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including Research and Teaching — ‘Gender-SMART’
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List of Acronyms

ANR	Agence Nationale de la Recherche (FR)
CICYTEX	Centro de Investigaciones Científicas y Tecnológicas de Extremadura (ES)
CIHEAM	Centro Internazionale di Altistudi Agronomici Mediterranei (IT)
CIRAD	Centre de Coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement (FR)
CUT	Cyprus University of Technology (CY)
GE	Gender Equality
GEP	Gender Equality Plan
ISAS	Institute of Sociology of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic (CR)
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
RFO	Research Funding Organization
RPO	Research Performing Organization
Teagasc	Agriculture and food development authority (IE)
WP	Work Package
WUR	Wageningen University (NL)
YW	Yellow Window (BE)



About Gender-SMART

Gender-SMART is a community of seven European Research Performing Organizations (RPOs) and Research Funding Organizations (RFOs), operating in the broadly framed field of research in food, agricultural and life sciences, supported by two technical partners. This community has committed to the three following operational objectives:

- 1) Seven gender Equality Plans (GEPs) are actively implemented, tackling the following areas of actions: a) building a Gender Equality Culture; b) Developing equal career support measures; c) Reshaping decision-making and governance; d) Integrating gender in funding, research and teaching
- 2) Change is steered beyond the project timeline, as GEPs are co-designed with relevant stakeholders, made visible and accessible to targeted audiences and the broader community, continuously supported by the top management, fully integrated and institutionalized, and adopted by target groups into their daily practices
- 3) Lessons are learnt and good practices are disseminated within and beyond the academia, through engaging stakeholders beyond Europe and designing tools “open to the world”

Gender-SMART adopts a holistic approach combined with a field-specific dimension, the articulation of a sound theoretical framework with more practical knowledge, addressing gender equality as a matter of scientific excellence, as well as a strong commitment to sustainability and openness.





Introduction

As from January 1st, 2022, having a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) in place, has become an eligibility criterion to access Horizon Europe funding for Research Performing Organizations (RPOs), including universities, and Research Funding Organizations (RFOs). . Not only the new (2021) European Union's framework programme for Research and Innovation, requires applicants to have a GEP in place, but it also establishes a new standard for such documents, which are expected to be institutionally approved and publicly available, elaborated upon sufficient data and evidence, backed by necessary human, technical and financial resources, and delivered along with relevant capacity-building activities. This standard also encourages RPOs and RFOs to adopt comprehensive strategies aimed at addressing work-life balance and organizational culture (a), gender-balance in leadership and decision-making (b), gender equality in recruitment and career progression (c), integrating the gender dimension in research and teaching contents (d) and gender-based violence, including sexual harassment (e).

Albeit recent, those developments nonetheless elaborate upon two decades of EU initiatives in this realm, which have increasingly placed the emphasis on transforming organizations and processes to achieve structural, long-lasting changes, notably through addressing their governance. Initiated by the European Commission through the evolutions of the European Research Area since 2012, this agenda has also been backed by EU Member States, as evidenced in the European Council Conclusions of November 2015 or the Ljubljana Declaration adopted in 2021 under Slovenian Presidency of the European Council, which considers GEPs a transformative tool "to achieve long-term and sustainable advancement towards Gender equality in R&I". At national and regional level as well, it is increasingly supported through legal requirements for RPOs and RFOs to adopt GEPs, in place in 13 EU member states and associated countries in 2022, and other supporting provisions such as gender quotas for the governing bodies of public research organizations, or the requirement to publish annual gender equality reports. These efforts are underpinned by the EU Strategy for gender equality 2020-2025, and by the first LGBTQ Rights Strategy adopted by the EU in 2021, which both also highlight the need for developing research on intersecting inequalities.

Those policy steps reveal a paradigmatic shift, by which research performing bodies and universities, as well as regional and national research funding bodies, are bound to review their governing processes and structures from a gender sensitive perspective, to adjust to those new, mutually reinforcing requirements and standards. This task, however, requires policy guidance, with a view to capitalize upon the considerable body of evidence, practices and knowledge accumulated over the past decades by those organizations which designed and implemented comprehensive gender equality strategies or plans, notably as part of EU-funded projects.

Gender-SMART is one of those many initiatives, which purpose is to design and implement holistic gender equality plans. Launched in 2019 under Horizon 2020, it is a community of seven European Research Performing Organizations (RPOs) and Research Funding Organizations (RFOs), operating in the fields of research in food, agricultural and life sciences, and supported by two technical partners with a vast, both theoretical and practical knowledge in mainstreaming gender in research and innovation. This policy document is the contribution of the Gender-SMART community to gendering the governance of research performing and research funding organizations. Considering that policy guidance in this realm should be rooted into the experience of specific domestic (national or regional) and disciplinary (in terms of areas of knowledge) contexts, this document elaborates upon the particular challenges faced by research organizations based in Cyprus, Italy, France, Spain and The Netherlands, operating at different scales (from the regional to the international), and in different policy environments with regard to integrating gender in research and academia. It also considers the peculiarities of addressing the gender dimension in fields such as (international) agriculture and food systems, agricultural innovation for development water and natural resource management or to these domains related rural studies and environmental sciences, where it has long been overlooked.

To make sense of those specificities and to enhance their learning value, also for organizations operating outside this particular realm, this document frames them within the broad context of climate change and climate action, evidencing the necessity for those organizations, to embrace a gender-inclusive understanding of the era-defining challenges we face. Whereas generic guidance already abounds, for RPOs and RFOs to address their governance bodies and mechanisms and develop more extensive notions of scientific excellence, this policy document intends to illustrate what it means in practice. This reaches from strategically framing gender as a core institutional value, through auditing and updating career management or research funding allocation processes, to supporting gender-sensitive field research and international mobility.

First, the document proposes an extensive definition of what gendering research governance refers to in terms of bodies, functions and mechanisms, including funding and evaluation, and how it can be gender biased. Second, it briefly assesses the policy contexts, from the sub-national to the EU level, in which Gender-SMART partners have been operating, and highlights the key developments and hindrances. Third, it showcases the **challenges** posed to the fields of life science, agriculture (for development) and environmental science, through evidencing the relevance of the **nexus gender + climate**. Based on short outlines – or “stories” - of **good practices at partner organizations**, it delivers **recommendations**, taking stock of the experience of our consortium in engaging with internal and external stakeholders and ecosystems, reviewing organizational values or leveraging change beyond the framework of an EU-funded project.

1. Definition and state of the play

1.1 Defining the realm of governance

As for many widely used concepts, there is no canonical definition of governance. Yet, it is usually acknowledged that «governance» exceeds the realm of what is usually understood as the government of organizations and societies. Whereas «government» primarily refers to the formally institutionalized bodies in charge of governing and their actions, «governance» “cover(s) the whole range of institutions and relationships involved in the process of governing” (Peters & Pierre, 2000:1). Formal as well as informal rules of the game and the exercise of power in setting and implementing those rules are at stake in the concept of governance. It is therefore particularly relevant to grasp how institutions work in practice and to focus on processes and a wider range of actors that contribute to interest intermediation and decision-making. It has also gained ground in political science and the sociology of organizations, with the promotion of good governance. Fostering transparency and participation, consulting with communities, policy planning and evaluation have been encouraged as elements of good governance.

This concept is not only useful to capture the broader picture of how governing, decision-making and resource allocation work, but also their growing complexification in specific institutional settings, due to the multiple levels of governance involved (from the local to the supranational), to the development of soft policy instruments or to the expansion from the 1990s onwards of increasingly sophisticated and performance-based public and private management procedures. More specifically, it allows to understand policy planning, evaluation and monitoring systems, scales, rewards and rankings, benchmark instruments, as well as contractual, project- or performance-based funding procedures (as opposed to permanent funding sources) as instruments through which societies and organizations are governed. This broad definition fully applies to the research and innovation sector, and to all kind of organizations, which are part of it, such as universities, RPOs, RFOs or research and higher education evaluation agencies.

In Europe, these organizations have been part of a continuous process of change in which they fundamentally transformed their missions, the way they govern and are governed and how they fund and are funded (Musselin and Texeira, 2014). Through EU-wide, national, and regional reform processes these organizations currently find themselves in a multi-level framework in which regions granted with legislative capacity, national ministries, regional and national funding agencies as well as the regulations and funding schemes established for the European Research Area increasingly define the way these organisations are expected to function, deliver their missions, and interact with each other. This results for each organization, among those the partners in the Gender-SMART consortium, in navigating within complex governance mechanisms and processes, and the presumable interference of a variety of actors, both internal and external. If we apply this wider notion of governance to research and higher education institutions, including research funding bodies, it allows us to look beyond the principles of academic autonomy and freedom as governing principles, and opens to examine the set-up of

what is to be researched and taught, how and to whom, as the output of complex processes that are not in principle exempt of potential biases.

1.2 Gendering governance

Gender scholars have been especially successful in challenging the governance of organizations and societies. They evidenced that most both formal and informal governing instruments tend to reproduce gender stereotypes and biases, and reinforce existing gendered power relations. Women's quantitative (in terms of gender balance) and substantive (in terms of interests represented and by whom) representation in formal decision-making bodies has long been analysed. This led to also analyse the impact of positive actions aimed at increasing their participation at all levels, notably in universities and research bodies (Zippel, Ferree, Zimmermann, 2016; Gamage, Sevilla, 2019). Yet, gender scholarship also highlighted that although merit, excellence, or performance are framed as objective and neutral concepts, these often appear in practice as heavily loaded with gender prejudices, thus also reproducing privileges, rather than fostering quality (Van den Brink, Benshop, 2012; Wieners, Weber, 2021). Similarly, they have shown that the metrics through which the careers of academics and administrative staff in RPOs are managed and enhanced, often carry gender biases and thus contribute to perpetuating vertical and horizontal segregation, just as gender-blind research assessment procedures likely reproduce gender gaps and biases in knowledge production.

Scholars interested in gendering governance have introduced the notion of "governmentality" to further explore governing mechanisms and processes. It induces that organizations and societies are not only governed through formal processes nor exclusively through instruments explicitly serving the purpose of governing (Kunz, 2011, 2016). Instead, it also includes informal rules, ways of doing things, shared knowledge, exclusion and inclusion practices, as well as planning, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, that jointly contribute to how decisions are being made and enforced, and how positions and resources are allocated in a given institutional environment (Waylen, 2014). From that perspective, the design, adoption and implementation of a Gender Equality Plan, can be exemplified as an instrument of (good) governance, aimed at structurally tackling the gender imbalances and bias inherent to the system itself (Nylgren, Fahlgren, Johansson, 2016).

As part of Gender-SMART, the partners have actively engaged their communities with the notion of gender bias and its content in research and innovation, both through capacity-building and the design of measures aimed at preventing such bias. Allegedly, gender-neutral metrics of merit and excellence, gender-blind research and teaching, gender bias in institutional communication have been tackled both at consortium and partners' levels and framed as part of the realm of governance in institutions devoted to producing and transferring knowledge, or to assess and fund public research.

2. Policy contexts for the integration of gender in research governance

Since research governance is multi-level, the policy context(s) of the Gender-SMART partners and how they have been operating will be sketched to understand the diversity of settings in which research governance operates and underline the need to address this from a gender perspective.

2.1 EU Level

Policy developments at the level of EU member states contribute to shape the policy environment in which Gender-SMART partners have been developing their GEPs, though it has been on the EU level that the agenda was successfully pushed and RPOs and RFOs were provided with common standards and resources for GEP design, implementation, and evaluation. Building on the ERA Communication of 2012, the 7th EU Research and Innovation Framework Programme (FP7) introduced the notion of structural change by adding new objectives to those already in place, such as the integration of the gender dimension in research contents and curricula. Under Horizon 2020, the focus was shifted to supporting RPOS in implementing fully-fledged and comprehensive GEPs addressing the full range of gender dimensions in research and the academia. As from 2018, Horizon 2020 projects aiming at developing and implementing GEPs needed to adopt the step-by-step approach defined in EIGE's GEAR Tool, first released in 2016, updated in 2020 and which underwent a complete recast in March 2022.

Along with GEP-focused projects, the European Commission funded several other initiatives in the framework of Horizon 2020 aiming at building capacities for GEP implementation, such as the Community of Practices established under the ACT project, Gender Action, as a spur for EU member states' initiative and accountability towards ERA objectives in this area, and the GE-Academy, devoted to designing and implementing capacity-building activities relevant to advancing gender in research and higher education, and to establish a network of qualified gender trainers. UniSAFE was launched to gather empirical evidence on the prevalence of gender bias and gender-based violence and sexual harassment in this area, involving 45 universities in the largest study carried out so far on the topic. The new GEP eligibility criterion for Horizon Europe, highlighted in introduction to this policy paper, is thus the latest, and perhaps most far-reaching of those cumulative actions, strengthened with the new ERA for Research and Innovation instated in 2020.

Due to the gap identified among higher- and lower-research intensive (or "widening") countries in addressing gender inequalities and bias in research and innovation – with the latter, concentrated in Southern and Central-Eastern Europe, failing to establish supportive policy environments, a primary concern of the EU Commission will be to ensure equal opportunities among Member States, and provide targeted support to less advanced countries, to bridge the gender and innovation gaps. This is notably achieved through establishing a pan-European award scheme for advancing gender in research and the academia (as explored by the CASPER project),

a Center of Excellence collecting and promoting good practices to achieve the ERA objectives, and other support facilities and projects with a clear focus on widening countries.

As members of an EU-funded project fully embracing this agenda, Gender-SMART partners have been especially engaged with this broader approach to gendering research and teaching governance. They have adopted a wide range of actions aimed at establishing gender mainstreaming structures, proper data collection and management systems, training communities or transforming internal processes. Yet, for each partner, actions targeted to gendering governance have also been shaped by specific national and regional features.

2.2 National and regional levels

As per the ERA roadmap 2015-2020, Member States had to develop and implement national Roadmaps or National Action Plans (NAPs). However, as stated in a report on the implementation of the ERA priority on gender equality submitted by Gender Action, not all countries developed a NAP. Efforts at national level have instead remained uneven, and the gap between active and inactive countries has been further widening (Wroblewski, 2020), prompting to reaffirm the importance of achieving sustainable institutional changes, as per the Council Conclusions on the new European Research Area (adopted in 2020) and the Ljubljana Declaration, which was approved by 34 Member States and Associated Countries as well as the European Commission and presented by the Slovenian Presidency in the Competitiveness Council of 28 September 2021. Yet, 3 out of the 5 countries represented in Gender-SMART, namely Ireland, France and Spain, feature among those having the most advanced policy framework to address gender in the governance of research and higher education institutions¹.

Tab. 1 Policy environments at national and regional level (Source: EIGE, 2022, modified)

Country	Policies?	GEP policy	GE Policy for research funding
CY	Yes	No*	No
ES	Yes	Yes	Yes (funding of research on gender in social sciences and humanities)
FR	Yes	Yes	Yes (gender as one of the priority axes of the French National Research Agency (ANR) for its current programme)
IE	Yes	Yes	Yes (funding available for GEP design and for mainstreaming gender in research)
IT	Yes	No	No
NL	Yes	No	No*

* Data interpretation divergent from the one by EIGE

¹ As from the data compiled in the analytical paper submitted with the update of the GEAR tool (EIGE, 2022, unpublished). Final updated information available from: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gear/where>

ANR and CIRAD (France)

In France, policies aimed at achieving gender equality in research and innovation have been significantly reinforced, with the successive enactment of the Law on Public Administration including parity provisions for certain public bodies (2012), the Act on Effective Equality between Men and Women (2014) and the Law on Higher Education and Research (2013), enforcing parity for university governing bodies and the appointment of gender equality officers, thus contributing to establishing a robust legislative framework. Complementarily to legislative measures, policy support has also been strengthened and primarily focuses on fighting sexual harassment and gender-based violence, achieving gender balance in governing bodies and career support and work-life balance. In 2013, the Charter for Gender Equality in Higher Education was published, elaborating upon an earlier initiative of the National Conference of Universities' presidents, which recommended French higher education institutions to adopt broad gender equality strategies and to tackle sexual harassment.

In 2019, a GEP mandate has been established, by which all public institutions should have adopted a GEP by December 2020 (postponed to March 2021). This mandate includes a penalty of up to 1% of the salaries paid by the institutions over a year – an unparalleled sanction in the EU. Following a survey launched in 2019 on RPOs and RFOs gender equality policies and practices, the Ministry of Higher Education and Research issued a Roadmap for effective equality and a template for GEP design which emphasis on decision-making, scientific career management (equal pay and opportunities), work life balance and sexual harassment. A national action plan monitoring committee was also set up in 2019, in which the main RPOs, universities representatives and ANR participate.

But before a law buries this obligation of implementing a GEP, the main French RPOs, the research evaluation council and ANR, the national funding agency, had been encouraged in 2016 by the Ministry of Higher Education and Research, to adopt gender equality as a priority, and to mainstream gender in research evaluation and funding. This reflected in the readiness of the ANR to audit its values and governance practices, and the support received from its top leadership in pursuing this agenda. Similarly, this supportive policy framework has revealed an asset for the coordinating partner, CIRAD, to ensure high-level support to the GEP. Due to the relative priority given to gender issues and the agenda previously pursued by CIRAD, this context also required the GEP team to regularly engage with social partners and other stakeholders.

CIHEAM (Italy)

Unlike the other Gender-SMART partners, CIHEAM Bari is part of an intergovernmental organisation (*Centre de Hautes Etudes Agronomiques Méditerranéennes*) founded in 1962 and bringing together 13 Mediterranean member countries, with four institutes based in France, Greece, Italy and Spain, and a General Secretariat headquartered in Paris. CIHEAM's policy agenda is guided by the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs, 2015), defined in its CAPMED 2025 – CIHEAM Action Plan for the Mediterranean. All institutes have their own governance although their action is also oriented by the CIHEAM's governing board (and the

long-established bilateral relations with international, national and local authorities. CIHEAM Bari operates closely with both the regional government of Puglia, and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In Italy, in 2006, the National Code of Equal Opportunities between Women and Men, established by Legislative Decree No. 198, set the obligation for Public Administrations, and therefore Universities, to adopt a Positive Action Plan (PAP). This three-year Plan must assure the removal of all obstacles hindering equal opportunities at work between men and women.

This Decree was complemented by Law 240 of 2010 on the General Reform of University Education, fostering equal opportunities, gender balance in decision making, extended parental leaves and providing funds for gender equality measures in public universities. The Italian policy framework was further upgraded in 2021, with the launch of the new National Research Programme by the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research, setting targets on gender balance in recruitment committees or the promotion of the gender dimension in research and the approval of the National Strategy for Gender Equality, including the STEM sector.

Although Italy has not been among the most progressive countries on gender frameworks until recently, several latest initiatives at national and regional level (through the participation of various Italian universities in EU-funded GEP projects), and the more pro-active role taken up by the Conference of Italian Rectors, shall be acknowledged. At CIHEAM Bari, these achievements feature on the corporate agenda and nurture the overall organisation's commitment towards SDG 5 pursuing Gender Equality also through the review of its governance practices with a gender lens.

CICYTEX (Spain)

Spain is arguably one of the most advanced policy frameworks for gendering research governance in the European Union, with close to 100% of all RPOs and universities having a GEP in place as of 2021. The Act on Effective Equality between Men and Women (2007), although not focusing on R&I sector, regulates parity in research and higher education institutions. It is complemented by the University Act (2007), which includes provisions on preventing gender bias in recruitment and appraisal, and by the Science, Technology and Innovation Act (2011) that establishes gender mainstreaming as a guiding principle for the research and innovation system. Additionally, royal decrees were enacted in 2019 and 2020, which considerably reinforced the policy framework with regards to equal pay and working conditions and the minimum compulsory contents of the GEPs, also introducing a mandatory GEP requirement for all companies and institutions with more than 50 employees, reinforced by a mandatory monitoring of GEP implementation. Those requirements have been understood as of direct application for universities, although it was later acknowledged that it was not intended to include them. This robust policy architecture is expected to be further tightened with the forthcoming adoption of a new Law on Science, technology and Innovation, due over the first semester of 2022.

At organizational level, GEPs adopted in Spain place the emphasis on data collection, equal opportunity in scientific careers, access to decision-making and awareness raising. Whereas research funding on gender issues had been significant prior to the budget cuts triggered by the 2008 financial crisis, the main nation-wide funding agency, the AEI, adopted its own plan focusing on gendering project calls in 2021, and established under the EU-funded SUPERA project, a network of regional funding agencies committed to advancing gender equality and combatting gender bias in research funding and evaluation. This regional dimension is especially relevant to CICYTEX, a Gender-SMART partner placed under the authority of the regional government of Extremadura. At CICYTEX, the GEP approval process has been negotiated directly with the regional government and the most representative trade unions and tuned to recent policy developments and the legal framework applicable to the regional level. This, in particular, concerned GEP provisions applicable to staff covered by a new regional statute of research staff at CICYTEX. The multi-level dimension of policymaking in quasi-federal Spain yet also revealed in the capacity of CICYTEX Gender-SMART team, to drag attention, and benefit from insights from the national gender equality mechanisms enforced in the realm of science and innovation.

CUT (Cyprus)

As of 2021, Cyprus features among the EU member states with no specific provisions on gender equality in research and the academia, and limited policies in this realm. Those primarily address gender balance in decision-making, the gender pay gap and career support. Whereas training activities exist and are available to research organizations, Cyprus is one of the three EU member states where the L'Oréal-UNESCO prize does not exist yet. It is in this loose policy framework, that Cyprus Technical University developed a GEP as part of Gender-SMART, using this opportunity to drag attention from State institutions and peer organizations, with a few to frame its own plan as a pilot initiative for the whole research and innovation system. It is the reason why CUT strived to engage with policymakers, involving Cyprus parliament and other policy makers in its activities, and building synergies with the European university alliance it is part of to increase GEP legitimacy and accountability towards its goals.

Teagasc (Ireland)

Cyprus situation offers a bold contrast with the one prevailing in Ireland, one of the most advanced policy frameworks in the EU for advancing gender in research, along with France and Spain. There, no-discrimination, recruitment and promotion, equal pay, working conditions and sexual harassment at public higher education and research organizations are tightly regulated under the Employment Equality Acts (1998 - 2015) and the specific piece of legislation covering universities and institutes of technology (1997), by which gender equality policies are made mandatory. The Irish Human Rights Equality Commission Act (2015) requires all public bodies to integrate gender equality assessment into their strategic planning. Unlike in other countries where GEPs have been made mandatory, in Ireland, those are requested in research and the academia only. Moreover, whereas obligations under equality acts in the UK lag behind those established

under the Athena Swan Charter (2004), in Ireland, the generalization of the Athena Swan award scheme in 2014 is largely convergent with policy development at national level, thus creating an enabling policy environment.

As of 2019, the Irish Research Council, the Science Foundation and the Health Research Board require Higher education organizations to be enrolled in Athena SWAN as an eligibility criterion to access research funding, and Ireland is one of the few EU member states where funding is available for GEP implementation. According to EIGE (2022), by the end of 2021, 88 Irish RPOs held an Athena accreditation, and it was foreseen that by 2023, the funding eligibility threshold would be raised to the intermediate accreditation level (Silver). As further evidence of this supportive framework, Irish RPOs make intensive use of gender training for their staff, notably to build capacities among the research staff, to cope with the new Horizon Europe framework. At Teagasc, this enabling context was used to mobilize stakeholders on achieving greater balance in governing bodies and tackle a gender-blind notion of research excellence and merit.

WUR (The Netherlands)

In The Netherlands, the 30 years-old Higher Education and Scientific Research Act contains some references to no-discrimination and requires universities and other higher education organizations to monitor equal opportunities. Yet, universities committed to the goals of the National Action Plan for Greater Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education and Research are bound to the adoption of Diversity plans including gender equality objectives. This, however, does not apply to all universities and in 2021, The Netherlands reported the lowest ration (23%) of RPOs with a GEP in place. This situation, which also reflects in relatively poor performances with regards to gender balance in senior positions and decision-making, contrasts with the comprehensiveness of the National Action Plan adopted for the ERA. Additionally, the broad focus on diversity, possibly to the expense of more holistic and in-depth measures on advancing gender equality while paying attention to intersecting inequalities, has been further reinforced in the aftermath of the Black Live Matters movement (BLM), which has been especially strong at Dutch universities.

At WUR, the Gender-SMART project provided a window of opportunity to harness gender equality measures to this post-BLM diversity agenda, as evidenced in section 4 of this policy document. Due to the framing of gender equality issues as a sub-agenda within broader diversity strategies and in the absence of a supportive policy framework, mainstreaming gender in research governance is often met with organizational resistances and inertia in The Netherlands. Therefore, WUR placed a specific emphasis on linking up this agenda to an inclusive notion of scientific excellence, and on demonstrating – through training activities and thematic conferences, the relevance of gender for the core research agendas carried out at the global oriented university in the fields of life science, agriculture and food system, and natural resource management.

3. Integrating gender in Gender-SMART's core research areas

3.1 Mainstreaming gender in life sciences, agriculture and environmental sciences

A neo-institutionalist approach to gender equality policies (Lombardo and Forest, 2012), shows that in a context of multi-level governance involving local, regional, national and EU instances, efforts aimed at advancing gender equality are deeply influenced by domestic, idiosyncratic factors and often framed through specific discursive patterns around notions of equality and inclusiveness. It is especially the case for notions with disputed meanings (Lombardo, Meier and Verloo, 2009) that those who articulate them steer into different directions. Those discursive framings affect the way gender imbalances and bias are understood and diagnosed. These also influence policy solutions as these are based on those diagnoses (Verloo, 2007) and thus risk to result in resistances and counter-resistances in the implementation of gender equality policies at universities (Tildesley, Lombardo and Verge, 2021).

Yet, in the field of research and innovation, policy environments are not the only ones at stake: disciplines, in the sense of knowledge production areas, are also relevant to address while integrating gender in the governance of research and academic bodies.

Indeed, scientific disciplines or research fields have their own stories of institutionalization by which topics and methods were deemed legitimate and the body of knowledge elaborated is constituted. This is mirrored in the established structures, such as units and departments, professional associations and degrees and in field-specific instances of legitimation such as academic journals or rankings. Altogether, beyond specific institutional settings of each research and academic organization, those instances constitute the instruments through which specific disciplines or research areas are governed. It is therefore important to disentangle institutional and disciplinary contexts, to leverage changes in a way that is relevant to both aspects. With exception of the ANR, whose funding mission virtually applies to all research fields, the Gender-SMART consortium reflects a specialization in the fields of life science, (international) agriculture and food systems, natural resource management and environmental science. It is in this framework, that gendering the governance of research, funding and teaching, has been addressed.

At a first stage, Gender-SMART partners have been confronted with steps and challenges, which are largely common to all organizations endorsing a gender equality agenda, irrespectively of their research domain: assessing knowledge and skills available internally to conduct change, securing resources and support from top leadership engaging stakeholders through participation or establishing gender mainstreaming support structures and data monitoring systems. Once these challenges addressed, specific needs and resistances have nonetheless come to the surface, fueled by both organizational and area-specific features.

For CICYTEX, CUT or Teagasc, those included for instance the gendered structure of regional or national agri-food systems, largely inherited from the past and reflected in horizontal

segregation, in terms of women's contribution to different types of occupations and sectors. For CICYTEX, CIHEAM Bari and CUT, area specificities also included the growing constraints on the research agenda, exerted by climate-induced hazards such as draughts or plagues. For CIRAD, CIHEAM or WUR, three organizations with a strong specialization on agriculture and nutrition for development, operating in international developments scenarios through field projects, contributes to shape the agenda, methods and field research experiences of research staff, in potentially gendered ways. As an example, an extensive survey carried out by CIRAD among staff, revealed that international mobility as prerequisite for career promotion was experienced along heavily gendered patterns, which limited women's career opportunities. At CIHEAM Bari, an inter-governmental organization with projects spreading over Middle East and the South bank of the Mediterranean, inter-cultural dialogue has been both a value and a challenge, notably due to diverging gender contracts across State parties. Inter-cultural diversity also applies to Master and PhD students pursuing their training at CIHEAM Bari and Wageningen University, where at the latter also the echo of the Black Live Matters Movement was amplified due to past colonial and current global focus of WUR, and faced calls for dealing with post-coloniality in an inclusive way.

These multi-layered contexts, also account for the more generic relevance of the gender dimension to their research domains or disciplinary scope of Gender-SMART partner organizations: due to their different contributions to productive and reproductive work, embedded in traditional gendered roles, women and men do not contribute similarly to food agriculture worldwide – although not necessarily in the way widely shared stylized facts point out (see: Doss, 2014), nor to the expansion of organic farming². Nor are they involved to similar extent in the development and uptake of new technologies aimed at increasing productivity (Doss, Morris, 2000; Peterman, Behrman, Quisumbing, 2014) or mitigating the effect of climate change (Jerneck, 2018). Due to the burden of care largely falling upon them, notably in the developing world, women also play a specific role in nutrition, illustrating the deeply gendered nature of the relation of communities to their natural environment, to livelihoods or feeding.

Exploring, for the purpose of capacity-building activities, the gender dimension of the research projects carried out by Gender-SMART partners, revealed the many ways in which gender and sex – and the lack of attention for gender dimension, may affect research design and results. Over the course of the project, at each partner, challenging gender blindness led to acknowledging that gendered power structures, reflected in different relations to (health) risks, trust patterns in food safety systems, water management structures, as well as unequal access to digital skills and products or environmental awareness, can strongly impact the validity, societal relevance and (market) outreach of a research design.

² Studies have argued that gender was one of the variables for determining the uptake of organic farming practices in certain contexts, whereas in others it was associated with women's empowerment. There is no straightforward link between gender and organic farming, though, as this relation is largely dependent on gender contracts within a given environment, and to the overall contribution of women in agriculture.

Whereas generic examples and tools abound, to highlight the potentially gendered nature of research and innovation, home grown projects offer a better learning value, as they reflect the state of the play at each organization and within each field. Challenging how research funding and teaching activities can lead to reproducing gender bias or help to tackle them, further deepened awareness among the Gender-SMART partners communities. It also increased the understanding that whereas enhancing capacities among researchers, evaluators and professors is necessary, it is nevertheless the integration of the gender dimension into research governance that has the power to change the status quo through fostering diversity in leadership and teams and deepening the notion of excellence and merit, to make them truly inclusive.

That is why Gender-SMART partners actively engaged in reframing gender blind notions of merit and excellence in research, through co-designing a set of inclusive values, as well as coaching and other capacity-building activities aimed at evidencing gender bias in the selection and career progression of researchers and other staffs, as well as those affecting the design of research projects. Wherever possible, those activities adopted an area-sensitive focus, making sense of the specific meaning of integrating gender in life science, (international) agriculture and food systems, natural resources management, and environmental studies. Adopting a gender lens, both in research and (research) policy making, goes far beyond counting men and women in a room or a field. Women's representation and participation in every research domain, discipline, project or research body are two legitimate goals, which account only for a fraction of what a gender lens implies. Challenging processes, methods and instruments through which research is delivered, is also at stake. Adopting a gender perspective also entails to change the lens and concepts through which major issues and challenges are framed. This means changing the way realities and problems have been articulated and understood, leading to a specific range of understanding, diagnostics and solutions. A gender lens thus often induces changing both our understanding of the relevant aspects of realities, problems/issues, the effects of partial and the scope of potential understanding and solutions.

The five pillars of integrating gender:

- A) Acknowledge power relations between men and women
- B) Consider the gendered division of work in societies
- C) Include the diversity of experiences brought by A+B
- D) Incorporate and legitimate various forms of knowledges
- E) Challenge gender-blind narratives and frames

This leads to challenging gender-neutral approaches and allegedly “universal” standards or definitions. Integrating gender should also lead to acknowledging the intersection of gender with other characteristics or systems of domination. We can bring this to a test by addressing the most defining issue of our time: **climate change**.

3.2 Adopting a gender lens on climate change

The footprint of human activities on climate has been known for over half a century, and policies to address it have emerged from the late 1980s, leading to the founding moment of the Earth Summit in Rio (1992) and to the UNFCCC coming into force in 1994. It is yet only 20 years later that a gender perspective was adopted: The Gender Work Programme (Lima, 2014), and the Paris Agreement (2015) are two milestones in gendering climate change.



A gender-focused event at COP 20 in Lima (2014)

This long sequence is typical of the path usually taken for integrating a gender dimension in a field where it has long been absent, that can be summarized through the following stages:

- ➔ **Gender blindness:** Gender is not considered relevant to the topic of the research/policy
- ➔ **Awareness** rises about the absence of women both as subject and actors of research or policy area, leading to first actions
- ➔ **A case is built**, that bringing gender diversity would help improving the quality of the research or policy outputs and that this is also about *content*, not only *representation*
- ➔ As women's participation and representation rises, evidence emerges that integrating gender is **not only about bringing women in**, and that "women" do not shape a homogeneous group

Referring to the four, above defined pillars of pillars of integrating the gender dimension, we can first draw intermediate conclusions regarding the articulation of gender and climate.

Power: men and women have an unequal access to land, natural resources, financial autonomy, economic and industrial assets, education, sexual and reproductive rights, and decision-making.

Intermediate conclusion 1:

Women's contribution to climate change and agency to tackle it, are **lower** than men's ones

Intermediate conclusion 2:

Their level of contribution/agency varies in relation to other **intersecting inequalities**

Division of work: productive and reproductive work are unevenly distributed, with women taking the bunch of (often unpaid and undervalued) reproductive work. The gendered **horizontal segregation** of work also reflects in women and men contributing differently to maintaining livelihoods and communities.

Intermediate conclusion 1

Men and women are **differently exposed to the impact of climate change** due to different occupational structures, linked to the unequal distribution of power and assets

Intermediate conclusion 2

Women are potentially **more vulnerable to climate change** due to the gendered division of work

Gendered experiences: women's experience of climate change is framed by the unequal balance of power and the gendered division of productive and reproductive work. As explored by the successive waves of eco-feminism, gendered experiences are also rooted into different relations to the environment.

Intermediate conclusion 1

Gendered experiences of climate change lead to **gendered patterns of climate (in)action**

Intermediate conclusion 2

Gendered **perceptions of climate-induced risks** may vary in relation to other intersecting inequalities and levels of empowerment

Diversity of knowledges: While climate change has long been primarily framed through the knowledge held by a few experts, various knowledges can be mobilized and legitimated in order to tackle it, which are rooted into gendered experiences which occasionally interact with experiences of (post)coloniality.

Intermediate conclusion 1

Knowledge(s) about the gendered dimensions of climate change may be useful to **tackling it**

Intermediate conclusion 2

Specific, **situated knowledge(s)** held by women disproportionately affected by climate change may result **useful to adaptation and resilience pillars of climate action**

Challenging gender blindness: Climate change has been produced by human societies heavily shaped by gender norms, inducing that both its causes and effects may have gender components.

Intermediate conclusion 1

Adapting to and mitigating the effects of climate change may either
reproduce or challenge gender norms

Intermediate conclusion 2

There are **no gender-neutral notions of adaptation, mitigation and resilience**, nor gender-neutral understanding of the skills, innovations or changes needed to address climate crisis.

Based on this brief review through a gender lens, **two main conclusions can be drawn**, which are applicable to all levels where creative adaptation, mitigation and resilience are required, from the local to the transnational, and across all climate-affected communities.

1) It is a system characterized by gendered power structures, combined with unequal accesses to resources, economic assets, education, health, technologies and development, that has produced climate change

2) It is unlikely that a system that reproduces structural inequalities based on gender, race, social class and other characteristics, can undertake the fundamental transformations required to effectively tackle climate change

Therefore, adopting a gender lens on climate change shall consist in unravelling this nexus, and challenging gender-neutral notions of climate action, while consolidating research devoted to the gendered roots of climate change, and the differential impact of climate-induced risks according to gender.

3.2 Framing the gender and climate nexus and the case of gendering governance

Any research or policy agenda aiming at implementing a gender approach to climate action, should take stock of the different articulations of the two issues. This has been one of the main objectives of the study aimed at identifying discourses on gender and climate change articulated by different types of stakeholders in international development policies, programs and projects, commissioned to Sciences Po Paris by the French Development Agency (AFD) in the prospect of the Equality Generation Forum (Forest, Foreste, Hamdi-Cherif et al., 2021). A multidisciplinary team of political scientists, sociologists and economists specialized in the politics of gender and climate action was set up to carry out a comprehensive critical analysis of the policy frames through which the intersection of gender and climate change is tackled. Their preliminary findings were shared with the Gender-SMART Community on the occasion of two thematic events held at CIHEAM Bari in December, 2021, and at CICYTEX in April, 2022, and are partially referred to here, with authors' authorization.

Coined by Mieke Verloo (2007), Critical Frame Analysis (CFA) is a powerful methodology developed in the gender scholarship to analyse how a fragmented information is transformed into a meaningful problem (a diagnosis) to which different solutions (a prognosis) are explicitly or implicitly associated. CFA proved especially useful to analyse concepts, such as gender and climate change, usually filled with very different, often conflicting meanings. Building upon an up-to-date state of the art, a sample of 54 organizations was defined, including 14 international organizations, 12 national development agencies from the Global North, 10 transnational NGOs, 11 communities of experts and practitioners, and 7 multilateral funding agencies and regional development banks (Fig.1). A body of 800 strategic documents, policy briefs, instruments and project-related documents addressing the nexus of gender and climate was referenced (Fig. 2). A grid comprising of 150 codes was set-up in English, French and Spanish, to identify the main core concepts, agendas and approaches applied by above-mentioned categories of stakeholders to gender and climate issues. Once all documents coded, a software-based cross analysis was carried out and 8 discursive frames identified.

Fig.1

Composition of the sample of documents (per type of organization)

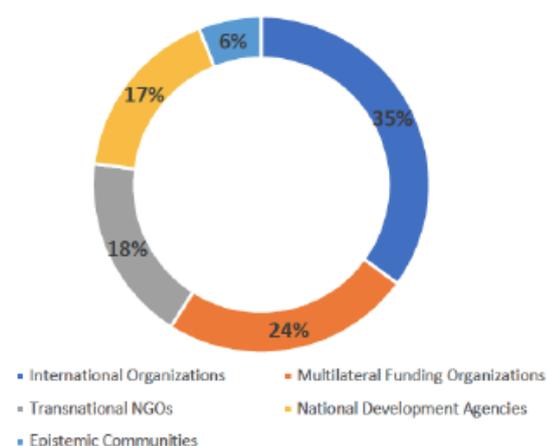
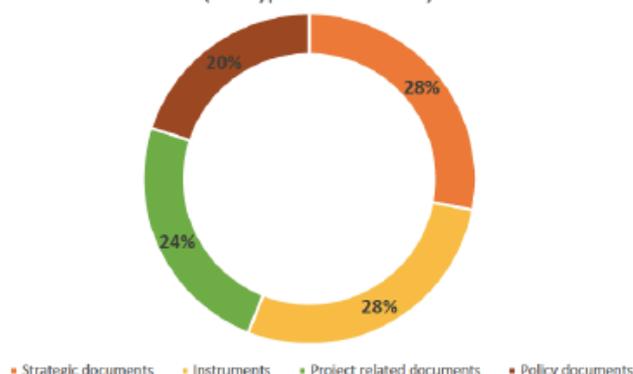


Fig. 2

Composition of the sample of documents (Per type of document)



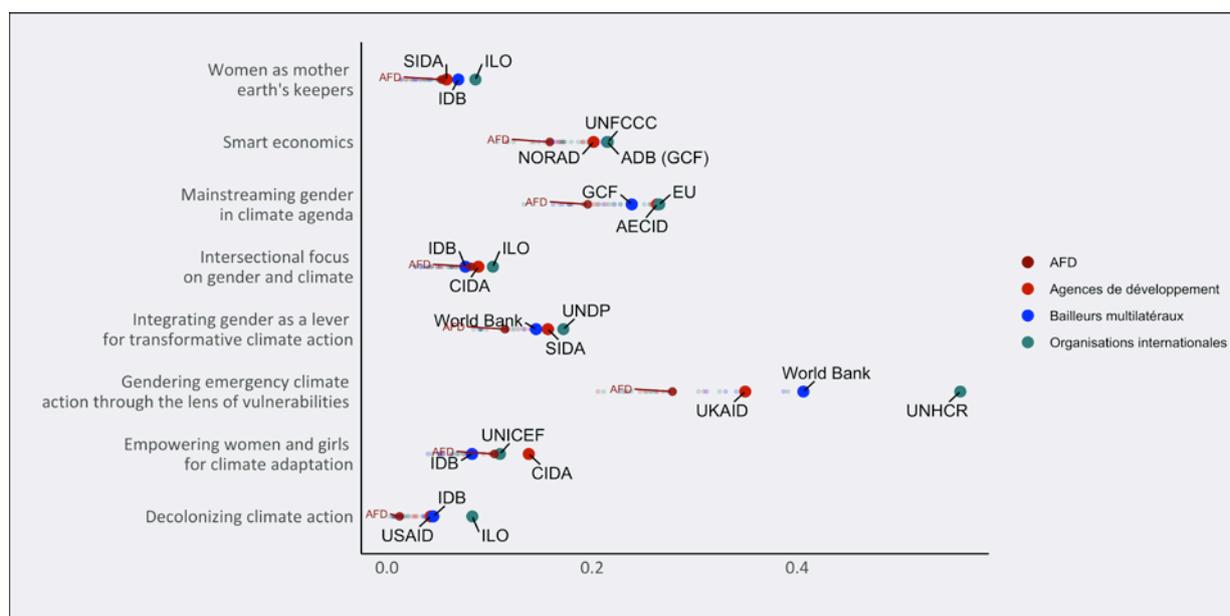
Source: Forest, Foreste, Hamdi Cherif et al. (2021)

This repository, arguably the largest ever constituted, demonstrates the growing relevance of the gender and climate nexus to major international development and climate action stakeholders. Each frame consists in a specific understanding of the gender and climate nexus, associated with the use of specific concepts, the combination of different areas of actions and privileging one or several pillars of climate action. While several frames usually coexist, one or two of them have been identified as dominant for each organization, and three frames tagged as predominant for the whole sample. Yet, this “podium” is different for each category of stakeholders and each organization within each category, thus revealing competing approaches and discourses regarding gender and climate. For each category of organization, the presence the different frames was determined in terms of the relative frequency of the smart codes (combination of codes) associated to each frame.

Tab. 2 Hierarchy of frames, per category of organization

Cadre interprétatif	Bailleurs multilatéraux	Organisations internationales	ONG transnationales	Agences nationales	Communautés épistémiques
<i>Gendering emergency climate action through vulnerabilities</i>	3	1	1	1	1
<i>Gendering climate change as smart economics</i>	1	2	2	2	2
<i>Mainstreaming gender in climate change agenda</i>	2	4	4	3	3
<i>Empowering women and girls for climate adaptation</i>	4	3	3	4	4
<i>Integrating gender for transformative climate action</i>	5	6	5	5	5
<i>Intersectional focus on gender and climate</i>	7	5	6	6	7
<i>Women as mother earth's keepers</i>	6	7	7	7	6
<i>Decolonizing climate action</i>	8	8	8	8	8

Fig. 3 Use of the frames by selected actors in the three main categories



Source: Forest, Foreste, Hamdi Cherif et al. (2021)

The occurrences of the 8 identified frames were also related to the key policy agendas from which gender and climate is addressed. Agriculture and food security constitute the second most frequent area where gender and climate are articulated by the organizations represented in the sample. Without going here into the details of each frame as documented by this study, the analysis shows that the nexus gender and climate change is primarily framed through:

- a) The **vulnerabilities** to which women and girls are exposed, especially in post-disaster or forced displacement scenarios, urging international and national development stakeholders to address those vulnerabilities,
- b) The **role of women as economic agents** in the prospect of the transition to greener, climate-resilient economies, prompting to mainstream gender and/or designing specific actions in the smart economics of climate transition.

c) **Gender mainstreaming**, which remains one of the main drivers for addressing gender in climate action and does not only constitute a method, but also a framing of its own, supporting a technical approach to gender & climate.

d) The lens of **women's and girls' empowerment and inclusion**, based on a traditional distribution of gender roles and without further challenging gendered power relations.

Along with four dominant frames, the study evidenced four challengers, articulating a more transformative understanding of the nexus gender and climate: **Integrating gender as a lever for transformative climate action and justice** and **adopting an intersectional approach to gender and climate** are both on the rise among transnational NGOs, and made their way at a few national development agencies, including the AFD. A frame rooted into different streams of eco-feminism and their encounter with more traditional approaches linking women with the preservation of nature remains present among a few NGOs such as Caritas or Christian Aid, as well as international organizations as the WFO and ILO. Although marginal, a **decolonizing approach to gender and climate** emerges at some multilateral funding organizations such as the Green Climate Fund or the Interamerican Development Bank.

The study points out several directions for improving the understanding of the gender and climate change among the international development and climate community:

- ➔ Although more vulnerable to the impact of climate change, women and girls cannot be solely addressed as victims. Their potential contributions to shaping solutions, as well as the relevance to challenge gendered power relations and assets distribution for building more resilient societies, should also be acknowledged, and devoted greater attention.
- ➔ Framing gender and climate through the role of women as economic agents should entail a full and explicit recognition of their disproportionate contribution to unpaid reproductive and care work, of their presence in large segment of informal economies, and help challenging gendered horizontal and vertical segregation in access to land property, paid work and financial agency.
- ➔ Empowering women and girls should entail challenging the status quo of gendered power relations, and not be limited to including women and girls in existing policies/programs/projects or designing specific actions.
- ➔ As they primarily focus on women's vulnerabilities and their role as economic agents in fundamentally unequal and segregated economic structures, combined with a rather technocratic approach to gender mainstreaming, the organizations of our sample largely fail to adopt a transformative agenda.

- ➔ This entails a lack of acknowledgement of the powerful lever that transforming societies towards greater gender equality would constitute for resolutely acting upon the causes and consequences of climate change.
- ➔ Consciously drawing inspiration from more transformative frames, and from those designed in the Global South over the last decade of climate action diplomacy, can certainly support the advent of a more structural understanding of this nexus, and facilitate its diffusion to the larger public.

The study thus shows that most widespread framings of the gender and climate nexus fall short to address how both issues are interwoven. This is mainly due to those frames being path dependent to the typical gender blindness that has long prevailed among stakeholders taking up the agenda of climate action. The unachieved diffusion of the Gender and Development (GaD) framework in international development research and policies, is also at stake, as the study evidences that the narrower focus on including women in development policies, which largely fails to account for structural power relations among gender, still largely coexists with a more comprehensive GaD framework. But these results simultaneously call attention upon the relevance of gendering the governance of research organizations devoted to supporting climate action in a number of fields, including the ones particularly represented in the Gender-SMART Community. Indeed, it highlights that for effectively addressing the gender dimension of climate change, new research agendas and methods are to be designed, for which changes are required in processes, research agenda settings, research assessment, evaluation and funding, so that on this defining issue, crucial gender aspects can be taken on board.

This is why the experience of initiatives such as Gender-SMART is so valuable: drawing upon specific legislative, policy and organizational contexts, Gender-SMART partners embarked in gendering their respective research governance structures, initiating different experiments and initiatives, which, together, reflect the scope of issues, processes and structures to be challenged from a gender lens.

4. Gender-SMART stories on gendering research governance

Below we summarize key learnings of Gender-SMART, in form of short stories reflecting, for each implementing partner, what gendering governance means in practice. As for any “good practice”, those briefly told in this section are largely context-dependent, evidencing specific windows of opportunity for change, organizational specifics as well as different configurations of stakeholders. However, beyond what is particular to each context of implementation, they intend to bring a leaning value, in terms of challenging norms, practices, processes and ways of doing things that are core to the governance of research organizations and universities³.

4.1 ANR: Building upon core values a shared culture of evaluation

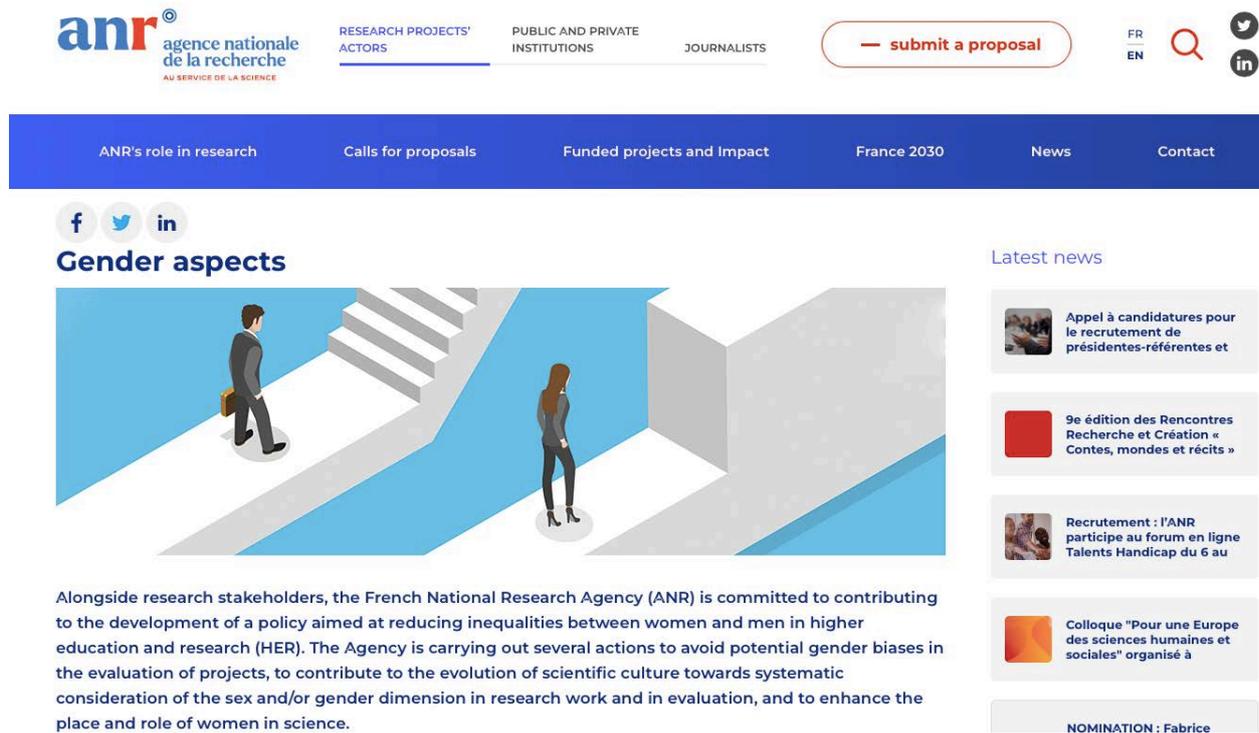
Founded in 2005, the French National Research Agency integrated gender equality in its broader action plan back in 2017, and - as a fundamental principle, into its Charter for deontology and scientific integrity, adopted in 2018. Engaged, as of 2019, in a participatory process to define its core values, the ANR decided to adopt a gender lens on the whole process, and to challenge those values in the making from a gender perspective, questioning whether those were enabling gender equality or requiring to be expanded in order to build a shared culture of equality. From the very start, this path of change intended to challenge how decisions are being taken and by whom, who is believed to be habilitated to represent the Agency in a variety of settings or how research assessments are being delivered. A Working group was set up and workshops were organized to reframe ANR’s core values of “equity”, “transparency” and “quality”, involving stakeholders from across the organization.

Integrated in the Gender Equality Plan, this process was understood as foundational, for a shared culture of fair, unbiased evaluation to be further strengthened through rising awareness and building capacities to prevent gender bias. Therefore, along with measures targeted on gendering career management processes or preventing sexual harassment among staff, the GEP of the ANR primarily engaged with organizational culture and with its core business: evaluating and funding research. To effectively implement its core values, the Agency:

- 1) Enhanced the quality and availability of sex disaggregated and gender-relevant data about evaluation committees, submitted projects’ teams and other aspects
- 2) Built up awareness and capacities to tackle gender blindness/bias through awareness-raising, coaching and training activities

³ These “stories” were collected from implementing partners by technical partner Yellow Window, as they progressively emerged as a consistent set of practices. Key impact drivers were considered, such as embeddedness in broader institutional practices and processes, using windows of opportunity for changes or supporting stakeholders’ engagement.

- 3) Elaborated resources for gender sensitive organizational communication and mainstreamed the attention for the gender dimension throughout its interaction with the broader French research ecosystem
- 4) Further increased interactions with European peer organizations initiated as part of the Gender-Net Plus ERA-NET, a program bringing together RFOs from 13 countries to integrate the gender dimension in Research Funding, and Science Europe, a platform as part of which the ANR participated first in the “Gender and Diversity” working group and currently in the new research culture one whose aim is among other topics to revise the first guide published by SE in 2017 and to go further on gender equality in research and academia.



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Gender aspects

Alongside research stakeholders, the French National Research Agency (ANR) is committed to contributing to the development of a policy aimed at reducing inequalities between women and men in higher education and research (HER). The Agency is carrying out several actions to avoid potential gender biases in the evaluation of projects, to contribute to the evolution of scientific culture towards systematic consideration of the sex and/or gender dimension in research work and in evaluation, and to enhance the place and role of women in science.

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NOMINATION : Fabrice

Since 2017, the ANR has been carried out a gender screening of the projects submitted and selected of its general open calls, and released analyses revealing a steady increase in projects submitted by women (+5 points between 2015 and 2020). This increase applies to all funding programs and is slightly more important for the JCJC “Young Researchers” instrument (+6 points). In December 2020, the ANR co-organized with CIRAD, an online conference devoted to the gender dimension in research, aimed at building the case for tackling gender bias in research evaluation and delivery. Targeted to French-speaking researchers and evaluators, the conference was held under the patronage of the Minister of Research and Higher Education, who introduced the debates jointly with the CEOs of the ANR and Cirad. During this conference, data and good practices were shared, as well as case studies from agriculture for development presented by CIRAD, demonstrating the value of a gender perspective for ensuring research quality.

4.2 CIHEAM: Training new generations and triggering a spill over effect

CIHEAM –International Center for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies –, an intergovernmental organization established in 1962, is active, inter alia, in the field of sustainable agriculture, fisheries and food systems, with a focus on the inclusive growth of rural and coastal Mediterranean territories. In its Action Plan for the Mediterranean (CAPMED 2025), built around UN Sustainable Development Goals, including SDG 5 on Gender Equality, CIHEAM defined 15 thematic priorities under four flagship initiatives: 1) Protect the planet; 2) Food Security and Nutrition; 3) Inclusive Development and 4) Crises and Resilience. Under Inclusive Development, CIHEAM addresses, among others, ‘gender equality and participation of vulnerable groups’ by investing in new generations and fragile territories.

Fig. 4 CIHEAM priorities for UN SDGs (CAPMED 2025)



CIHEAM Bari - one of the four CIHEAM's institutes, is a partner of Gender-SMART project consortium. However, before joining the project, it was already involved in women's empowerment in the Mediterranean, primarily addressing gender equality through women's inclusion in projects and women-focused programs., As part of capacity-building activities, the above projects and programs were reviewed showing that a comprehensive understanding of gendered power and social structure was only rarely achieved, thus largely failing to challenge traditional roles or stereotyped occupational structures, which is also reflected in women-focused projects. Yet, by acknowledging that agriculture, water management and coastal activities across the Mediterranean are deeply rooted into cultural and historical contexts, with variegated but ubiquitous gender dimensions, CIHEAM Bari placed the emphasis on training new generations of researchers. Integrating the discussion around gender equality in its broader practice of intercultural dialogue, capacity-building activities were focused on cohorts of Master,

PhD and Post-doc students, raising their awareness on gender bias and strengthening their ability to tackle the gender dimension from their respective national and education backgrounds.

A dual thematic focus was also adopted, to tackle gender-blind and gender-biased notions of excellence (A), both for staff and advanced students, and to address the gender dimension of climate change (B), a crucial challenge to the Mediterranean, African and Middle East countries represented at CIHEAM, but also to the Institutes' research teams, in the frontline of adaptation, mitigation and resilience through developing sustainable practices and fighting climate-induced threats to biodiversity. Evidencing how adopting a gender dimension can positively impact research quality, outputs and outreach, activities carried out at CIHEAM Bari were also intended to stimulate knowledge sharing and transfer across CIHEAM institutes in Montpellier (FR), Zaragoza (ES) and Chania (GR). This could be achieved through mobilizing CIHEAM's General Secretariat in Paris, for which a training session on inclusive GEPs was jointly delivered by YW and CIHEAM Bari team for the Headquarters to design its gender mainstreaming strategy, and extending online capacity-building opportunities to other CIHEAM Institutes.

4.3 CIRAD: From institutional dialogue to institutional action

At CIRAD, the French leading research body for agriculture and development, institutional dialogue on gender equality had been already established prior to coordinating the Gender-SMART project. Several initiatives had been undertaken, with the participation of social partners, including carrying out an organizational survey in 2016, which notably evidenced gendered patterns for international mobility – a core aspect of research trajectory at CIRAD. For this reason, GEP aspects related to recruitment, career management and progression, were subject to a development path-taking place as part of this broader institutional dialogue. Gender-SMART was yet instrumental to adopting a more comprehensive approach to organizational change for gender equality, notably with view to embedding gender equality into CIRAD's governance (GEP Axis 1) and integrating the gender dimension in research contents (GEP Axis 2).

AXE 1
Intégrer l'égalité professionnelle dans la gouvernance et le fonctionnement de l'institution

- Construire une culture d'égalité femmes-hommes au sein de l'entreprise.
- Réaliser l'égalité dans l'emploi et le recrutement.
- Réaliser l'égalité dans les parcours professionnels.
- Concilier vie privée et vie professionnelle.



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AXE 2
Intégrer la dimension « genre » dans la stratégie scientifique et partenariale

- Intégrer la dimension « genre » dans la stratégie scientifique.
- Intégrer la dimension « genre » dans la stratégie partenariale.



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AXE 3
Promouvoir l'action du Cirad sur les questions d'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes

- Communiquer en externe sur l'approche égalité professionnelle femmes-hommes au Cirad.



© Cut

Gendering governance, at CIRAD, involved the adoption of gender-sensitive communication practices, tackling recruitment and access procedures to decision-making positions to make them more inclusive or drafting a charter of values fostering equality and inclusiveness. Built around a strong collective ethos, strengthened through regular organization-wide events as “CIRAD Days” aimed at developing a sense of belonging among staff with different backgrounds, affiliations, and mobility paths, CIRAD also made sure to mainstream gender across key organizational events. Regularly evidencing top-leadership support to the gender equality agenda, Gender-SMART coordinator placed a specific emphasis on internal and external communication, giving visibility to female researchers and gender-related topics, and the dissemination of good practices in adopting a gender lens in the intercultural contexts of the development scenarios where CIRAD researchers are bound to intervene.

The sustainability-driven approach adopted by CIRAD team, involves building a community of practices around the integration of gender in research contents, mainstreaming gender equality requirements in frameworks for international partnerships, but also more community-oriented actions devoted to establishing a strategy for gender-biased free recruitment and management processes, enhancing work-life balance or supporting parenthood. For CIRAD, gendering governance has been framed as a lever for achieving overarching cultural and organizational changes, with view to build a sustainable and inclusive organization where all knowledges are equally valued. This is why CIRAD also leveraged this gender equality agenda in exerting its advocacy role within the broader research for development communities, seizing opportunities to strengthen the nexus between gender and excellence.

4.4 CICYTEX: From peripheral to pioneer? Bridging regional development and gender

Established in 2010 under the Regional Law for Science, technology and Innovation of the Extremadura Region, in South-Western Spain, CICYTEX is an autonomous entity responding to the Regional Ministry for Economy, Science and the Digital agenda. As from 2022, it integrates four institutes devoted to agricultural, forestry ecological and food research. Its areas of specialization reflect the geographical and socio-economical specificities of a vast territory largely devoted to extensive farming, sharing various (agri-)cultural specificities such as cork production with neighbouring Portugal and which has long been struggling with a lack of access to infrastructures and internal migration. As extended as the Netherlands (41,000 square kilometers), Extremadura only counts with 1 million inhabitants (-0,4% in 2021) and is the poorest autonomous community of mainland Spain, with over 12% of its population at risk of poverty (INE, 2021). Not only agriculture, forestry and food industry constitute major sources of income, which evolution conditions regional development, but Extremadura is also confronted with the impact of longer-term challenge including climate change and ageing. CICYTEX is therefore a crucial asset for the regional government, with a major role in addressing regional economic, agricultural, environmental, and demographical challenges.

In this context, gendering regional research governance through Gender-SMART was seized as a window of opportunity for projecting regional science and innovation into a new era, building upon policy developments taking place both at the regional and national level. Tightly framed by the adoption of a new regional (public) research staff' statute and by the implementation of newly enacted requirements for GEP adoption in research organizations at national level (See: section 2: 9), which notably requests the active involvement of trade unions, GEP design and implementation at CICYTEX places a particular emphasis on work culture, recruitment and career management, leadership, gender sensitive communication and combatting sexual harassment and gender-based violence, also mirroring the pioneering action of Spain in this realm. Yet, adopting a broader lens on gender and research governance, CICYTEX GEP also contemplates action on integrating the gender dimension in research projects, as well as gender equality criteria for joint projects with the local industry.



Regional policy stakeholders in the fields of economy, R&I and gender equality were reached out throughout the process, not only securing support but also granting CICYTEX with a more far-reaching mandate to inspire other regional entities with innovative policies. In delivering this mandate, CICYTEX also put itself on the Spanish map by securing capacity building opportunities from the Women and Science Unit (UMYC) of the national Ministry of Science and Innovation, the Spanish Research Agency (AEI) and the Spanish Foundation for Science and Technology (FECYT). Actively engaged with, regional and national stakeholders were reunited with European partners from Gender-SMART and other sister projects as SUPERA, confronting CICYTEX pioneering initiatives with regional and global challenges, such as horizontal and vertical segregation in the regional agri-food system or gendered aspects of climate change. Bridging regional development, innovation and gender gaps was thus presented as a same, comprehensive agenda, garnering considerable regional press attention for CICYTEX's innovative stance and its (female) leadership.

4.5 CUT: Leveraging national stakeholders and the EU+ university alliance

Established in 2004, as the second university of Cyprus after the one founded in Nicosia in 1989, Cyprus Technological University is one of the main innovation beacons of the country, playing a pivotal role notably in the realm of agriculture and local food and wine industries. In its mission statement, CUT pledges to establish itself as a pioneering institution in delivering applied research and achieving internationally renowned excellence, committing to transferring knowledge to society and the industry in order to bring economic, social and environmental benefits. It also intends to play a “catalytic role in the social dialogue, providing substantiated proposals for important socio-economic issues”. It is with these values in mind, as a socially responsible universities fully engaged in the European Research Areas, that CUT has been

contributing to advancing gender equality policies in Cyprus. The first Cypriot university to adopt a GEP in a EU member state without any specific national policy framework for advancing gender equality in research and innovation (EIGE, 2021), it provided inspiration for other RPOs of the Island to adopt GEPs meeting Horizon Europe Requirements, as the University of Cyprus or Cyprus Cancer Research Institute.



Gender equality panel at EUt+ conference, CUT, Cyprus, 09.2021

Yet, CUT intended to expand its outreach beyond fellow Cypriots RPOs, and convened in September 2021 a ground-breaking event on occasion of the meeting of the European University of Technology (EUt+), one of the EU-wide universities' alliances funded by the European Commission since 2019. The panel "EUt+, a beacon of equal opportunities for all" not only intended to share knowledge and good practices among the organizations in-

involved in the alliance, but to publicly articulate gendering research governance with innovation and excellence. Key national stakeholders were involved in the discussion, including the President of the Parliament of Cyprus, Annita Demetriou, the Advisor at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on gender mainstreaming in foreign policy and the Officer of the Commissioner of Administration and the Protection of Human Rights. Nationally, this discussion arguably constituted a milestone for advancing national policies in this realm, while at the EU level, it represented one of the first demonstrations of the specific responsibility held by European university alliances in achieving the ERA's objectives on gender equality and the gender dimension in research. In May 2022, CUT will further strengthen the thematic component of its strategy for gendering research governance, convening an event to reflect upon the transferability and scalability of the practices developed under Gender-SMART.

4.6 Teagasc: A gender lens on sustainability and competitiveness

Teagasc, the Irish Agriculture and Food Development Authority, set out in its Statement of Strategy 2021-2024, a holistic concept of sustainability that enshrines four dimensions: economic, social, environmental and innovation. Teagasc endorses the development of the Irish agri-food sector as its primary responsibility, in a country where this sector provides 7% of jobs and accounts for over 60% of indigenous manufactured exports in 2020 (Irish Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, 2021). This responsibility, however, requires the authority to support the development of a sustainable food system relying upon a powerful concept of the circular economy in its drive to achieve SDGs. Also embracing the One Health concept which enhances the imbrication of soil, livestock and human health, this approach pursues for instance

increasing the profitability of the beef and dairy sectors while reducing their carbon print and demonstrating the value chain of less intensive farming. To achieve those goals and support the sustainable growth of the Irish agri-food sector, Teagasc strategy contemplates fostering diversity and gender balance in an organization still affected by horizontal and vertical segregation. Gender-SMART nonetheless led to significantly expanding Teagasc’s ambitions in terms of integrating gender in governance, as reflected in its GEP’s four strategic objectives.

OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

We have defined four strategic objectives which provide clarity and support on how we deliver the GEP.

1.

CREATING A GENDER DIVERSE CULTURE

We believe that organisations can be powerful platforms for social change and that it is our responsibility to further gender equality. Creating a culture of equality isn’t just the right thing to do; it’s also the smart thing. It empowers us to innovate, build deeper connections with our stakeholders and ultimately become a better organisation.

2.

RESHAPING DECISION-MAKING AND GOVERNANCE

Governance is key to delivering gender equality results. Meaningful changes on the ground require a coordinated, competent and powerful whole-of-organisation commitment, and clear and effective mechanisms in place within and across Teagasc to be able to translate policies, programmes, services and budgets into concrete benefits for men and women.

3.

DEVELOPING EQUAL CAREER SUPPORT MEASURES

Achieving gender balance requires meaningful organisational change that addresses and acknowledges hidden biases. Teagasc is committed to overcoming the constraints that act as barriers to the promotion of women such as unconscious bias, biased recruitment and biased promotion processes. We will continue to create support mechanisms to ensure all women in the organisation reach their full potential.

4.

INTEGRATING GENDER IN RESEARCH, TEACHING AND FUNDING

We are committed to the equitable and fair treatment of both genders in assessing applications for funding, and also in ensuring that the design and conduct of research considers gender influences and issues. Our renewed focus on integrating gender in research, teaching and funding will be reflected in equality of opportunities and will ultimately maximise the quantity and the quality of our research.

Our Gender Values

Equal Opportunities

Teagasc will ensure that everyone in Teagasc will have equal opportunities to achieve their potential.

No Barriers

Teagasc will ensure there are no barriers to achieving gender equality within the organisation.

Active Inclusion

Teagasc will actively ensure that all voices in the organisation are heard and that staff are empowered to share their views and ideas.



Reshaping decision-making and governance (Objective 2) relies upon a set of core gender values, challenging a gender neutral notion of merit and excellence and reviewing decision-making processes.

“ Teagasc will integrate a gender dimension into all stages of the research process, from the initial research idea to the dissemination of results. ”

Integrating the gender dimension in research content also stands out and is framed as a matter of competitiveness and ability to deliver quality and market outreach, in a country where due to the combination of EU and domestic research policy frameworks,

integrating gender has become mandatory for all RPOs, thus increasing the collective ability of the Irish R&I system to comply with Horizon Europe requirements. This emphasis was reflected in Teagasc’s high interest in receiving capacity-building activities delivered under Gender-SMART.

4.7 WUR: Confronting intersectionality and gendering research practices

Wageningen University and Research (WUR), which brings together a university and a research foundation, is defining their focus on three overlapping core areas: Food, feed and biobased production (1), Natural resources and living environment (2) and Society and well-being (3). Whereas WUR had adopted an action plan for gender balance in teams in 2013, and included the objective of increasing gender diversity in its Strategic Plan 2019-2022, joining the Gender-SMART project constituted a milestone in gendering its governance. The project's implementation and the subsequent GEP design process, took place at a moment when the Black Lives Matter movements hit Dutch universities, increasingly resonating among diverse university communities. At WUR, where over 25% of students are coming from abroad, representing more than 100 nationalities, protests held in 2020 eventually led to the opening of a formal institutional dialogue aimed at promoting greater diversity, tackling racism and discussing the decolonization of research and teaching. This encouraged WUR not only to take further pledges to respecting the different "backgrounds, religious beliefs, sexual orientations, gender identities and functional limitations" of its staff and students – thus embracing a multiple discriminations agenda, but also to launch a research project called DARE. The project, standing for Decolonization, Anti-Racism, Anti-discrimination, Equity and Equal changes, with view to both document and analyze systemic racism, notably with a view to improve reporting mechanisms. A bridge was created with the agenda of Gender-SMART, to inspire participants to the Black Lives Matter-driven institutional dialogue with a gender+ approach adapting the structural change focus implemented in the project, to a broader set of systemic discriminations.

WUR also invested significant project resources in building capacities for its research staff to integrate the gender dimension in research as Horizon Europe's new criteria caught part of the research community unprepared, and initiated work on gendering curricula and teaching practice, in a context of growing demand from the student community. In both cases, specific attention was brought to WUR's core research and teaching areas. In October 2021, WUR and Gender-SMART teamed up with the GENDER Platform of the CGIAR, a global consortium for international agricultural research organizations delivering research on food security to host the 4 days online global Conference Cultivating Equality – Advancing Gender Research in Agriculture and Food Systems.



Cultivating Equality

Advancing Gender Research
in Agriculture and Food Systems



GENDER
Platform



Home

Conference objectives

Themes and perspectives

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Conference Programme

12-15 October 2021

This year, the UN Food Systems Summit calls for “bold actions to transform the way the world produces and consumes food” to advance the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Gender equality is a pre-condition for achieving these goals and generating sustainable and resilient agricultural and food systems.

Welcome to the
Cultivating Equality
2021 event page!

Click [here](#) for the
plenaries and the
programme.

Click [here](#) to register
for the conference.

This online conference, one of the milestone events held under Gender-SMART with the participation of high-profile keynote speakers, highlighted Gender Equality as a pre-condition for generating sustainable and resilient agricultural and food systems, building the case for virtuous synergies between advancing equality in societies at large, and creating sustainable agricultural, rural and food systems in the context of climate change. The conference resolutely adopted an intersectional focus, evidencing how the intersection of gender with other inequality grounds such as social class, age or ethnicity, is shaping scenarios for marginalization and social exclusion.



Concluding recommendations

The stories briefly summarized above, tell us about Research Funding and Research Performing Organizations committed to transforming their governance towards greater gender+ inclusiveness and integrating the gender dimension in research, teaching and evaluation processes and contents. Together, they evidence that gendering research governance is about delivering comprehensive organizational change, starting from core values, through management and decision-making processes, to communication, regional, national and international partnerships, knowledge production and knowledge transfer. Each of the partner organizations involved in Gender-SMART, seized its own window of opportunity for change: the definition of new core values; institutional dialogues opened on working conditions or inclusiveness, and internationalization. Those windows of opportunities were shaped both by domestic organizational and policy frameworks and specificities, and by transnational dynamics in the realms of gender equality and tackling intersecting inequalities. Europeanization processes in the field of research and innovation, either through the diffusion of ERA priority for gender equality in R&I or the implementation of Horizon Europe's new criteria, have paved the way for those organizations to decisively advance the gender equality agenda. It is yet their participation in an EU-funded initiative aimed at co-designing and implementing comprehensive Gender Equality Plans drawing upon in-depth diagnoses and backed by sufficient knowledge, skills and resources, which provided them with the fundamental impulse to move forward.

From their stories and cumulative experience, one may draw the following generic recommendations, directed to all research bodies committed to integrating gender in the governance of research, research funding and teaching:

➔ **Review your core values and mission statement from a gender lens**

Research organizations deploy their activities around a set of core values and/or missions, usually briefly detailed in publicly available strategic documents and further disseminated and communicated throughout the organization. Engaging stakeholders in a participatory process to reassess whether those core values/missions address or support gender equality and gender sensitive research processes, will help strengthening their validity and applicability, while ensuring that the organization is tuned with SDGs, ERA priorities as well as national or regional commitments to advancing gender equality.

➔ **Initiate or expand institutional dialogue to address gender and other inequalities**

Gender-SMART and other “sister projects” have demonstrated the value of stakeholders’ engagement and participation in the change process, for which gendering governance should be embedded into a broader institutional dialogue aiming at fostering diversity, acknowledging intersecting inequalities and favoring inclusiveness in decision-making, recruitment and career management, evaluation and assessment, as well as knowledge production, transfer and dissemination. As such institutional dialogues occasionally pre-exist, in a form or another, to the design of a gender equality strategy, hacking those in place to expand their scope and depth, and promoting the use of participatory methods, should be considered where appropriate.

➔ **Connect to the organization's core business**

This advocacy document, through the case of gendering the governance of research bodies primarily devoted to life sciences, agriculture, agriculture for development and food systems, highlights that pursuing a gender agenda should be tightly imbricated with the RPO's or RFO's core research areas or activities: this not only better supports stakeholders' participation and commitment to the strategy overarching goal, through evidencing the benefits of a gender approach for the quality of knowledge production, transfer or evaluation, but also evidences more broadly that adopting a gender lens can serve the achievement of simultaneous goals of the organization, and its capacity to address crucial environmental, economic and societal challenges such as climate change.

➔ **Identify and address your windows of opportunities**

Integrating gender in governance, especially if considering the complex, multi-layered dimension of this notion, should draw upon the identification of windows of opportunity for change at organizational, regional, national and European/international levels. Domestic legislative or policy changes, leadership changes, the drafting of a new strategic plan or the one of a new statute, the integration of new organizations (institutes, research units...) into the broader institutional structures, joining a European University Alliance or dealing with social mobilizations and protests, should be framed as crucial opportunities for advancing gender equality and integrating the gender dimension in research. So as to make the most of them, assessing related risks or identifying potential allies should be part of this strategic framing process that might ultimately accelerate or leverage change.

➔ **Engage with external stakeholders**

Whereas involving internal stakeholders is a key impact driver, the engagement of external stakeholders, such as regional, national or EU policy makers or gender experts, representatives of peer projects and/or organizations, business partners, trade unions, professional associations, etc., is also crucial. Their contributions can help to enhance available expertise, foster mutual learning, lower internal resistances and strengthen accountability through benchmarking or an external assessment. This can be achieved both for GEP design, monitoring and evaluation, and through the organization of or participation to dissemination and mutual learning events.

➔ **Adopt an intersectional focus**

Gender always intersects with other inequality grounds and bias to shape organizational practices and people's opportunities and experiences. Therefore, adopting an intersectional focus is key to produce valid evidences to support GEP design, reaching out to particularly marginalized or disadvantaged groups and contributing to inclusiveness from a gender equality agenda. As a truly intersectional approach apt to grasp the cumulative effect of multiple discrimination might be difficult to implement (due for instance to data or knowledge gaps), adopting a gender+ lens, sensitive to potential intersections with gender, should be nonetheless encouraged.

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