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GENDER EQUALITY CULTURE

PARTICIPATORY APPROACH FOR DEFINING GENDER EQUALITY CORPORATE VALUES AND INCLUSIVE BEHAVIOURS

CIRAD, France

The Gender-SMART project is a community composed of seven European Research Performing & Funding Organisations, operating in the broadly framed field of research in food, agricultural and life sciences, committed to advancing gender equality.

This fact sheet illustrates one of the twelve experience-based good practices collected by the project to encourage and steer change in Gender-SMART Partner Institutions.

Results are meaningful and scalable to reach out to a larger number of beneficiaries.

AREA



Gender
Equality Culture

CATEGORY



Cultural
Advocacy

PARTNER



CIRAD, France



FOCAL PERSONS



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Key stakeholders

Gender-SMART Core Team members

Main Description

Gender Equality (GE) values are important to change the corporate culture of the Organisation as they provide guidance (by setting objectives) and shape operational behaviours.

CIRAD did not have a set of GE values, nor more general corporate values.

For the first time ever, a significant participatory dynamic was launched within CIRAD, characterised by a large mobilisation of its personnel in numbers and a high diversity of profiles (sex, age, hierarchical positions, geographic locations, researchers, and support staff).

CIRAD staff was invited to participate in workshops (#25) and/or to submit their insights to an online survey with a view to developing a gender friendly corporate culture. Each GE value was selected through an inclusive and participatory approach and translated into 2 to 3 inclusive behavioural statements. The participatory approach adopted was highly appreciated by participants.

The GE values and inclusive behaviours are now part of an institutional document that provides guidance to advance a gender sensitive corporate culture at CIRAD, using a common language and encouraging inclusiveness in different initiatives (e.g., trainings, welcome days for newly recruited staff, etc...).

Background

CIRAD (Agricultural Research Centre for International Development) is the French agricultural research and cooperation organisation working for the sustainable development of tropical and Mediterranean regions.

CIRAD works with its partners to build knowledge and solutions and invent resilient farming systems for a more sustainable, inclusive world.

It mobilises science, innovation and training in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Its expertise supports the entire range of stakeholders, from producers to public policymakers, to foster biodiversity protection, agroecological transitions, food system sustainability, health (of plants, animals and ecosystems), sustainable development of rural territories, and their resilience to climate change.

CIRAD was founded in 1984 as a public establishment (EPIC), following a merger of French tropical agricultural research organisations, and is under the joint authority of the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation and the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs. As such, it supports French science diplomacy operations.

CIRAD works in some fifty countries on every continent, thanks to the expertise of its 1650 staff members, including 1140 scientists, backed by a global network of some 200 partners. As of January 2020, CIRAD has a Gender Equality Plan that runs until 2023.



CIRAD Action Plan for Gender Equality

VISIT PAGE



Specifics of the measure

CIRAD Core Team developed a concept for the organisation of workshops to define GE values and inclusive behaviours. Twenty-five workshops were organised in different geographical sites (Montpellier, Reunion Island, Martinique, Guadeloupe where CIRAD staff are also present).

Furthermore, an online questionnaire was developed to give the opportunity to all staff to contribute (e.g., expats in other regions).

The collected information was analysed and summarised in a "Guide for Inclusive Behaviours". This guide is an institutional document that is available both in a static PDF and an animated version (motion design).

The guide was launched through a written message by the CEO to all CIRAD staff (due to COVID constraints the in-person launch event could not be held), as well as 2 video interviews of top management members.

To further the dissemination and operationalisation of the guide, a 7-month communication campaign dedicated to the 7 identified pillars (one value, also named pillar, per month) was run publishing monthly videos containing testimonies of CIRAD personnel. Moreover, tailored dialogue sessions were prepared in close collaboration with CIRAD's occupational psychologist. Every month, CIRAD staff were invited to discuss together inclusive and non-inclusive behaviours. These sessions focused on a particular value (the value addressed each month was the same as the one covered by the communication campaign).

At present, the guide is included/mentioned in the diversity and inclusion training that CIRAD has been providing in its training offer since September 2019. It is also presented (interactive format) to newly recruited personnel on the welcome days.

The mid-term reboot event for the Core Team was focused on inclusive behaviours. With the help of an external expert in improvisation, team members were asked to reflect their inclusiveness in their daily actions/work environment. Core Team members need to be an example with their behaviour. Role plays on inclusive behaviours are due to be organised in July 2022 during CIRAD staff's annual gathering event.

Awareness on what inclusive behaviours are and how to react when confronted with non-inclusive attitudes (moving from bystander to actor position) is expected to be heightened along with a deeper understanding of what gender equality is and how it is addressed within the Gender-SMART project.

As relates to monitoring, in January 2021 a questionnaire was administered to evaluate behaviour inclusiveness. All staff were invited to self-evaluate their inclusiveness for each of the behaviours linked to the 7 Pillars (Values). Answers were analysed and communicated in November 2021.

Inclusiveness of individual behaviours was rated on a 5-point scale (from never to always).

It is now foreseen to further develop and adapt the guide to meet the specific needs of teams, such as research units. Closer collaboration with middle management is also envisaged to see how they can use it on a daily basis and/or what they need in terms of additional tools for its relevant improvement. Management trainings now also incorporate aspects linked to inclusiveness.

Lessons learned

Overall, the participatory approach was appreciated as CIRAD staff could express themselves through various means: workshops & questionnaire to define the values; dialogue sessions to further discuss the values.

Success factors were:

- ✓ levers put in place to induce a positive atmosphere in the workshop: e.g., participants were asked to introduce themselves focusing on their personality and not on their position/job at CIRAD;
- ✓ dynamic and innovative way of working: participatory approach applied for the first time to such an initiative. The use of participatory techniques and tools to stimulate creativity and collective thinking;
- ✓ launch of the workshops in different geographic locations. Indeed, staff in the outermost regions often feel excluded from institutional events.

In contrast, self-evaluation through the questionnaire was judged to be biased by many participants ("we tend to evaluate ourselves more positively"). Similarly, attendance at dialogue sessions (via Teams) was not very high, even though the feedback from participants was always very positive. Moreover, Covid constraints limited physical presence and greater engagement.

