



FLAGSHIP PROGRAMME



WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE

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The Issue

Closing the gender gap in agriculture can have a transformational impact on women's lives and can unleash substantial development co-benefits between gender equality and climate action.

Agriculture remains one of the most important areas of women's work globally with more than a third of employed women in the agricultural sector. Yet women farmers face a number of key structural barriers that limit their access to land, information, finance, infrastructure, technologies and markets. Closing the gender gap in agriculture through informed investments that remove these barriers represents a huge opportunity for women's empowerment, economic development and societal resilience. It has been estimated that equalizing access to inputs could increase agricultural outputs by up to 20 percent in Africa.

At the same time, a changing climate means that there is a shrinking window of opportunity to seize this opportunity. Yet most agricultural policies and investments still fail to consider differences in the resources available to men and women, their roles, labor burdens and the constraints they face. In the absence of concerted efforts to address the gender gap in agriculture in the context of a changing climate, women farmers are at risk of being trapped in a downward spiral. Conversely, key initiatives that address this gap such as secured land tenure, greater financial inclusion and access to information and markets are also essential to accelerate the adoption of climate-smart agricultural practices.

Our Strategy for Change

Improving the climate-resilience of women farmers is one of UN Women's Flagship Programming Initiatives.

UN Women's experience in this field has shown that strengthening resilience requires an integrated approach that simultaneously addresses the structural barriers women farmers face within the context of a changing climate. UN Women therefore has identified the following four priority outcome areas, which will require actions from a coalition of partners to achieve transformative change:

UN WOMEN'S FLAGSHIP PROGRAMMING INITIATIVES

Women's Empowerment through Climate-Smart Agriculture is one of UN Women's Flagship Programming Initiatives designed to ensure that UN Women can deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This Flagship Programme will support national governments to address multiple SDG targets across multiple goals.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THIS PROGRAMME, CONTACT:
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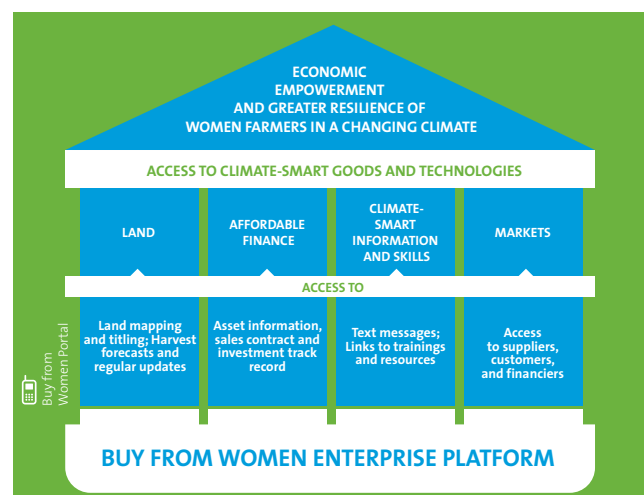
1. Engender climate-smart policies and increase women's land tenure security by building political will and addressing discriminatory social and customary norms. This will facilitate reform of statutory and customary laws, policies and practices to address gender specific barriers, including those related to improving women's access to land.

2. Increase women farmers' access to climate-smart information by strengthening the capacity agricultural extension workers and ensuring that climate information services are accessible, timely and user-friendly for women farmers.

3. Increase women farmers' access to finance to invest in climate-smart agriculture by engendering lending practices of public and private financial institutions, including through directed lending, direct lending, and credit enhancement mechanisms. A changing climate requires a shift from borrowers' credit capacity and traditional loan guarantees towards risk management and sustainable financing.

4. Increase women farmers' access to higher-added value markets by supporting women farmers to form cooperatives, and strengthening their capacity to meaningfully participate in the green value chain. Preferential access through quotas, targets, and tax exemptions for women cooperatives may be required. Investments will be needed in local infrastructure, including post-harvest storage and processing facilities.

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) will be leveraged to facilitate the implementation and scale up of all these efforts. A mobile-based enterprise platform will link women farmers to customers, suppliers and financiers, build their economic identity and enable a rigorous assessment of the value for money of the programme.



FACTS AND FIGURES - WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

- Women comprise some 43% of the agricultural labour force in developing countries (FAO 2011).
- In sub-Saharan Africa, this proportion increases to 59% of employed women being in informal agricultural employment (UN Women 2015).
- Total agricultural outputs in Africa could increase by up to 20% if women's access to agricultural inputs was equal to men's (DFID 2010).
- Less than 20% of agricultural landholders worldwide are women (FAO 2010).
- Only 22% of women in low-income countries hold bank accounts in rural areas (World Bank 2015).

How the Programme works

The Programme will be implemented through a portfolio of country projects and a regional programme for the Sahel supported by a Global Policy Project.

Initially, the Programme will be launched in 12 to 15 pathfinder countries in sub-Saharan Africa. It is expected that the methodologies and experiences will be adapted and extended to self-starting countries. Most country-level projects are expected to be implemented with one or more of UN Women's key partners, including development banks, UN agencies FAO, WFP and IFAD, and non-governmental partners with proven track records. All projects will be implemented in close partnerships with national governments.

The Global Policy Project will support country projects by developing methodologies to assess the gender gap and improve data collection, providing technical assistance, building global and regional partnerships, convening communities of practice, and ensuring knowledge management.

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