *the process of increasing capacity and opportunities for women to participate in and to influence agrifood system decision-making in ways that allow them to realize their own choices and goals*. This definition captures three core dimensions emphasized in the empowerment literature: the ability to make choices, the ability to participate meaningfully in processes, and the ability to exercise agency by shaping goals and decisions. The feedback loop illustrated on the right side of the figure highlights how increased empowerment within governance can, in turn, contribute to more enabling conditions and resources for women's empowerment within the food system.

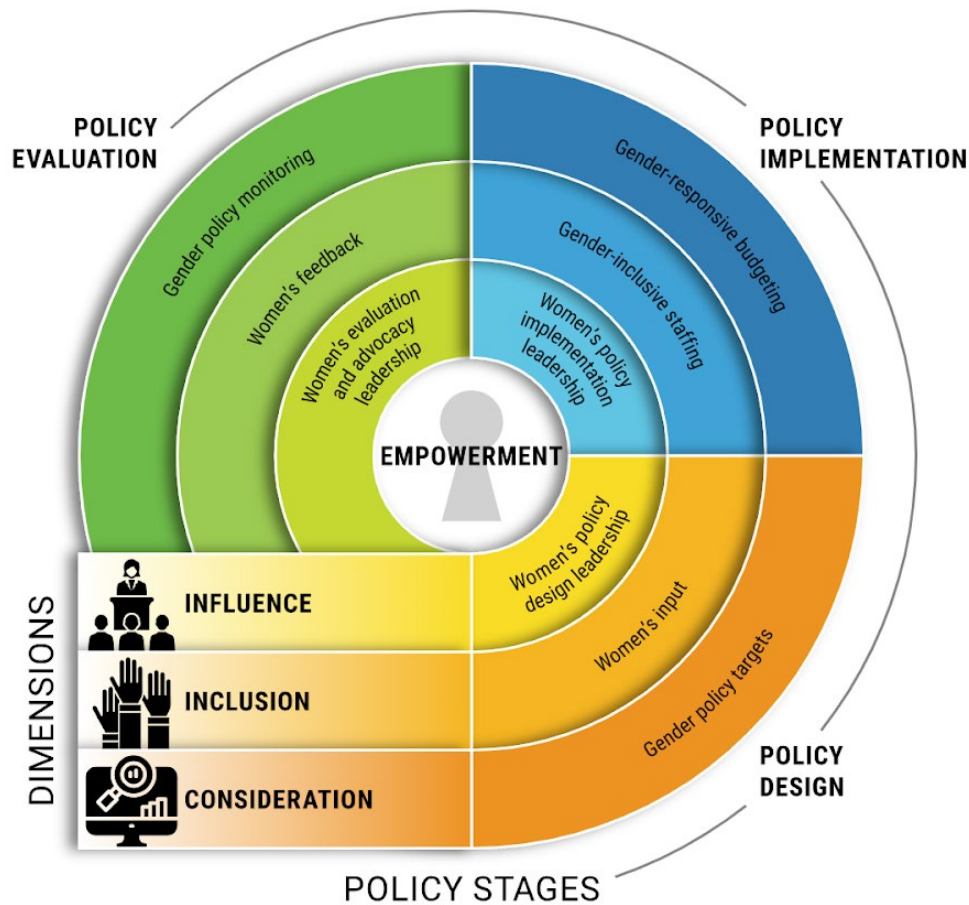
WEAGov does not propose a new theory of women's empowerment, nor does it make assumptions about causal relationships between participation, influence, and outcomes. For example, it does not assume that increasing opportunities for participation will necessarily and on its own lead to better outcomes for women. Such outcomes depend on underlying social and economic conditions, initial endowments, shocks to agrifood systems, and institutional dynamics, among other factors. Rather, WEAGov is designed as an assessment framework to organize systemic inquiry into these complex and interrelated processes.

2.2. WEAGov indicators

Building on the 3×3 conceptual framework, WEAGov operationalizes women's empowerment in agrifood policy processes through nine indicators. These indicators correspond directly to the intersection of three stages of the national policy cycle (design, implementation, and evaluation) and three dimensions of empowerment (women are considered, women are included, women are influencing). Each indicator measures one cell in the 3×3 matrix.

The indicators were finalized through an iterative process that combined synthesis of prior theory and measurement approaches in policy process and women's empowerment literatures and refinement through expert consultation with policymakers, practitioners, and researchers, followed by pilot implementation and debriefs in India and Nigeria. Figure 2 summarizes the nine indicators and their placement within the framework. Below we briefly introduce each indicator and the rationale for its inclusion. Specific measurements for each indicator are summarized under each indicator, with detailed measurement information included in the Appendix.

Figure 2: WEAGov indicators



Source: Kyle and Ragasa (2024).

Stage 1: Policy design: Agenda setting, formulation, and adoption

Indicator 1 (Gender policy targets): This indicator assesses whether gender issues are salient in public and policy discourse (for example, how gendered agrifood problems are framed by influential policy actors) and the extent to which gender targets and gender-responsive commitments appear in key agrifood policy documents. Feminist scholars have long argued that gender-neutral policy language obscures inequalities and limits accountability for addressing them (Bhattacharya and Rani, 1995; McPhail, 2003). Policy documents can also play a foundational role in transforming unequal gender power relations by establishing commitments that can be monitored and contested (Ampaire et al., 2020; Brown, 2011; Jacobs et al., 2021). A growing body of work evaluates the gender content of policy documents (for example, Gumucio and

Tafur Rueda, 2015; Acosta et al., 2019; Hasan et al., 2019; Ampaire et al., 2020; Howland et al., 2021; Jacob et al., 2021; Lau et al., 2021; Hau and Rauber, 2021; Kironde et al., 2021; Amaok et al., 2022; Andersson et al., 2022; Devkota et al., 2022; Drucza et al., 2022; Mohammed et al., 2022; Barooah et al., 2023; Vercillo et al., 2023; Slavchevska et al., 2025). Tools such as the Gender Analysis in Agricultural Policy (GAPo) provide structured approaches to diagnose gender gaps in policy content (Acosta et al., 2025). A common finding from these policy reviews is that gender consideration in policy design is often general and weakly operationalized. For example, very few policy documents explicitly draw on sex-disaggregated data despite its role in evidence-based policymaking (Venance et al., 2025). A review of 255 policy documents by Acosta et al. (2025) showed that while the majority mentioned women's roles in agriculture or acknowledged gender-differentiated challenges and about half proposed some policy measures to address gender inequality and improve women's empowerment in agriculture, many of the gender measures proposed remain general. We measure this indicator three ways:

- Scored gender content in national agriculture, climate, and nutrition policies (each scored separately);
- Scored gender content in prominent presidential or budget speech; and
- Gender attention in prioritized agrifood policy issue (context-specific).

Indicator 2 (Women's inputs to policy design): This indicator captures whether women and women's organizations meaningfully participate in consultation and deliberation processes that shape policy priorities and content. Participatory policymaking has long been emphasized as central to gender-responsive policy, including the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming (Krizsan and Lombardo, 2013), by enabling women and women's organizations to articulate priorities and contest problem definitions and policy tradeoffs (Barooah et al., 2023; Drucza et al., 2020). Bringing new and different ideas enhances the quality of deliberation, thereby increasing chances of adopting policies that benefit broader segments of the population. For example, including women in politics expands the country's "political talent pool" and increases the variance in other relevant characteristics of representatives (Khan et al., 2017). While women's representation in formal political institutions is one important channel, women's inputs into policy design also occur through ministries, civil society, research institutions, private sector actors, and

multilateral partners engaged in agenda setting and formulation. Accordingly, WEAGov assesses women's inclusion in policy design by considering a broad set of policy actors involved in agrifood agenda setting, drafting, consultation, and adoption. We measure this indicator three ways:

- Formal process for collecting citizen's input in agrifood policymaking process;
- Expert perceptions of opportunities for women's input into agrifood policy process; and
- Expert perceptions of women's input into national agriculture, climate, and nutrition policies (each measured separately).

Indicator 3 (Women's leadership and influence in policy design): This indicator assesses whether women occupy leadership roles within institutions shaping agrifood policy formulation, such as ministries, parliamentary committees, civil society organizations, and private sector entities, and whether women are perceived as influential in setting priorities and shaping policy decisions. While women's leadership in high-level policy and parliament can be associated with stronger attention to gender equality in policymaking (Alexander, 2012; Campbell et al., 2010), representation does not always translate into influence. WEAGov therefore combines evidence on women's presence in leadership roles with expert assessments of whether women's leadership is substantively influential in policy design choices. We measure this indicator four ways:

- Share of women in parliament;
- Share of women on parliamentary agricultural committee;
- Share of women in managerial roles in nongovernmental entities involved in agrifood policy design; and
- Expert perceptions of women's perceived influence over national agriculture, climate, and nutrition policy design (each measured separately).

Stage 2: Policy implementation: Budgeting, staffing, and delivery systems

Indicator 4 (Gender-responsive budgeting): An adequate and strategically allocated budget is central to translating policy intent into action. Gender-responsive budgeting evaluates how public budget decisions address gender inequalities, including both allocations targeted to women and gender implications of spending more broadly (IPU, 2017). In doing so, it can promote transparency and provide a tool for advocacy and accountability (Budlender and Hewitt, 2003). Gender-responsive budgeting tools have gained global traction (Rubin and Bartle, 2022), although institutionalization remains uneven and implementation

practices vary widely. For WEAGov, this indicator captures the extent to which agrifood budget processes formally incorporate gender analysis and whether budget allocations meaningfully support gender targets articulated in agrifood policies and strategies. We measure this indicator three ways:

- Scored gender content in National Development Plan or national budget;
- Gender-responsive budgeting practices in agrifood ministries; and
- Expert perceptions of budgetary support and implementation of gender targets in national agriculture, climate, and nutrition policy (each measured separately).

Indicator 5 (Gender-inclusive staffing): Even well-designed policies can fail to produce equitable outcomes if implementation processes overlook women’s perspectives or exclude them from everyday decision-making. Agrifood policy implementation typically spans line ministries, extension systems, nongovernmental organizations, and private actors, all of whom exercise discretion that affects program delivery and shapes who benefits and who is excluded (Prior and Barnes, 2011). This indicator assesses whether organizations responsible for delivery have gender strategies in place to guide implementation, as gender training and skills enable public officials and other relevant stakeholders to better integrate a gender perspective throughout the policymaking cycle (Jacobs et al., 2021), and women’s representation among their nonmanagerial staff. In the agriculture sector, limited knowledge of gender among policymakers and extension officers has been extensively reported as a main constraint for implementing gender mandates in policy (Ampaire et al., 2020; Howland et al., 2021). We measure this indicator two ways:

- Share of women nonmanagerial staff in agrifood policy implementing agencies; and
- Gender strategies among agrifood policy implementing agencies.

Indicator 6 (Women’s leadership and influence in policy implementation): This indicator assesses women’s presence in leadership roles within implementing agencies that exercise operational decisions (for example, program priorities, staffing, delivery mechanisms, and adaptive management). Leadership within executive agencies and implementing bodies shape how policies are interpreted, operationalized, and adapted, including under conditions of shock and crisis response (Boin et al., 2021; Smith, 2023). We measure this indicator two ways:

- Share of women agrifood ministers and permanent secretaries; and
- Share of women managerial staff in agrifood policy implementing agencies.

Stage 3: Policy evaluation: Monitoring, feedback, and reform

Indicator 7 (Gender policy monitoring): Monitoring and evaluation systems create the evidence base for accountability and reform and shape whether gender equality goals remain visible beyond policy adoption. Policy monitoring occurs through multiple channels: (1) short-, medium-, and longer-term review landmarks; (2) two-way communication processes (progress reports from implementation agencies to the policy-making center; responses back from the center to implementing agencies); (3) use or creation of intermediary bodies between the policy-making and policy implementing levels; (4) separation of monitoring, regulating, and inspecting roles from support mechanisms; (5) use of policy support programs to better understand the stories behind the statistics; and (6) setting and adjusting realistic expectations of what constitutes “success” in policy (for example, policy objectives might never be fully delivered in the case of “wicked problems”). Gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation requires sex-disaggregated data, indicators that capture gendered outcomes, and explicit attention to gender equality goals in review processes. By capturing whether gender is considered in policy evaluation, the indicator identifies whether learning and accountability processes support more inclusive and equitable agrifood policies. We measure this indicator four ways:

- Mechanisms for gender audits and reviews within agrifood policy implementing agencies;
- Expert perceptions of tracking and monitoring of gender goals in the national agriculture, climate, and nutrition policies (each measured separately);
- Scored availability of gender-disaggregated agrifood statistics; and
- Scored availability of analysis using gender-disaggregated data in agrifood performance public reporting.

Indicator 8 (Women’s feedback on policy implementation): Another critical way that governments learn about policy implementation is through direct feedback from citizens. Responsiveness to citizens is a foundation of governments’ mandate to serve; ideally, when citizens provide feedback to governments about policy implementation, governments listen and incorporate this information into their decision-making. Thus, ensuring that diverse voices are included in the feedback process—including the voices of women—is critical to ensuring that those voices are included in policy evaluation and needed policy reforms. Citizen feedback loops can break down in many ways, however, and can be difficult to sustain. Even when citizens

have opportunities to provide feedback on policy implementation, they may not take advantage of these opportunities if they do not believe that government will be responsive (Grossman et al., 2020). In WEAGov, women's inclusion in feedback systems is treated as an empowerment-relevant feature of evaluation and learning: meaningful inclusion requires both access to channels and the ability and willingness to use them. We measure this two ways:

- Formal mechanisms for citizens to provide feedback on agrifood policy implementation; and
- Expert perceptions of opportunities for women to provide feedback on agrifood policy implementation.







Indicator 9 (Women's leadership in policy evaluation). Policy evaluation and reform are inherently political processes that involve interpreting evidence, weighing trade-offs, and determining which problems merit attention (Cornwall, 2003; Parkinson, 2009). This indicator assesses whether women hold leadership roles in organizations responsible for evaluation, oversight, or policy review and whether they influence deliberations about policy effectiveness and reform. We measure this three ways:

- Share of women in managerial positions in governmental agencies involved in agrifood policy review and evaluation;
- Share of women in managerial positions in nongovernmental entities involved in agrifood policy review and evaluation; and
- Expert perception of women's leading role in monitoring and review of national agriculture, climate, and nutrition policies (each measured separately).

2.3 WEAGov methodology

The WEAGov assessment framework is methodologically pluralistic, triangulating information from multiple sources to gain a comprehensive understanding of women's voice and agency in agrifood governance. The 6-step WEAGov methodology is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. WEAGov implementation process and data sources

6 Steps of WEAGov	Purpose
Agrifood policy and stakeholder mapping	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify the key national policies covering the agrifood sector, including, at a minimum, the national agricultural development policy, national nutrition policy, and climate policy relevant to agriculture plus any important subsector policies (e.g., forestry, fishery) - Identify key public sector ministries responsible for implementing the identified policies - Identify key private sector, civil society, and research actors that play a role in influencing, implementing, and/or evaluating national agrifood policies
Desk review of national policies and quantitative indicators	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using the policy scoring rubric, score identified national policies for gender content - Collect key quantitative indicators on agrifood policy through desk review - Review recent national budget speeches and associated documents for gender content
Organization survey	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contact key organizations identified via the stakeholder mapping exercise and survey using the organizational survey tool - Using a snowball sampling method, expand sample of organizations to ensure coverage of key agrifood ministries and their divisions; parastatals; civil society organizations; private sector; and universities
Expert survey	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interview leaders, officers, and experts from within these organizations using the expert survey tool about their perceptions and observations on women’s influence and inclusion in the policy process - Using a snowball sampling method, expand sample of experts to ensure coverage of diverse perspectives
Technical validation workshop	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Convene experts from public sector, civil society, research, and private sector to discuss and validate results using the technical validation workshop tool
Policy dialogue	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Convene high-level agrifood policy actors to discuss WEAGov results and to prioritize policy interventions to increase women’s empowerment within the agrifood policy process

Source: Authors’ elaborations.

The nine WEAGov indicators are quantified by 38 specific measurements and backed by scoring data from policy content analysis, secondary or administration data; organizational survey data; and expert survey data collected using the methods described in Table 1. The 38 measurements are presented in Appendix Table A1. These 38 measurements are scored using a 4-category Likert scale, ranging from 1=very weak; 2=weak, 3=medium/moderate, 4=strong. With the scoring, however, we wanted to convey that the general principle of women’s full and equal participation in the policy process (“strong”) is not an over-achievement; rather, it is a target for which to aim. We also wanted to convey that reaching this target can be a process; thus, we also use the terminology of 1=low, 2=on the way, 3=advancing, 4=at goal. In general, the measures are as described in Table 2.

While each indicator represents complex underlying concepts which could each be subject to deep inquiry in and of themselves within a country, we aim to develop measurements for the concepts which can be feasibly collected within the course of a few months by local experts at relatively low cost. A detailed implementation manual with instructions on how to design a full pilot and how to collect each measure is available online (Kyle and Ragasa, 2024). The indicators rely on a triangulation of information across desk review, organizational surveys, and expert surveys. While “objective” indicators drawn from desk review and organization surveys focus on *de jure* aspects of policy implementation like the number of women holding a specific leadership position or whether gender commitments are contained within a specific national agrifood policy, policies on paper often differ substantially from *de facto* realities. For example, a country may have drafted an agricultural policy with clear gender targets and strong gender analysis, yet in practice those within the policy system expect that these targets will not be monitored, tracked, or given funding priority. Expert surveys on how agrifood policy experts within the country perceive things working in reality can surface important gaps between formal policy and reality. Technical workshops with agrifood policy experts in the country help to adjudicate disagreements between data sources and to interpret results in the country context.

Table 2. Scoring principles

Scale	Definition	Implication	Meaning
1	Very weak	Low	Measure reflects minimal attempts to achieve women’s full and equal participation in the agrifood policy process
2	Weak	On the way	Measure reflects a general struggle to meet the criteria for women’s full and equal participation in this aspect of the agrifood policy process, however some attempts are being made
3	Moderate	Advancing	Measure reflects significant advancement toward women’s full and equal participation in the agrifood policy process, but there remain important steps to take to reach goal
4	Strong	At goal	Measure reflects full and equal participation by women in this aspect of the agrifood policy process

Source: Authors’ elaborations.

2.5 WEAGov data collection process in India and Nigeria

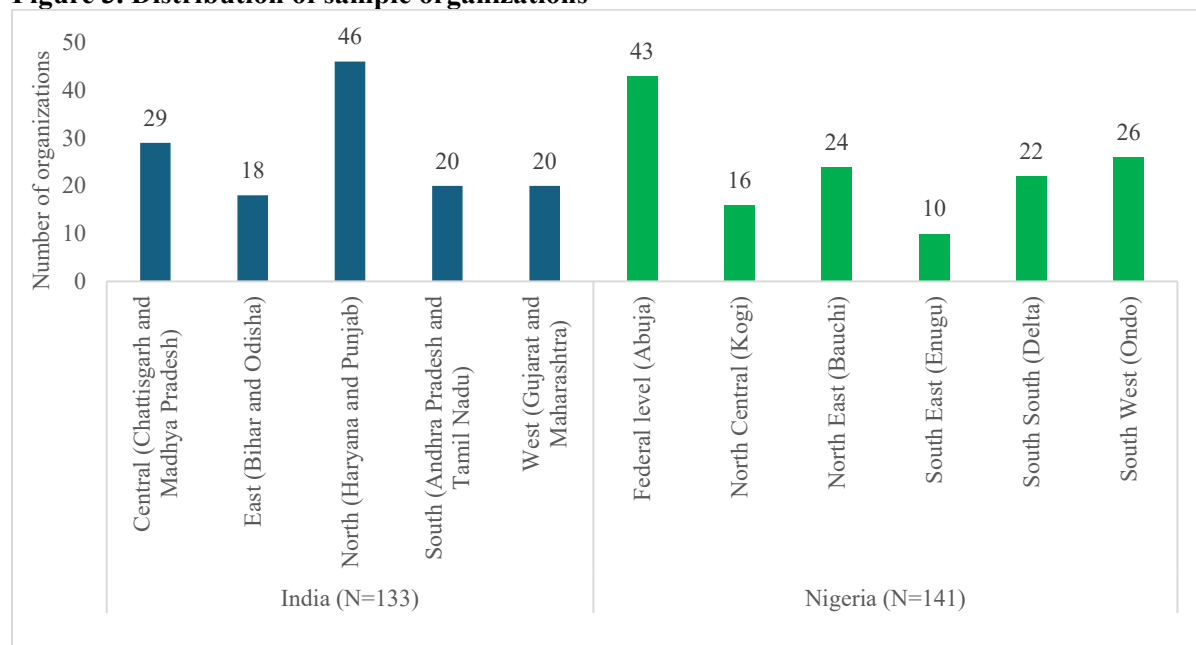
Following WEAGov methodology, the study (1) analyzed the gender content of 49 agrifood policies and tracked 10 major policies in expert surveys; (2) compiled available gender/agrifood indicators, data, and insights from literature; (3) implemented 274 organizational surveys (Figure 3); (4) conducted expert surveys with 407 decisionmakers in agrifood organizations (Figure 4); and (5) organized a technical validation workshop and policy dialogue in India and Nigeria in 2023–2024.

This study relies on primary data collection from 241 agrifood stakeholders in Nigeria in between February and March 2023 and from 166 agrifood stakeholders in India in January and March 2024 by IFPRI, LEAD at Krea University in India, and Agricultural Policy Research Network (APRNet) in Nigeria. A survey questionnaire captured basic demographic information on the respondents and detailed information on their perceptions of the status of women’s empowerment within the agrifood policy process. The survey was primarily conducted by individuals online, although enumerators often began by visiting agrifood organizations in person or by telephone to introduce the research project and to gain consent and support for participation.

We used a two-stage approach to identify respondents. First, we conducted a landscape mapping of the organizations involved in national agrifood policymaking in India and Nigeria, whether by contributing to policy design, policy implementation, or policy evaluation. While the focus was on the national policy

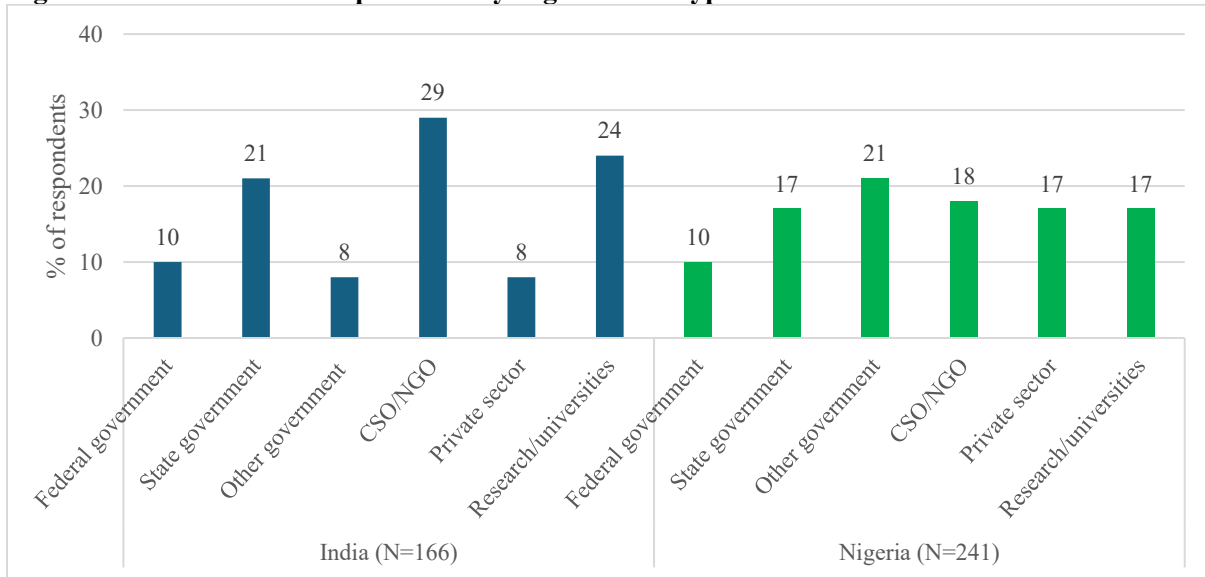
process, many state-level actors across all regions in India and Nigeria contribute meaningfully to all stages of the policy process. Given the limited resources and the inability to implement the study in all states, we selected 2 focus states and 1 focus state in each of the geopolitical zones in India and Nigeria, respectively. Figure 3 shows the distribution of sample organizations, widespread across geopolitical zones. Second, in each of the sample organizations, 1–5 representatives (head, managers, key decisionmakers, policy experts, and gender focal points) were asked to respond to the expert survey. The sample stakeholders are from diverse agrifood organization types from different levels of agrifood ministries and other government agencies, civil society and nongovernmental organizations (CSOs/NGOs), private sector, research institutions, and universities (Figure 4). A total of 150 respondents (37 percent) are women, and 23 percent are youth (under the age of 35). Almost all respondents have at least a bachelor’s degree: the majority sample are MS and PhD graduates in India, whereas the majority sample in Nigeria are BS and MS graduates. The sample elites are from diverse key positions, with 22 percent and 13 percent% of those interviewed in India and Nigeria, respectively, are heads of the sample organizations.

Figure 3. Distribution of sample organizations



Source: Authors.

Figure 4. Distribution of respondents by organization type



Source: Authors. CSO=civil society organizations, NGO=nongovernmental organizations, CSO/NGO group includes donor representatives.

3. WEAGov Application in India

India is among the largest agricultural economies and also exhibits one of the widest gender gaps globally, ranking 129th out of 146 countries (WEF, 2024). India has formally adopted a wide range of laws and strategies to promote gender equality and has recently emphasized a “women-led development” approach, as reflected in the G20 New Delhi Leaders’ Declaration 2023, which focuses on enhancing economic and social empowerment, bridging the gender digital divide, driving gender-inclusive climate action, and securing women’s food security, nutrition, and well-being (PIB, 2023).

Applying WEAGov to the Indian agrifood policy process reveals how these broad gender commitments translate, or fail to translate, into concrete processes across the policy cycle. Table 3 summarizes India’s scores across the 38 WEAGov measures. Appendix Tables A2 and A3 provide more detail. India performs well on consideration indicators: gender is strongly reflected in agriculture, nutrition, and climate policy documents, and gender salience is high in public speeches and national policy disclosures. Women’s leadership in civil society organizations is also a relative strength, as is women’s representation among managerial and nonmanagerial staff in implementing agencies.

However, WEAGov also underscores several critical weaknesses. Nineteen of the 38 measures score “weak” and five score “very weak.” The most pronounced gaps occur in inclusion and influence: for example, while India has formal mechanisms allowing citizens to provide feedback on policy implementation, ordinary rural women lack awareness and understanding of how to utilize these channels to provide meaningful feedback. Women’s representation in formal leadership in parliament and in India’s agrifood cabinet ministries is also low. The recent constitutional amendment reserving one-third of seats in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies for women offers potential for long-term improvement, but its effects will depend on its implementation and also on whether women who gain power through these reservations are able to secure positions on committees relevant to agrifood policymaking.

Table 3. Summary of WEAGov scores, India

Scale	Definition	Implication	India (out of 38 measures)
1	Very weak	Low	5
2	Weak	On the way	19
3	Moderate	Advancing	10
4	Strong	At goal	4

Source: Authors’ elaborations.

India is widely regarded as a pioneer of gender-responsive budgeting, having institutionalized the practice beginning in 2004. Budget documents reveal that the country’s gender budget amount had increased more than eight-fold by 2018–2019 (Sushant and Laha, 2021), but allocations as a share of total budget have remained steady at 4 to 5 percent since 2005 (Hooda and Kataria, 2022). Prior research argues that over time, the exercise has become mechanical rather than genuine (Hooda and Kataria, 2022; Khullar, 2023; Mishra and Sinha, 2012; Sushant and Laha, 2021). WEAGov adds value by showing how these well-documented limitations to gender-responsive budgeting manifest across the policy cycle for specific national agrifood policies. For example, gender-responsive budgeting has been more successfully implemented in national nutrition policies compared to national climate policies (Ragasa et al., 2024), and WEAGov highlights how a lack of sex-disaggregated data hinders gender targeting in budgets. The framework therefore highlights that the existence of gender-responsive budgeting, while important, does

not ensure that gender targets embedded in national agrifood policies are adequately funded, operationalized through implementation plans, or monitored for impact.

To strengthen the gender-responsive budgeting implementation and impact, experts surveyed and stakeholders in the policy dialogue highlighted the need to design and implement a comprehensive strategy that includes careful in-depth gender analysis, identification of priority action areas based on identified major gender gaps and inequalities, proper planning, and setting of short- and long-term goals. Collecting, analyzing, and publicizing gender-disaggregated data must be strengthened. Moreover, there must be greater recognition of women as farmers and key value chain actors, and this gender-disaggregated data must be better integrated into the budgeting process. Budget allocation should thus be the culmination of these data-driven, evidence-based efforts.

From the expert surveys and policy dialogue, other practical actions were identified to address the system's weaknesses, the first of which requires reframing and redefining women as farmers and key value chain actors given that women have been fundamentally excluded in policy processes and budget allocations. Women are often left without any land title to their name and are not considered as "farmers"—their status confined instead to that of mere helpers or laborers (IDR, 2018; Jain et al., 2023). This has major implications for their exclusion in policy processes, budget planning and allocation, and beneficiary targeting in agricultural projects and schemes as land ownership is an eligibility condition for many these processes, projects, and schemes. This suggests the need to strengthen women's land rights and to reframe, redefine, and recognize the crucial role of women in agrifood and value chains in policy discourse and frameworks, and not base provision targeting mainly on land ownership. Several initiatives have aimed to enhance women's land rights, such as a reduction in stamp duties on property registration by women, spousal ownership provisions, or in inheritance laws. Yet these initiatives have had limited effect, primarily due to lack of proper implementation, prevailing social attitudes and customs, and lack of education and awareness of legal rights which simultaneously make women more open to exploitation while limiting their opportunities (Jain et al., 2023). It is imperative to create greater awareness through community involvement and educating both rural women and men to increase their awareness of women's land rights,

other rights, and other important provisions in policies and laws, as well as to communicate this information in a way that is easily translated to a general public which may not be overly familiar with legal jargon. The government and its development partners also need to review and rethink these definitions and frameworks to better recognize women as farmers and key value chain actors so that they become central in policy consultations, discussions, implementation, evaluation, and budget allocations.

Second, experts surveyed and stakeholders in the policy dialogue highlighted the need for more opportunities for a wide audience, including women and other marginalized groups, to provide policy inputs and feedback. There are several ways that this can be done. Awareness of existing consultation processes can be promoted. Even when pre-legislative policy consultations are held, experts emphasized that citizens often do not know about these opportunities or how to engage in them productively. CSOs with strong local networks could work in tandem to reach a broader cross-section of the population through media and grassroots campaigns and can help to ensure that these groups learn about opportunities to participate in consultative processes. Alternative channels for participation can also be leveraged. Given that women often have mobility constraints, have limited access to information, and face restrictive norms against their participation in public spaces, nontraditional participation channels are a promising way to enhance their voice and participation. For example, providing virtual participation options and/or financial and logistical support for participants to attend consultations could diversify participation. Consultation opportunities can also be combined with trainings. Because women may have limited experience with providing inputs into the policy process, it is important to provide trainings on how to engage effectively with grassroots organizations that want to weigh in on policy consultations. For example, these groups may not know that they are allowed to engage, when and where to do so, or what types of feedback on policies are most valuable and likely to influence policy design.

Last, evaluation processes should be standardized. While experts reported strong auditing for some policies, such as Mission Poshan, they reported weaker auditing for many other agrifood policies, especially those related to climate. Inconsistencies in policy evaluation across policies and over time hinder progress toward gender targets. Developing an online management information system for agrifood ministries to

feed into in real time with progress updates could enable continuous monitoring of gender targets and facilitate coordination across ministries toward reaching those targets. It could also allow agrifood ministries to coordinate more around data collection and monitoring. Relying solely on periodic evaluation studies, which are inherently infrequent, may not yield sufficient actionable insights. Prioritizing regular evaluations for all agrifood-related policies and continuous progress monitoring in real time would improve the granularity and effectiveness of policy evaluation in the sector.

4. WEAGov Application in Nigeria

On gender equality, Nigeria lags behind other low- and middle-income countries, ranking 123rd out of 146 in the Global Gender Gap Report (WEF, 2024). In the most recent presidential election held in March 2023, women candidates won only 3.2 percent of seats in the National Assembly, down from 4.4 percent in the previous assembly. Women’s representation in state houses and assemblies is equally low.² While Nigeria has adopted some national strategies that acknowledge gender inequalities, particularly in agriculture, women’s voice and influence in agrifood governance remain weak. Applying WEAGov to Nigeria reveals a pattern distinct from India but similarly marked by sharp disparities across the policy cycle. Table 4 summarizes Nigeria’s scores across the 38 measures: Nigeria has *no* indicators scoring 4 (“strong”), though 10 score moderate and a striking 28 fall into the “weak” or “very weak” categories. Appendix Tables A4 and A5 provide more detail.

Table 4. Summary of WEAGov scores, Nigeria.

Scale	Definition	Interpretation	Nigeria (out of 38 measures)
1	Very weak	Low	14
2	Weak	On the way	14
3	Moderate	Advancing	10
4	Strong	At goal	0

Source: Authors’ elaborations.

² See “Nigeria: International Women’s Day eclipsed as men win 96% of legislative seats,” *The Africa Report* 8 March 2023, [Nigeria: International Women’s Day eclipsed as men win 96% of legislative seats \(theafricareport.com\)](https://theafricareport.com).

Areas of relative strength include women’s leadership in nongovernmental organizations involved in agrifood governance and the existence of a National Gender Policy in Agriculture—a rare but ambitious attempt within the region to set sector-specific gender targets. Gender targets are also moderately integrated into national nutrition and climate change policies. Women are reasonably represented among managerial and nonmanagerial staff in agrifood policy-implementing agencies, reflecting federal requirements that one-third of management and decision-making roles in government entities are held by women.

However, WEAGov identifies substantial gaps across the dimensions of inclusion and influence. Few opportunities exist for citizens to provide any feedback about policy implementation, and ordinary women have very limited opportunities to engage with the ad hoc processes that do exist. Gender-disaggregated monitoring is extremely limited, and evaluation systems are weak. Women’s representation in formal leadership in parliament and in agrifood cabinet ministries is very low, even compared to peer countries in the region. Persistent underfunding across agrifood ministries hampers the implementation of gender-related commitments embedded in existing national policies.

Experts surveyed and stakeholders in the policy dialogue highlighted several practical actions to address these weaknesses. First, greater nudging and advocacy by relevant ministries, CSOs/NGOs, and policy steering committees are needed to dedicate budget and staffing resources toward meeting the gender targets that have already been set in key national agrifood policies. A key first step could be a holistic review along with socialization among agrifood ministry staff to ensure that all staff are aware of gender targets set in national policies and know how to track and monitor progress toward those targets. Policy review committees can be set up by the lead ministry to periodically review progress toward these targets. Up-front coordination is also needed between agrifood ministries and the Ministry of Budget and National Planning to ensure that gender targets are being sufficiently funded from inception. For example, the National Gender Policy in Agriculture achieves high scores for its attention to gender goals and for bringing strong inputs and influence of women into the policy process, but it falls short on implementation, budgetary support, monitoring, and evaluation. Ensuring that this policy has a specific and dedicated budget line and is well-integrated into the country’s national and agricultural development plan is essential to securing its

implementation. Over time, legislative support for gender-responsive budgeting within agrifood ministries can improve ministries' funding and implementation support for gender targets, ensuring that gender targets set by policies are being funded in practice. The Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning and partners have been carrying out several training and mentoring activities to help government agencies with gender-responsive budgeting; these activities need to be scaled, and lessons on what strategies work and do not work should be shared to improve the effectiveness of these training and mentoring programs and to get gender targets actually funded.

Second, policy feedback, monitoring, and evaluation need to be strengthened overall, with attention to gender and social outcomes. A meaningful first step would be to collect more gender-disaggregated data on women in the agrifood sector, especially on issues related to control of resources and women's agency and empowerment, as well as capacity building to collect and analyze these data. Collaboration between the National Bureau of Statistics and agrifood ministries around priority data and outcomes would be helpful to ensure data credibility.

Third, opportunities for policy input and consultation must reach a wide audience, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds. While we heard from local experts that public consultations are often held in Nigeria before a policy is implemented, these seem to be ad hoc, and many experts cited significant gaps in the inclusion of marginalized voices in consultations. Agrifood ministries should create more opportunities for citizens in general and women specifically to provide inputs into policy design through consultative processes and should socialize those opportunities more extensively to ensure that women can use them. Key ways to broaden inclusivity include (i) developing educational material about policies in native languages and appropriate to the literacy levels of the population; (ii) advertising opportunities for input widely; and (iii) reaching out for input across broad geographic areas and many channels, including digital tools. Given the existing strength of CSOs in Nigeria in terms of women's leadership and representation, these organizations can provide policymakers with critical inputs on policy design, and policy feedback and should be extensively consulted. These organizations can also be key bridges between

government ministries and civil society and provide advice on reaching more marginalized populations for consultations. CSOs should themselves to be more proactive in policy deliberations, review, and evaluation.

Last, critical gaps in women's leadership opportunities must be closed. Despite the difficulty of taking concrete steps to increase women's representation in parliament and among cabinet ministers in the near term, as these both rely on actions by political leaders and political parties as well as on electoral results, both government ministries and CSOs can raise the profile of female leaders in the agrifood policy process. We found many women managers in both government ministries and CSOs; ensuring that these women are visibly recognized for their roles and have the opportunity to be seen by the public as leaders and experts in the field can build the profile of women leaders in the sector over time. In the long term, changing attitudes and norms related to gender will require providing more training on confidence building and leadership for girls and women at very young ages, as well as conducting gender-transformative campaigns and education that target girls, boys, women, and men.

5. Discussion

Applying WEAGov in India and Nigeria generates two related sets of insights. First, the tool identifies concrete entry points for strengthening women's voice and empowerment in agrifood policy processes by revealing where gender commitments weaken or break down along the policy cycle. Second, the pilot applications demonstrate the value of WEAGov as a diagnostic instrument that travels beyond the contexts where it was developed. By combining policy-content analysis with organizational surveys and expert assessments, it uncovers implementation bottlenecks and discrepancies between stated policy commitments and realities that cannot be observed from policy documents alone. Together, these findings illustrate how WEAGov can guide governments, civil society, and researchers toward more targeted and actionable strategies for building gender-inclusive governance systems.

Several cross-cutting issues emerge from the country applications. Across both countries, agrifood policy documents integrate gender considerations and articulate gender-related goals. Gender is visible in national strategies, and high-level rhetoric affirms women's importance to agrifood systems. However,

policy salience does not translate into consistent budgeting, implementation, or monitoring. In both countries, gender targets tend to weaken as policies move from design to execution.

Regarding budgeting and implementation, Nigeria's National Gender Policy in Agriculture and other sectoral policies articulate gender goals, yet they suffer from underfunding and weak monitoring. WEAGov's low implementation and evaluation scores point to a need for early coordination with the Ministry of Budget and National Planning, greater internal awareness of gender targets among agrifood ministry staff, and clearer mechanisms for tracking progress. In India, gender-responsive budgeting is fully institutionalized, but two decades of implementation have reduced gender-responsive budgeting to a largely mechanical exercise. WEAGov highlights that without deeper gender analysis, publicly available sex-disaggregated data, and stronger integration of evidence into budgeting decisions, gender-responsive budgeting will struggle to influence policy priorities or reduce gender gaps. A meaningful first step would be to collect more gender-disaggregated data on women in the agrifood sector, especially on issues related to control of resources and women's agency and empowerment, as well as capacity building to collect and analyze these data. In both settings, strengthening gender budgeting therefore requires not new commitments but deeper operationalization.

Both countries rely on consultative processes before policies are finalized. While we heard from local experts that public consultations are often held in India and Nigeria before a policy is implemented, these seem to be ad hoc, and many experts cited significant gaps in the inclusion of marginalized voices in consultations. Again, India is further ahead than Nigeria on this front, with laws and legal processes in place both stating the need for up-front consultations and the process for doing so. This legal framework provides a strong foundation to expand access to consultative opportunities. Nigeria, on the other hand, has norms about up-front consultation, and experts referenced that this is frequently done, yet lacks a legal framework and formal process, making consultations implicitly ad hoc and variable. While the end result in both countries is similar—women, especially those in rural areas and from marginalized groups, are insufficiently consulted in policy design and policymakers do not hear enough about whether or not policies are working on the ground for women—the policy solution might be different. While India could socialize

existing consultation opportunities more extensively to ensure that women can use them, Nigeria could begin by setting up legal frameworks for consultation.

In both countries, more evaluation and research are needed on the gender implications of agrifood policies and on key gaps not addressed by the current policy landscape. Feedback on how policy implementation is going on the ground from the citizens and farmers policies are intended to support is also essential. Government ministries should establish mechanisms and processes for policy feedback and promote their use. Once those mechanisms and processes are in place, it is important to ensure that citizens are aware of opportunities to provide feedback and know how to do so, especially women who are often more reticent to contact government officials. Civil society organizations should make themselves more proactive in policy deliberations, review, and evaluation.

WEAGov also highlights underutilized strengths of each policy system. In both countries, women hold mid-level roles in implementing agencies and leadership roles across civil society organizations. These actors who already hold meaningful positions can serve as immediate entry points for strengthening gender inclusion in policy consultations, monitoring committees, and advisory bodies. There is still a need in both countries to close critical gaps in women's leadership opportunities in high-level leadership positions in the public sector, such as cabinet positions, parliamentary committees, and senior leadership teams. Raising the visibility and influence of women who already hold positions and have the necessary expertise in agrifood systems can help create pathways for women's greater influence over time.

The pilot applications also demonstrate key insights for WEAGov as an analytical tool. Whereas most gender policy reviews focus on policy documents, WEAGov systematically integrates full policy-cycle assessments; triangulated evidence across desk reviews, organizational surveys, and expert assessments to detect gaps that policy documents obscure; and diagnostic value in identifying the weakest links in the chain to point to actionable entry points. This approach highlights the persistent absence of clear implementation strategies in national agrifood policies, vague or nonmeasurable gender targets, limited collection and use of sex-disaggregated data, and weak monitoring and evaluation systems. For example, in India, WEAGov tracking of six major agrifood policies shows that policies score well on gender

consideration but consistently lower on inclusion and influence during implementation and review (Table 5a). Differences across policies—such as the stronger monitoring systems in Mission Poshan (a major nutrition scheme) relative to the National Action Plan for Climate Change—illustrate how the tool can distinguish between well-designed policies that remain weakly implemented and those supported by more robust operational mechanisms.

A similar pattern emerges in Nigeria. Among the 19 policy documents desk-reviewed, 11 (58 percent) have some mention of gender or women’s issues in the policy content analysis and 4 (21 percent) have gender-specific targets or goals, quantitative indicators in the results framework, and implementation details and therefore scored high in gender consideration. Four policies were tracked in the organization and expert surveys (Table 5b). While the National Gender Policy in Agriculture achieved high scores for attention to gender goals and for bringing together strong inputs and influence of women into the policy process, it falls short in implementation, budgetary support, monitoring, and evaluation. The National Agriculture Policy received the lowest scores and were weakest in all indicators of consideration, inclusion, and influence of women from design stage to implementation and monitoring among the three major policies tracked. It is particularly low in the implementation, budget support, and women’s influence in monitoring and review of gender goals and overall policy targets. The National Climate Policy and National Nutrition Policy scored much better in terms of gender content and women’s input in the design stage, but they also scored lower in the indicators of implementation and evaluation.

Table 5. Tracking of agrifood policies in India and Nigeria

a. India

	National Policy for Farmers	MKSP	National Nutrition Policy	Mission POSHAN	National Action for CC	National Mission for SA
Scored gender content in policy document	AT GOAL	AT GOAL	AT GOAL	AT GOAL	ADVANCING	AT GOAL
Women's inputs into policy design*	ADVANCING	ADVANCING	Old 1993 policy; design processes were not tracked	ON THE WAY	LOW	ON THE WAY
Perceived women's influence in policy design*	ADVANCING	ADVANCING	Old 1993 policy; design processes were not tracked	ON THE WAY	LOW	ON THE WAY
Perceived implementation of gender targets*	ON THE WAY	ADVANCING	ON THE WAY	ADVANCING	ON THE WAY	ON THE WAY
Perceived adequacy of funding*	ON THE WAY	ADVANCING	ON THE WAY	ADVANCING	ON THE WAY	ON THE WAY
Tracking and monitoring of gender targets*	ON THE WAY	ADVANCING	ON THE WAY	ADVANCING	ON THE WAY	ON THE WAY
Perceived women's leading role in policy review*	ON THE WAY	ON THE WAY	ON THE WAY	ADVANCING	ON THE WAY	ON THE WAY

b. Nigeria

Indicator	National Agriculture Policy	National Climate Policy	National Nutrition Policy	National Gender Policy in Agriculture
Scored gender content	ON THE WAY	ADVANCING	ADVANCING	AT GOAL
Women's inputs*	ON THE WAY	ADVANCING	ADVANCING	AT GOAL
Women's perceived influence in the design*	ON THE WAY	ON THE WAY	ON THE WAY	AT GOAL
Perceived budgetary support and implementation of gender targets*	LOW	LOW	ON THE WAY	ON THE WAY
Tracking and monitoring of gender policy goals*	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW
Women's perceived leading role in monitoring and review*	ON THE WAY	ON THE WAY	ON THE WAY	ON THE WAY

Source: Authors' elaborations.

Note: MKSP= Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana. CC=Climate Change, SA=Sustainable Agriculture. *Indicates that this measurement is collected from the expert survey.

In terms of the novelty of the methodology, WEAGov offers the following:

- (1) A deep-dive into national policy (and supporting documents), and implementation and operationalization plans;
- (2) Insights on both policy implementation and design;
- (3) A systematic look throughout the policy cycle to identify bottlenecks and entry points;
- (4) Organizational policies and activities to identify entry points to strengthen women's consideration, inclusion, and influence within these agrifood organizations, from quota systems, diversity and gender policies, and hiring procedures to nudges and communication strategies for changing organizational culture and norms; and
- (5) An attempt to capture women's agency in policy process, not just participation of or consultation with women actors but their influence and leadership in the policy process.

WEAGov offers a diversity of approaches, data sources, and perspectives, and a process of triangulation of data and results. It uses both qualitative and quantitative indicators, as well as official and secondary data, policy documents, and media review; organization-level survey and experts' perceptions; and different perspectives of stakeholders. Finally, the WEAGov process ends with the validation of scores and rating by a smaller set of experts and a policy dialogue to discuss assessment implications, feasible strategies that may help address the major bottlenecks identified, and concrete next steps.

WEAGov can help diagnose the status of gender consideration, and women's voice and leadership in policy processes. It is intended to be a low-cost rapid assessment tool, and it is intended to complement other tools and indexes that focus on policy outcomes and impacts that measure gender parity at the household level and women's empowerment at the individual level. While WEAGov does not provide testing of approaches/interventions, it provides insights based on literature review, harvesting rich suggestions and recommendations from experts and discussions of past experiences about what do and do not work from policy experts. While it does not provide impact of particular policies or policy instruments, it provides rapid assessment from experts on the processes and indicative impacts of the policies and policy instruments. WEAGov should be used for rapid assessment of the policy processes and complemented by

rigorous policy impact studies that look at individual, household, and community level impacts. The widely used Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) and the new Women's Empowerment Metric for National Statistical Systems (WEMNS), which provide nationally representative indicators and data on women's empowerment, are examples of such measures of women's empowerment at those levels (Quisumbing et al., 2025). Further expansion of WEAGov could include more grassroots organizations' perspectives in the survey.

6. Concluding Remarks

Policies can be powerful in achieving multiple broad-based development goals, including women's empowerment. Diverse perspectives, equal participation, and credible data and evidence are needed for sound policy and investment choices. The Women's Empowerment in Agrifood Governance (WEAGov) framework and measurement tool is a new tool to help measure and track progress in gender consideration, women's inclusion, and women's leadership in each stage of agrifood policy—design, implementation, and evaluation. Based on the two country pilots, WEAGov diagnosed priority areas for improvement to advance women's inclusion and leadership in public policy processes, identified entry points for actions, and proved to be a useful complement to other tools that focus on measuring impacts of policies at individual and household, and on ratings by community members of policies or services.

Women's empowerment is multidimensional and multi-level; and sources of disempowerment can come in different levels and governance structures—household, community, organizations, and state and national policies. There is no single, comprehensive tool to measure all these dimensions at different levels; several tools are available and can help capture and measure empowerment at different levels and governance structures. For example, WEAI and WEMNS are popular tools that measure empowerment at household level. The WEAGov tool aims to complement other tools at household and community levels by focusing on and identifying entry points for improving gender consideration, women's inclusion, and women's influence in different stages of agrifood national policy cycle.

The tool can be applied to other policy processes in other sectors and at other levels, such as state-level policy processes. It can be expanded to capture other social markers and intersectionality, for example, how youth, ethnic groups, and people with disabilities are considered in the policy documents, how they are included and are influencing policy processes, and how policy declarations targeting them are being implemented and evaluated. These are future tool expansion and application, which we nudge researchers and practitioners to try.

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Appendix

Appendix Table 1. WEAGov measurements

Indicator	Measure	Data source
Policy design		
Gender policy targets	Scored content in national agriculture policy	Desk review
	Scored content in national climate policy	Desk review
	Scored content in national nutrition policy	Desk review
	Scored content in prominent presidential or budget speech	Desk review
	Gender attention in prioritized agrifood policy issue	Expert survey
Women's input	Formal process for collecting citizens' input in agrifood policymaking process	Desk review
	Opportunities for women to provide inputs in policy design	Expert survey
	Women's inputs in national agriculture policy	Expert survey
	Women's inputs in national climate policy	Expert survey
	Women's input in national nutrition policy	Expert survey
Women's policy design leadership	Share of women in national parliament	Desk review
	Share of women in parliamentary agriculture committee	Desk review
	Share of women leaders in nongovernmental sector involved in agrifood policy design	Organizational survey
	Women leading and influencing deliberations on the national agriculture policy	Expert survey
	Women leading and influencing deliberations on the national climate policy	Expert survey
	Women leading and influencing deliberations on the national nutrition policy	Expert survey
Policy implementation		
	Scored gender content in the national development plan	Desk review

Indicator	Measure	Data source
Gender-responsive budgeting	Gender-responsive budgeting in agrifood ministries	Organizational survey
	Perceived budgetary support and implementation of gender targets in the national agriculture policy	Expert survey
	Perceived budgetary support and implementation of gender targets in the national climate policy	Expert survey
	Perceived budgetary support and implementation of gender targets in the national nutrition policy	Expert survey
Gender-inclusive staffing	Share of women nonmanagerial staff in agrifood policy implementing agencies	Organizational survey
	Gender-sensitive strategies among agrifood policy implementing agencies	Organizational survey
Women's policy implementation leadership	Share of women agrifood ministers, state ministers, and permanent secretaries	Desk review
	Share of women managerial positions in agrifood policy implementing agencies	Organizational survey
Policy evaluation		
Gender policy monitoring	Agrifood policy implementing agencies conduct gender audits and reviews periodically	Organizational survey
	Tracking and monitoring of gender goals in the national agriculture policy	Expert survey
	Tracking and monitoring of gender goals in national climate policy	Expert survey
	Tracking and monitoring of gender goals in national nutrition policy	Expert survey
	Scored availability of gender-disaggregated national agrifood statistics	Desk review
	Scored gender-disaggregated data included in agrifood performance public reporting	Desk review
Women's feedback	Formal mechanism for providing feedback on policy implementation	Desk review
	Perceived opportunities for women to provide feedback	Expert survey
Women's policy evaluation leadership	Share of women in managerial positions in governmental agencies involved in agricultural policy review and evaluation	Organizational survey
	Share of women in managerial positions in nongovernmental entities involved in agricultural policy review and advocacy	Organizational survey

Indicator	Measure	Data source
	Women's perceived leading role in monitoring and review of the national agriculture policy	Expert survey
	Women's perceived leading role in monitoring and review of the national climate policy	Expert survey
	Women's perceived leading role in monitoring and review of the national nutrition policy	Expert survey

Source: Authors' elaborations, based on definitions and indicators provided in Kyle and Ragasa (2024).

Appendix Table A2. India WEAGov pilot study results summary, by indicator.

(1) Policy design

Indicator	Summary of findings
Gender policy targets	<p>Three measures were used to track gender considerations in policy discussions and documents and were scored as 2–4 (weak to strong). The first measure focuses on the Prime Minister's Independence Day speech, which was scored as 4 (strong or “at goal”) due to its clear gender targets and strategies. The second measure is a perception measure from the expert survey, in which sample experts reported that gender was not frequently discussed in high-level agrifood policy discussions; and gender salience in these policy discussions was scored as 2 (weak).</p> <p>The third measure is scored gender content from the review of 30 agrifood policy documents. Focusing on the 6 most important agrifood policies, 5 have strong gender consideration (score 4) and 1 has a moderate score (score 3). Two major agricultural policies—NPF and MKSP—emphasize promoting enhanced income for women farmers and were scored as 4 (strong or “at goal”). Two major nutrition policies—NNP and Mission POSHAN—were also scored 4 (strong or “at goal”) primarily for the clarity on goals and stakeholders' inclusion in various dimensions. Two major climate policies—NMSA and NAPCC—were scored as 4 and 3, respectively. NMSA was scored as 4 (strong or “at goal”), which specifies that out of the 50 percent of the budgetary allocation is for small and marginal farmers and at least 30 percent of beneficiaries must be women. NAPCC, on the other hand, lags in clarity on achieving gender targets and was hence scored as 3 (moderate). Of the other 24 policies reviewed, 50 percent of agricultural policies, 30 percent of nutrition policies, and 30 percent of environment or climate policies reviewed have weak or very weak gender considerations (score 1 or 2).</p> <p>Overall, there are fairly strong gender considerations and targeting in the major agrifood policies and the prime minister's speeches. However, greater gender consideration is needed in some agrifood policy documents and public discussions on agrifood policy issues.</p>
Women's input	<p>Three measures were used to assess women's input in agrifood policy design: 1 objective measure on the presence of formal processes for citizen's inputs into policy design; 1 perception measure on women's involvement in policy design in general; and 1 perception measure on women's inputs in the 5 major policies tracked (1997 NNP was not tracked for its design). While there is a legal framework and formal processes for getting citizens' inputs in policy formulation (score 4), in practice few women have opportunities to provide meaningful inputs into agrifood policy design (score 2). This is more serious in rural areas and for grassroot organizations and marginalized groups. Across the five policies tracked, ratings were moderate (score 3) in women's inputs in the design of agricultural policies (NPF and MKSP), very weak (score 1) to weak (score 2) in the design of climate policies (NAPCC and NMSA), and weak (score 2) in the design of Mission Poshan. Sample experts suggest the need for strong awareness campaigns that can acquaint citizens, especially in rural areas and among marginalized groups, with these policy processes.</p>
Women's leadership in policy design	<p>Three measurements were used: women parliamentarians; women members to agricultural committees in the parliament; and perceptions on women's influence in 5 major policies. These show very weak to weak women's leadership in policy design processes. As of March 2024, only 13 percent of upper and lower houses' MPs are women (score 1, very weak) and only 7 percent of agriculture-related committees in the upper and lower houses are women (score 1, very weak), but 39 percent of heads of sample nongovernment organizations were women (score 3, moderate). Across the five policies tracked (1997 NNP was not tracked for its design), ratings were moderate (score 3) in women's influence in the design of agricultural policies (NPF and MKSP), very weak (score 1) to weak (score 2) in the design of climate policies (NAPCC and NMSA), and weak (score 2) in the design of Mission Poshan. The good news is that the reservation of one-third of all seats of lower and upper legislative assemblies to women was passed in 2023. This reservation policy needs to be enforced, coupled with capacity building for women leaders to effectively lead policy and legislature-making processes.</p>

(2) Policy implementation

Indicator	Summary of findings
Gender-responsive budgeting	<p>Three measures were used: scored gender content of the finance budget, gender budgeting process in the core agrifood ministries, and expert perception on gender budgets in the 6 major policies tracked. Despite the government’s initiatives and efforts to push the agenda of women’s empowerment through various means, the gender-responsive budgeting across different agrifood organizations remains weak to moderate and inconsistent. First, the 2023/24 finance minister’s budget speech, rated based on its gender content or gender targets, was scored as 3 (moderate). Second, the budget on gender appears to be well-documented across the ministries, with 35 percent of Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD)’s budget and <2 percent of Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (MoAFW)’s budget going to gender activities in fiscal year 2024–2025. For other ministries, such as Education, Women and Child Development, Housing and Urban Affairs, Health and Family Welfare, and Jal Shakti, the allocation for gender-specific initiatives fluctuates between 5 and 12 percent of their respective budgets. However, the gender budget in several other ministries remains considerably low (<1 percent of the total budget). State-level ministries are also not reporting on targets set under gender-responsive budgeting, and there may be a need to explore this further and consequently conduct capacity-building at the state level. This measure was scored as 3 (moderate).</p> <p>Third, across the 6 policies tracked, experts reported diverse experiences and varying feedback: score 3 (moderate) for MKSP and Mission Poshan and score 2 (weak) for the other four policies (NPF, NNP, NAPCC, and NMSA). This suggests a potential gap in understanding and awareness of the effectiveness of these policies and might also reflect the differing implementation efforts; and there is a need to look at where, when, and how these policies are performing and share lessons.</p>
Gender-inclusive staffing	<p>Three measures are used for this indicator. Data show some progress has been made, but ratings remain weak to moderate. On average, sample organizations have 35 percent of staff who are women (score 3, moderate). However, organizational gender policies and gender-sensitive activities for women staff are less common among organizations (score 2, weak). A total of 43 percent of the sample organizations have an organizational gender policy or strategy; 29 percent have leadership training for women employees; 26 percent have committees focusing on gender equality; and 46 percent have established gender diversity committees.</p>
Women’s policy implementation leadership	<p>Three measures are used for this indicator, and the rating is from very weak to weak (scores 1 or 2). Although 39 percent of women are in management positions in sample organizations, only 1 woman minister is in the core agrifood ministries (13 percent); 33 percent of heads of these core agrifood ministries are women, and 13 percent of state ministers are women. This measurement was scored as 1 (very weak).</p>

(3) Policy evaluation

Indicator	Summary of findings
Gender policy monitoring	<p>Four measures show a weak data system with limited sex-disaggregated data and weak monitoring of gender targets in general and in specific policies. The first measure—availability of gender-disaggregated national food statistics—was scored as 2 (weak). Even though the government collects gender-disaggregated individual data through multiple surveys, such as the National Family Health Survey, the Agriculture Census, and the Periodic Labor Force Survey, these data have various limitations for policy use. These limitations are mainly due to mismatch between the data collected and the information required for effective gender-responsive policymaking, especially for rural India (Shah, 2022).</p> <p>The second measure—gender analysis in the major agriculture report published by MoAFW—was scored as 2 (weak). The annual report includes a distinct section, “Gender Perspective on Agriculture,” which outlines goals and targets specifically tailored for women within each policy or scheme. However, it lacks detailed descriptions, offering only minimal information, such as gender considerations in program design (if any) and basic statistics on women beneficiaries or those trained. Unfortunately, it provides no insight into the actual impact of these policies on women in agriculture.</p> <p>The third measure shows that 34 percent of organizations in the sample conducted gender audits, and this measure scored as 2 (weak). The fourth measure—expert perception on monitoring gender targets in the six major policies tracked—was scored as 2 (weak). Four policies (NPF, NNP, NMSA, and NAPCC) were consistently scored as 2 (weak), while MKSP and Mission Poshan were scored as 3 (moderate). Further, the majority of experts highlighted insufficient tracking and monitoring of gender goals and policy targets across the board.</p>
Women’s feedback	<p>Two measures were used in this indicator and were rated as very weak to weak (score 1 or 2). In India, institutionalized, systematic, or formal feedback mechanisms for citizens, and women in particular, are weak. Women have few opportunities to provide feedback on policy design and implementation.</p>
Women’s evaluation and advocacy leadership	<p>Three measurements were used for this indicator and were rated as weak to moderate (score 2 or 3). The share of women in managerial positions in government agencies and NGOs involved in policy evaluation is 38 percent on average (score 3, moderate). Across the 6 major policies tracked, the majority of experts rated women’s influence in monitoring the national agriculture, climate change, and nutrition policies as 2 (weak), except for Mission Poshan, which was rated as 3 (moderate).</p>

Source: Author’s elaborations.

Note: NAPCC = National Action Plan for Climate Change; NNP = National Nutrition Policy; NPF = National Policy for Farmers; NMSA = National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture; MKSP = Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana.

Appendix Table A3. India WEAGov scores, by indicator and measurement

Stage	Indicator	Measurement	Score	
Policy design	1. Gender policy targets	Scored gender-intentional content in prominent presidential or budget speech	At goal	
		Gender attention in prioritized agrifood policy issue*	On the way	
		Scored gender-intentional content in national agriculture policy		
		NPF	At goal	
		MKSP	At goal	
		Scored gender content in national climate policy		
		NAPCC	Advancing	
		NMSA	At goal	
		Scored gender content in national nutrition policy		
		NNP	At goal	
	Mission Poshan	At goal		
	2. Women's input	Formal process for collecting citizens' input into agrifood policymaking process	At goal	
		Opportunities for women to provide inputs into policy design*	On the way	
		Women's inputs into national agriculture policy*		
		NPF	Advancing	
		MKSP	Advancing	
		Women's inputs into national climate policy*		
		NAPCC	Low	
		NMSA	On the way	
		Women's inputs into national nutrition policy*		
		Mission Poshan	On the way	
	3. Women's policy design leadership	Share of women in parliament	Low	
		Share of women in parliamentary agricultural committee	Low	
		Share of women leaders in nongovernment sector involved in agrifood policy design+	Advancing	

Stage	Indicator	Measurement	Score		
		Women leading and influencing deliberations on the national agriculture policy*			
		NPF	Advancing		
		MKSP	Advancing		
		Women leading and influencing deliberations on the national climate policy*			
		NAPCC	Low		
		NMSA	On the way		
		Women leading and influencing deliberations on the national nutrition policy*			
		Mission Poshan	On the way		
		Policy implementation	4. Gender-responsive budgeting	Gender targets and budget are specified in the national development plan	Advancing
				Gender-responsive budgeting in agrifood ministries	Advancing
Perceived budgetary support and implementation of gender targets in national agriculture policy*					
NPF	On the way				
MKSP	Advancing				
Perceived budgetary support and implementation of gender targets in national climate policy*					
NAPCC	On the way				
NMSA	On the way				
Perceived budgetary support and implementation of gender targets in national nutrition policy*					
NNP	On the way				
Mission Poshan	Advancing				
5. Gender-inclusive staffing	Average share of women in total staff in agrifood policy implementing agencies+		Advancing		
	Gender-sensitive staffing policies among agrifood policy implementing agencies+		On the way		
6. Women's policy implementation leadership	Share of women agrifood ministers and permanent secretaries	Low			
	Share of women in managerial positions in agrifood policy implementing agencies+	Advancing			

Stage	Indicator	Measurement	Score	
Policy evaluation	7. Gender policy monitoring	Scored availability of gender-disaggregated national agrifood statistics	On the way	
		Scored gender-disaggregated data included in agrifood performance public reporting	On the way	
		Agrifood policy implementing agencies conducting gender audits+	On the way	
		Tracking and monitoring of gender goals in the national agriculture policy*		
		NPF	On the way	
		MKSP	Advancing	
		Tracking and monitoring of gender goals in the national climate policy*		
		NAPCC	On the way	
		NMSA	On the way	
		Tracking and monitoring of gender goals in the national nutrition policy*		
		NNP	On the way	
		Mission Poshan	Advancing	
		8. Women's feedback	Formal mechanism for providing feedback on policy implementation	On the way
	Perceived opportunities for women to provide feedback*		On the way	
	9. Women's evaluation and advocacy leadership	Share of women leadership in government involved in policy monitoring and evaluation+	Advancing	
		Share of women leadership in nongovernment sector involved in policy evaluation and advocacy+	Advancing	
		Women's perceived leading role in monitoring and review of the national agriculture policy*		
		NPF	On the way	
		MKSP	On the way	
		Women's perceived leading role in monitoring and review of the national climate policy*		
		NAPCC	On the way	
		NMSA	On the way	
	Women's perceived leading role in monitoring and review of the national nutrition policy*			

Stage	Indicator	Measurement	Score
		NNP	On the way
		Mission Poshan	Advancing

Source: Author's elaborations.

Note: + Estimates based on the IFPRI/LEAD organization survey for WEAGov pilot (2024); * Indicates perception measurement collected through the IFPRI/LEAD expert survey for WEAGov pilot (2024). Scoring is based on a 4-point Likert scale, with 1 being the weakest and 4 being the strongest. Color codes indicate 1 = very weak, 2 = weak, 3 = moderate, and 4 = strong. We also want to convey with the scoring the general principle that women's full and equal participation in the policy process (rated as strong) is not an overachievement but a target to be reached. Thus, we also use the terminology of 1 = low, 2 = on the way, 3 = advancing, and 4 = at goal. NAPCC = National Action Plan for Climate Change; NNP = National Nutrition Policy; NPF = National Policy for Farmers; NMSA = National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture; MKSP = Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana.

Appendix Table A4. Nigeria WEAGov pilot study results summary, by indicator

POLICY DESIGN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender policy targets: The country is to be applauded for its National Gender Policy in Agriculture. Gender consideration in the National Climate Change Policy and the National Food and Nutrition Policy is also quite strong (score 3); however, gender attention in the major agriculture sector policy (the National Agricultural Technology and Innovation Policy) is weak (score 2). Although high-level speeches mention gender, they lack details and specific gender targets and strategies; and gender salience in discussions about agrifood policies is generally weak. • Women’s inputs: Although consultations are often conducted during policy formulation, local experts perceived few opportunities for ordinary citizens to provide input into agrifood policy formulation, and even more limited opportunities for women to do so. • Women’s policy design leadership: The extent of women’s leadership in agrifood policy design varied between the public sector and the private sector and civil society. Only 3 percent of Nigeria’s parliamentarians are women; however, the share of women leaders in nongovernmental entities involved in policy design is significantly higher, at 41 percent at the time of the survey.
POLICY IMPLEMENTATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender-responsive budgeting: Across multiple measures used, budgetary support for gender goals is reportedly very weak. The National Development Plan (2021–2025), the basis for budgetary allocation across sectors, includes general gender goals but has no specific targets on gender equity or women’s empowerment in the agrifood system and no specific budget allotted. A 2022 report by a Nigerian nongovernmental organization, the development Research and Projects Centre (dRPC), found that only 0.60 percent of the Nigerian federal budget was allocated to women’s economic empowerment. This finding is consistent with responses in the organization and expert surveys: 84 percent of sample experts in agrifood policymaking responded that budgetary allocation toward women’s empowerment in Nigeria is “weak” or “very weak” and that none of the agrifood ministries conducts a gender-responsive budgeting exercise. • Gender-inclusive staffing: Overall, women staff are fairly well represented in agrifood policy implementation in Nigeria, making up 43 percent of nonmanagement staff in agrifood policy implementing organizations. Local experts highlighted significant difficulties, however, in opening up career opportunities for women in the civil service. • Women’s policy implementation leadership: Overall, women’s leadership is absent in the highest positions in agrifood policy implementation agencies: the five key agrifood-related ministries have no women ministers, state ministers, or permanent secretaries. The situation improves, however, when we include other leadership and management roles in these ministries and in a sample other government and nongovernment entities: women represent 39 percent of their staff in management positions. This proportion is in line with the gender policy’s requirement of having a third of management and decision-making positions held by women but falls short of achieving gender equality.
POLICY EVALUATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender policy monitoring: Almost all sample experts perceived weak tracking and monitoring of gender goals and policy targets overall. National agriculture, climate, nutrition, and gender policies all received low ratings (score 2) for tracking and monitoring gender targets. Although the National Bureau of Statistics periodically collects and publishes gender-disaggregated data, data on women in the agrifood system and on women’s agency and empowerment are lacking. Not surprisingly, then, the use of gender-disaggregated data is quite low: only 16 percent of sample organizations collect or use gender-disaggregated data. • Women’s feedback: No formal mechanism exists for citizens to provide feedback on agrifood policy implementation. This finding matches sample experts’ perception that the government puts little effort into getting feedback from citizens and offers limited opportunities for citizens and women to provide feedback. The lack of feedback seems more the result of overall limitations in opportunities for feedback from all citizens than of specific limitations for women. • Women’s policy evaluation leadership: Among organizations involved in agrifood policy review and evaluation in our organization survey, 26 percent are led by women and 36 percent of management positions are held by women. This finding is similar for government and nongovernment entities. When asked about their perception of women’s influence in policy implementation and monitoring, the majority of sample experts rated women’s influence in monitoring the national agriculture, climate change, and nutrition policies as “very weak” or “weak.”

Source: Authors’ elaborations.

Appendix Table A5. Nigeria WEAGov scores, by indicator and measurement

	Indicator	Measurement	Score
POLICY DESIGN	1. Gender policy targets	Scored gender content in prominent presidential or budget speech	On the way
		Gender attention in prioritized agrifood policy issue*	On the way
		Scored gender content in national agriculture policy	On the way
		Scored gender content in national climate policy	Advancing
		Scored gender content in national nutrition policy	Advancing
		Presence of national gender policy in agriculture	At goal
	2. Women's input	Formal process for collecting citizen's input in agrifood policymaking process	Advancing
		Opportunities for women to provide inputs in policy design*	Low
		Women's inputs in national agriculture policy*	On the way
		Women's inputs in national climate policy*	Advancing
		Women's inputs in national nutrition policy*	Advancing
	3. Women's policy design leadership	Share of women in parliament	Low
		Share of women in parliamentary agricultural committee	Low
		Share of women leaders in nongovernment sector involved in agrifood policy design ⁺	Advancing
		Women leading and influencing deliberations on the national agriculture policy*	On the way
		Women leading and influencing deliberations on the national climate policy*	On the way
		Women leading and influencing deliberations on the national nutrition policy*	On the way
	POLICY IMPLEMENTATION	4. Gender-responsive budgeting	Gender targets and budget are specified in the National Development Plan
Gender-responsive budgeting in agrifood ministries			Low
Perceived budgetary support and implementation of gender targets in the national agricultural policy*			Low
Perceived budgetary support and implementation of gender targets in the national climate change policy*			Low
Perceived budgetary support and implementation of gender targets in the national nutrition policy*			On the way
Perceived budgetary support and implementation of gender targets in the national gender policy in agriculture*			On the way
5. Gender-inclusive staffing			Average share of women in total staff in agrifood policy implementing agencies ⁺
Gender-sensitive staffing policies among agrifood policy implementing agencies ⁺		On the way	

	Indicator	Measurement	Score
POLICY EVALUATION	6. Women's policy implementation leadership	Share of women agrifood ministers, state ministers, and permanent secretaries	Low
		Share of women in managerial positions in agrifood policy implementing agencies ⁺	Advancing
	7. Gender policy monitoring	Scored availability of gender-disaggregated national agrifood statistics	On the way
		Scored gender-disaggregated data included in agrifood performance public reporting	Low
		Agrifood policy implementing agencies conducting gender audits ⁺	Low
		Tracking and monitoring gender goals in the national agriculture policy*	Low
		Tracking and monitoring gender goals in the national climate policy*	Low
		Tracking and monitoring gender goals in the national nutrition policy*	Low
		Tracking and monitoring national gender policy in agriculture*	Low
	8. Women's feedback	Formal mechanism for providing feedback on policy implementation	Low
		Perceived opportunities for women to provide feedback*	Low
	9. Women's leadership in policy evaluation and advocacy	Share of women leadership in government involved in policy monitoring and evaluation ⁺	Advancing
		Share of women leadership in nongovernment sector involved in policy evaluation and advocacy ⁺	Advancing
		Women's perceived leading role in monitoring and review of the national agriculture policy*	On the way
		Women's perceived leading role in monitoring and review of the national climate policy*	On the way
		Women's perceived leading role in monitoring and review of the national nutrition policy*	On the way
		Women's perceived leading role in monitoring and review of the national gender policy in agriculture*	On the way

Source: Author's elaborations.

Note: + Estimates based on the IFPRI/APRNet organization survey for WEAGov pilot (2023); * Indicates perception measurement collected through the IFPRI/APRNet expert survey for WEAGov pilot (2023). Scoring is based on 4-point Likert scale with 1 being the weakest and 4 being the strongest. Color codes mean: 1=very weak, 2=weak, 3=moderate, 4=strong. However, we want to convey with the scoring the general principle that women's full and equal participation in the policy process ("strong") is not an over-achievement, rather should be seen as reaching a target. Thus, we also use the terminology of 1=low, 2=on the way, 3=advancing, 4=at goal.

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