

Evaluation synthesis

What works on gender equality and women's empowerment – a review of practices and results

Approach paper

Contents

Abbreviations and acronyms	i
I. Background	1
A. Introduction	1
B. IFAD’s mandate and strategic focus	1
C. GEWE within the 2030 Agenda.....	2
II. Overview of IFAD gender policies and strategies	2
A. IFAD policies on GEWE	2
B. IFAD operational approaches to GEWE	4
C. Examples of transformative GEWE practices.....	5
D. Ongoing initiatives with RBAs	6
III. IFAD Evaluations of GEWE	6
A. Timeline.....	6
B. CLE Gender –messages on GEWE practices.....	7
C. IOE GEWE ratings	8
IV. Synthesis objectives, scope and methodology	8
A. Objectives.....	8
B. Scope and approach.....	9
C. Evidence base.....	10
D. Analytical framework.....	10
E. Methodology.....	11
V. Implementation arrangements	15
A. Evaluation management and team.....	15
B. Learning partnership.....	15

Abbreviations and acronyms

AfDB	African Development Bank
APR	Asia and Pacific Division of IFAD
CGIAR	Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research
CLE	corporate-level evaluation
CPE	country programme evaluation
DfID	Department for International Development
ECG	Evaluation Cooperation Group
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
ESA	East and Southern Africa Division of IFAD
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GAD	gender and development
GPoA	Gender Plan of Action
GEWE	gender equality and women's empowerment
IOE	Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD
PCR/V	project completion report validation
PPA	project performance assessment
PTA	Policy and Technical Advisory Division of IFAD
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SKD	Strategy and Knowledge Department of IFAD
WCA	West and Central Africa Division of IFAD
WEAI	Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index
WFP	World Food Programme
WID	women in development

I. Background

A. Introduction

1. This evaluation synthesis report on gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) practices and results will be produced by the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE). The synthesis will provide learning opportunities for IFAD by identifying and capturing accumulated knowledge from existing evaluative evidence. The draft report will be shared for discussion within IFAD Management and, as part of IOE's approved programme of work, will be presented to the Evaluation Committee in 2017.
2. An evaluation synthesis report consolidates and presents key evaluation findings and lessons around a selected learning theme with the aim to identify underlying causal mechanisms and how they work under what conditions. Because its scope is also defined by the availability of evaluative evidence, it differs from other forms of research which draw evidence from a wider range of sources and data collection methods.
3. IOE originally intended to conduct this synthesis jointly with the evaluation offices of WFP and FAO. However, as it turned out, FAO did not obtain approval from the senior management to undertake a joint synthesis and WFP dropped out as a result.
4. The main purpose of this synthesis is to support learning on what GEWE practices work and under what conditions and to identify transformative GEWE practices that should be further promoted and scaled up in the near future. For the IFAD10 period, IFAD has committed to improve its performance on gender practices, in particular the share of GEWE interventions aiming at transformative change. It will aim to ensure that at least 15 per cent of project designs are gender-transformative and at least 50 per cent achieve full gender mainstreaming
5. This year also marks the transition to a new development agenda. In 2015, with the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), UN Member States committed to a renewed and more ambitious framework for development. The SDG agenda is all about transformative change. In its preamble the Outcome Document calls for bold and transformative steps which are urgently needed to shift the world onto a sustainable and resilient path, and it includes a number of goals that are of a transformative nature. Transformative approaches aim to overcome the root causes of inequality and discrimination through promoting sustainable and far-reaching change.

B. IFAD's mandate and strategic focus

6. IFAD is the only international financial institution with a specific mandate to reduce rural poverty through investments in agriculture and rural development. It has been established as an international financial institution in 1977 to mobilize resources to invest in development opportunities for poor rural people. The fund works in close collaboration with borrowing country governments and local communities to design, supervise and assess country-led programmes and projects that support smallholders and poor rural producers.
7. IFAD's goal is to empower poor rural women and men in developing countries to achieve higher incomes and improved food security. Gender equality is at the heart of IFAD's mandate and closely linked to IFAD's commitment to eradicating rural poverty. Many of IFAD's policies have gender considerations embedded within their principles and approaches, in particular the Targeting Policy of 2006 and the Policy of Engagement with Indigenous Peoples of 2009. The former states that IFAD will address gender differences and have a special focus on women within all identified target groups — for reasons of equity, effectiveness and impact — with particular attention to women heads of households, who are often especially disadvantaged, and the latter notes a special commitment to improve the well-being of indigenous

women. As outlined in IFAD's gender policy (2012), addressing gender inequalities and empowering women are vital to meeting the challenge of improving food and nutrition security, and enabling poor rural people to overcome poverty.

8. The new IFAD Strategic Framework 2016-2025 includes empowerment and gender equality among its five principles of engagements. It recognises that poverty is frequently a consequence of the way rural people are marginalised. Rather than recognising women's important roles as drivers of sustainable development, social and cultural norms often limit the access of women and other marginalised groups to productive assets and undermine their social status, decision-making power and ability to benefit from public services and exercise their citizenship rights. Women thus need to be empowered to unleash their enormous productive potential. IFAD is committed to ensure that poor rural communities and individuals, particularly women, indigenous peoples and young people, become part of a rural transformation that is inclusive and drives overall sustainable development.

C. GEWE within the 2030 Agenda

9. The 2030 Agenda emphasises inclusion not just as an end in itself but as critical to development effectiveness. At the centre of this agenda is the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls (SDG5). In addition, gender-sensitive targets are included in the other goals.
10. The SDG agenda promotes gender equality and women's empowerment as basic human rights across all development goals. It demands that all forms of gender discrimination will have to be addressed for poor and less poor women alike. Its vision includes every woman and girl enjoying full gender equality and that all legal, social and economic barriers to their empowerment have been removed (p.4). Furthermore, the SDG agenda includes a dedicated "transformative" goal (number 5) on gender equality and women's empowerment, attention to human rights and equitable benefits for women and girls are embedded in a number of indicators. This goal has been, amongst others, advocated by UN Women (2013), to further drive change and monitor transformation in the structural determinants of gender-based inequality. The three components of the stand-alone goal are: freedom from violence; access to resources, knowledge and health; and voice, leadership and participation.

II. Overview of IFAD gender policies and strategies

A. IFAD policies on GEWE

11. IFAD's mandate to mainstream gender stems from the Agreed Conclusion 1997/2 on gender mainstreaming which the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) adopted based on the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 1995). The 1990s saw a shift from a "Women in Development" (WID) approach to "Gender and Development" (GAD) in IFAD's operations.¹ The first Strategic Framework for IFAD (1998-2000) highlighted the role of rural women for sustainable agriculture and rural development. The second IFAD Strategic Framework (2002-2006) further recognised that rural poverty reduction was intrinsically linked to women's empowerment and gender equality. The framework articulated the role of women as agents of change for their communities. It acknowledged that powerlessness is a dimension of poverty and that gender inequality is a manifestation of poverty. It stated that gender issues should be addressed as a cross-cutting concern in all aspects of IFAD's work. At the same time, IFAD adopted the Gender Plan of Action (2003-2006) as an operational document with the aim to internalise gender issues in the project cycle. The action plan's overall objective was to systematize and

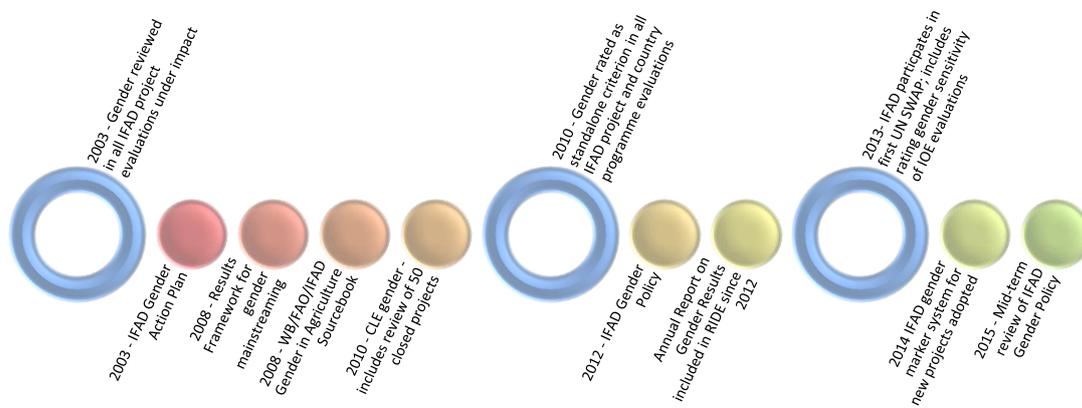
¹ While the WID approach targets women and focuses on activities exclusively for them, the GAD approach focuses on the relationship between men and women, their differences, inequalities and similarities, and tries to provide solutions for the creation of a more equitable society.

scale up efforts to mainstream gender perspectives in different aspects of IFAD's work and to comply with the United Nations commitment, in particular the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) agreed conclusions (2002), on gender mainstreaming.

12. IFAD's efforts to mainstream gender were further accelerated in the follow-up to the report adopted by the Governing Council in 2010 which requested actions to strengthen the capacities and improved monitoring systems for gender mainstreaming. In the same year IFAD conducted corporate-level evaluation of IFAD's Performance with regard to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. The evaluation recommended, amongst others, the development of a corporate policy on gender equality and women's empowerment.

Figure 1

IFAD timeline on gender strategy and policy



13. The IFAD Policy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment was approved by the Executive Board in April 2012. The policy covers both the business of IFAD (the loans and grants programmes and projects, knowledge management, communication and capacity building) as well as promoting gender equality within the organization (including staffing and financial resources). The Policy includes an implementation plan and sets out accountability of staff at different levels, including senior managers. IFAD's Policy and Technical Advisory Division (PTA) has conducted a mid-term review of the gender policy implementation in 2015.
14. IFAD participated in the first United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP) in 2013. The UN-SWAP includes a set of 15 common Performance Indicators, clustered around six broad and functional areas against which entities report to UN Women annually through an online reporting system. IFAD's performance was consistently above the United Nations system as a whole. In 2014, IFAD exceeded the requirements for almost half of all indicators. This accomplishment sets IFAD apart as one of the top performing entities in the UN-SWAP.

Table 1

Objectives of the IFAD Gender Plan of Action and the Gender Policy

Gender Plan of Action (2003)	Gender Policy (2012)
Expand women's <i>access to and control over fundamental assets</i> – capital, land, knowledge and technologies Strengthen women's agency – their <i>decision-making</i> role in community affairs and representation in local institutions; and Improve <i>well-being</i> and ease workloads by facilitating access to basic rural services and infrastructures.	Objective 1: Promote <i>economic empowerment</i> to enable rural women and men to have equal opportunity to participate in, and benefit from, profitable economic activities. Objective 2: Enable women and men to have <i>equal voice and influence</i> in rural institutions and organizations. Objective 3: Achieve a more <i>equitable balance in workloads and in the sharing of economic and social benefits</i> between women and men.

15. The Fund has also adapted the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) for piloting in the context of IFAD-supported operations, so as to improve the measurement of gender impacts at the project level. The index measures women's empowerment in five domains (production, resources, income, leadership, and time), which tie in with the three strategic objectives of IFAD's policy on gender equality and women's empowerment.
16. Strategies that IFAD programmes used to integrate gender concerns into the programme design included mainstreaming (addressing gender throughout the programme) or targeted interventions (e.g. through specific components or activities targeted at women). Mainstreamed actions are more likely to be gender sensitive, while specific targeted interventions can be transformative if they promote specific aspects of women's rights or address gender GPOAs. IFAD reviews the level of gender integration at design, using a six-point scale ranging from gender blind to gender transformative. Projects are rated from a gender perspective at points of design, implementation, completion and evaluation.

Table 2

IFAD gender mainstreaming markers

1	2	3	4	5	6
Gender blind	Gender neutral	Gender aware	Partial gender mainstreaming	Gender mainstreaming	Gender transformative
There were no attempts to address gender concerns or mainstream gender into project activities.	Focus on gender issues was vague and erratic.	Some limited measures were taken to strengthen gender focus and some efforts were made to facilitate the participation of women.	Efforts were made to facilitate the participation of women and they accounted for a significant number of beneficiaries.	Significant contribution to addressing gender needs and achieving GEWE, addressing all three gender policy objectives.	Significant contribution to gender transformation, addressing all three gender policy objectives and engaging in policy dialogue.

17. The most recent PMD ratings (2014/2015) show that 82 per cent of the value of loans is rated moderately satisfactory or above (4-6) at project approval. This included 35 per cent that was fully mainstreamed (5) and 18 per cent that was transformative (6). For the IFAD10 period (2016-2018), IFAD has committed to raise performance to 90 per cent rated moderately satisfactory or better at entry (4), of which, at least 50 per cent of project designs will achieve full gender mainstreaming (5) and at least 15 per cent of project designs will be rated as gender-transformative (6).

B. IFAD operational approaches to GEWE

18. At operational levels, IFAD's approach to GEWE has evolved since the early years of WID. In 2010 the corporate-level evaluation (CLE) on GEWE identified four types of gender-sensitive approaches.
- Strategic* – a specific GEWE strategy that is related to a gender policy agenda and a specific strategic issues (e.g. land rights);

- b. *Participatory and demand-driven* – women and men are equally involved in a participatory process and women’s needs are identified and addressed (e.g. through community-driven development projects on rural development);
 - c. *Compliance* – targets are set for women’s participation;
 - d. *Affirmative action or “targeted approaches”* – a specific component or sub-component exclusively for women.
19. The sample reviewed by the 2010 CLE² showed that the majority of the projects belonged to the second type, the demand driven community-driven development type of approach that addressed GEWE through a participatory process. Gender mainstreaming activities were closely linked to participatory planning of community development projects. The approaches to women’s empowerment were generally similar across different regions and projects. Activities for women focussed mainly on microcredit, livestock and provision of public facilities.
20. One of the methodologies is the Gender Action Learning System (GALS)³ which comprises a series of tools that enable household members to negotiate their needs and interests and find innovative, gender-equitable solutions in livelihoods planning and value chain development. The GALS is an innovative community-led methodology that has been developed with IFAD grant support to Oxfam Novib. Initially piloted in Uganda, the methodology is now expanding into other parts of Uganda through capacity building of local NGOs, and also into other countries (including Rwanda, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Ghana).

C. Examples of GEWE practices

21. More recently, IFAD started to promote household methodologies that aim to transform gender relations at household level. They attempt to bundle the disparate livelihood strategies pursued by women and men (her plot, his plot, etc.) into one coherent strategy. The formation of a ‘family vision’ to which children, in many cases, contribute, enables the family to conceptualize and work towards a shared time-bound goal. Critically, household methodologies do not seek to empower one gender (women) at the seeming expense of the other (men). They adopt a ‘power with’ rather than a ‘power to’ approach, and work to promote the understanding that unequal power relations between women and men result in failures to make the best decisions possible, and thus contribute significantly to poverty.⁴
22. Examples of IFAD-supported project activities specifically aiming at promoting transformation in gender roles and power relations include the following:⁵
- a. Gender transformative project activities at the household levels, such as labour saving technologies and practices, production techniques for improved food security and nutrition (e.g. home gardens)
 - b. initiatives to promote gender equality at community level, such as support to self-help groups and other grassroots organizations, functional literacy, financial competency, legal literacy on women’s rights, paralegal services, self-help leadership skills, negotiation skills for value chain development, exchange visits, engaging with men for gender equality, land titling, community listeners’ clubs

² Based on a sample of 50 projects evaluated between 2003 and 2010.

³ http://www.galsatscale.net/_documents/GALSoverview.pdf

⁴ https://www.ifad.org/topic/household_methodologies/overview/tags/gender/11326117

⁵ IFAD PTA Gender Desk. 2015. Note for piloting gender transformative approaches in selected countries in the IFAD portfolio. January 2015

- c. gender-specific targeting of value chains for crops and products under women's control;
- d. gender transformative actions along the value chain, including public-private partnerships;
- e. initiatives to strengthen women role's in food production, transfer of traditional knowledge systems and contribution to sustainable natural resource management and biodiversity conservation; and
- f. policy engagement on gender issues with the ministries of agriculture, livestock and rural development.

D. Ongoing initiatives with RBAs

23. Ongoing initiatives and work undertaken jointly by the Rome-based Agencies include the five-year (2012-2017) UN Women/FAO/IFAD/WFP joint programme aiming to economically empower rural women in selected field sites by improving their food and nutrition security, increasing their access to and control over productive resources, services and income, reducing their workload and strengthening their participation and leadership of rural producer organizations. In addition, IFAD has on a pilot basis introduced the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index to help the organization improve measuring impact from a gender equality/women's empowerment perspective.

III. IFAD Evaluations of GEWE

A. Timeline

24. IOE has been systematically assessing gender results since it introduced its *Methodological Framework for Project Evaluation* in 2003. Gender equality and women's empowerment was reviewed (and rated) as one of six dimensions of poverty. The first IOE Evaluation Manual (2009) treated gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) as integral dimensions within the various evaluation criteria adopted by IOE applying a mainstreaming approach, but no ratings were assigned for gender. In 2010, the CLE on gender recommended that IOE develop a distinct criterion on gender with a set of questions to be addressed. Since then IOE has applied the criterion in all country programme evaluations (CPEs) and project evaluations and started awarding ratings as of 2011.
25. In 2015 IOE revised its evaluation manual and updated the gender section. The manual states that gender will be assessed in all evaluations by IOE, and therefore all country strategy and programme and project evaluations must include a rating for this criterion. Each evaluation assesses performance based on the main objectives outlined in the country strategies and project design, and the 2012 corporate gender policy.
26. In 2010, IOE conducted a CLE on *IFAD's Performance with regard to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment*. It also led the joint review on *Gender Equality and Development Evaluation Units: Lessons from Evaluations of Development Support of Selected Multilateral and Bilateral Agencies*, conducted by the Evaluation Cooperation Group (ECG) in 2012.
27. IOE also participates in the UN-SWAP with measuring the Evaluation Performance Indicators (EPI) for all its evaluation products. In 2015, the overall score for all the different types of evaluations was in the higher end of the "meets requirements" (10.2). Country Programme Evaluations were "exceeding requirements" and Project Performance Assessments and Synthesis Evaluations "meeting requirements". The overall score has placed IOE in a top position among all participating UN evaluation offices. Factors that have contributed to the overall result include IOE's guidance that explains the need for GEWE aspects to be evaluated and a specific gender criterion is applied in all project and country programme evaluations and the use of evaluation consultants with gender

expertise, particularly for the Country Programme Evaluations and to some extent for the Project Performance Assessments.

Table 3
IFAD milestones in the evaluation of gender results

Corporate-level evaluation of GEWE	2010
Guidance on integration of gender into evaluations	Based on IFAD's Gender Plan of Action (GPoA) ⁶ , the 1 st IOE evaluation manual included assessment of gender in 2009 throughout all evaluation criteria. A separate, rated, gender criterion was then included in 2010, and assessed in all reports as of 2011. The 2 nd manual formalises the 2010 amendment to the 1 st manual.
Gender as mandatory evaluation criterion	2003 – 2008: systematic coverage of gender issues 2009 – 2010: gender issues mainstreamed and assessed across all evaluation criteria 2011 – now: separate gender criterion included and rated
SWAP ratings on gender sensitive evaluation methods	2012: meets requirements 2013: meets requirements 2014: meets requirements (9.7) 2015: meets requirements (10.2)

Source: IFAD IOE Evaluation Manual 2008; IFAD IOE Evaluation Manual 2015; IFAD 2003, 'Operationalizing the Strategic Framework for IFAD 2002-2006: Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in IFAD's Operations – Plan of Action 2003 – 2006'

B. CLE Gender –messages on GEWE practices

28. The 2010 CLE conducted a meta-evaluation of 50 project evaluation reports. It found that projects classified as rural development projects were particularly relevant to women. Although they did not usually state specific gender objectives they often resulted in substantial physical benefits to women as well as to men. The CLE also found that in some cases, activities specifically offered to women were stereotyped, for example sewing machines, handicraft activities etc. offered specifically to women, while women had not been explicitly considered for other activities, such as livestock and credit activities, also carried out by the projects.
29. The CLE confirmed that economic and human capacity benefits in many cases translated into improved status and voice, mainly because women become more self –confident and financially independent are often more involved in local decision making. Microfinance initiatives have generally shown positive gender benefits in most circumstances.
30. A major factor contributing to more effective gender interventions was the appointment of gender specialists and women officers in Government's project management units. The CLE found that most projects did in fact devote adequate resources to gender-related initiatives, but resources were not always well used because insufficient thought had been given to their suitability for the required activities.
31. The CLE concluded that overall project performance and performance on GEWE appear to be linked, without implying any causal relationship. However, comparative analysis with other agencies indicated that, when project design and implementation are attentive to GEWE, a projects is generally more likely to be successful. This is also because of the central role women play in promoting sustainable agriculture and because of the importance of taking into account wider social dynamics including gender relations within development interventions.

⁶ The GAP itself aimed to 'systematize and scale up ongoing efforts to mainstream a gender perspective in different aspects of IFAD's work and to comply with the many United Nations commitments, most recently with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Resolution E/2002/L.14, Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in all Policies and Programmes of the United Nations.'

C. IOE GEWE ratings

32. Since IFAD started reviewing GEWE in 2003, it has produced 251 assessments of gender-related interventions. The following table presents the numbers of different evaluation products, 163 in total, containing gender ratings since 2011.

Table 4
Number of evaluations containing a gender equality and women's empowerment rating per year*

Evaluation type	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Grand Total
Country Programme Evaluations	17	7	16	16	6	62
Impact Evaluations				1	1	2
Project Completion Report Verifications	12	10	12	9	23	66
Project Performance Assessments	4	8	6	9	6	33
Grand Total	33	25	34	35	36	163

*year in which the evaluation was included in the ARRI

Source: IOE evaluation database (January 2016)

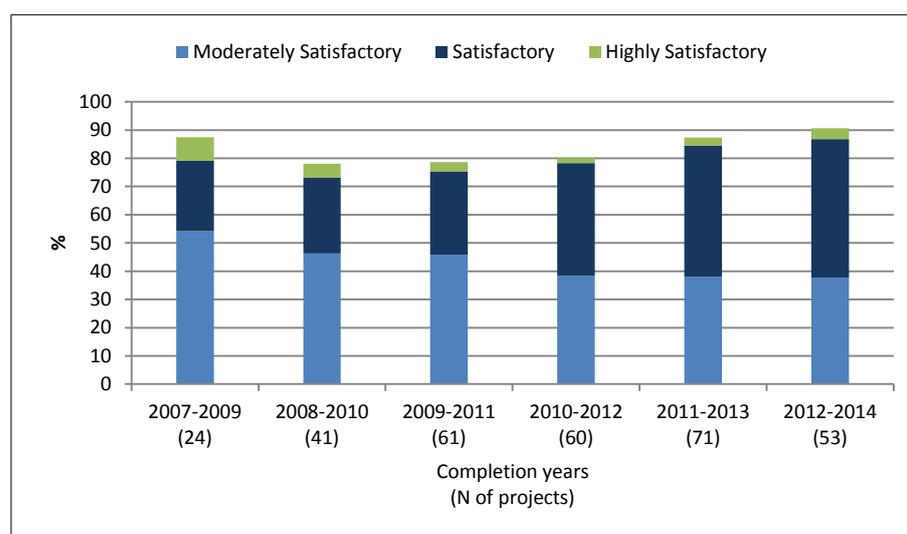
NB: 97 CPE programme ratings in 27 CPEs

As shown in the figure below, IOE's GEWE ratings have improved over the years, driven by an increase in the percentage of satisfactory or better projects starting from 2010. In the last cohort of the PCRV/PPA data series nearly 53 per cent of the projects are satisfactory or better out of the 90.2 per cent that are in the moderately satisfactory or better zone.

Figure 2

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment – by year of completion

Percentage of projects rated moderately satisfactory or better (PCRV/PPA data) (source: 2016 ARRI)



33. The good progress made in integrating GEWE into IFAD's operations suggests that it is now a good time to better understand what GEWE practices have worked under what conditions and what the transformative practices are that could be effectively scaled up through IFAD interventions (2016 ARRI).

IV. Synthesis objectives, scope and methodology

A. Objectives

34. The synthesis focuses on learning more than on accountability. It derives its lessons primarily from existing evaluative evidence. The objectives of this synthesis are thus:

- a. To identify transformative GEWE practices that can inform future IFAD interventions under the Agenda 2030; and

- b. To identify key factors enabling (or hindering) transformative GEWE practices, within the limitations of the available evaluative evidence.

B. Scope and approach

35. The synthesis will focus on the operational part of IFAD's programme and within this on programme/project level of interventions to address issues of GEWE (as opposed to institutional or policy level interventions) that have taken place within the context of the agricultural sector and rural development. This includes, for example, concrete interventions to improve women's access to resources, services, decision-making, benefits etc.
36. **Timeframe.** The period covered by this synthesis will start from 2010, after the first CLE on GEWE was completed. The first corporate-level evaluation of GEWE covered a detailed review of 50 close projects and 4 country studies. For the period 2010-2015, the synthesis will review a sample of evaluation products that contain substantive evidence on GEWE interventions within IFAD operations. This coincides with the period when gender was rated at a standalone criterion in IOE (2011). The projects evaluated during this period typically would have been designed 8 to 10 years earlier, under the first and second strategic IFAD framework.
37. **Questions.** The overall synthesis of findings will be guided by the following *overarching questions*:
 - a. Which strategies and interventions – and at what level – were successful in achieving sustainable GEWE results, as outlined in the IFAD gender policy? To what extent did they contribute to transformative GEWE change?
 - b. Which strategies and interventions did not work?
 - c. What are the key factors (including contextual factors) explaining success or failure?
38. The review of evaluation will be guided by the following detailed *review questions*:
 - a. *Relevance*: What were the gender-specific objectives and targets, and how consistent were they with the policies and frameworks at the time of design? To what extent did they address the drivers of exclusion, discrimination and unequal power relations? How important were the gender-related interventions to achieve the programmes objectives? To what extent has the project been able to address the expressed priorities of women? To what extent did it challenge established gender beliefs and norms? To what extent can the interventions reviewed be considered as "fit for purpose" with regard to the 2030/SDG Agenda?
 - b. *Effectiveness*: To what extent have GEWE objectives been achieved? What is the supporting evidence that (gender disaggregated) results were achieved (or not)? To what extent did the interventions support inclusive and transformative change? Which interventions worked and under what circumstances? What are the factors explaining the success? What have been the key change agents on GEWE?
 - c. *Impact*: What impact did GEWE interventions have on rural poverty? How did women's lives change as a result of these interventions? To what extent has the project contributed to a sustainable change of gender roles and relations (transformative change)?
 - d. *Sustainability*: Which practices and results have been sustainable? And what were the factors supporting sustainability?
 - e. *Lesson learned*. What were the transformative practices that worked (or didn't) and what lessons can be learned from this?

C. Evidence base

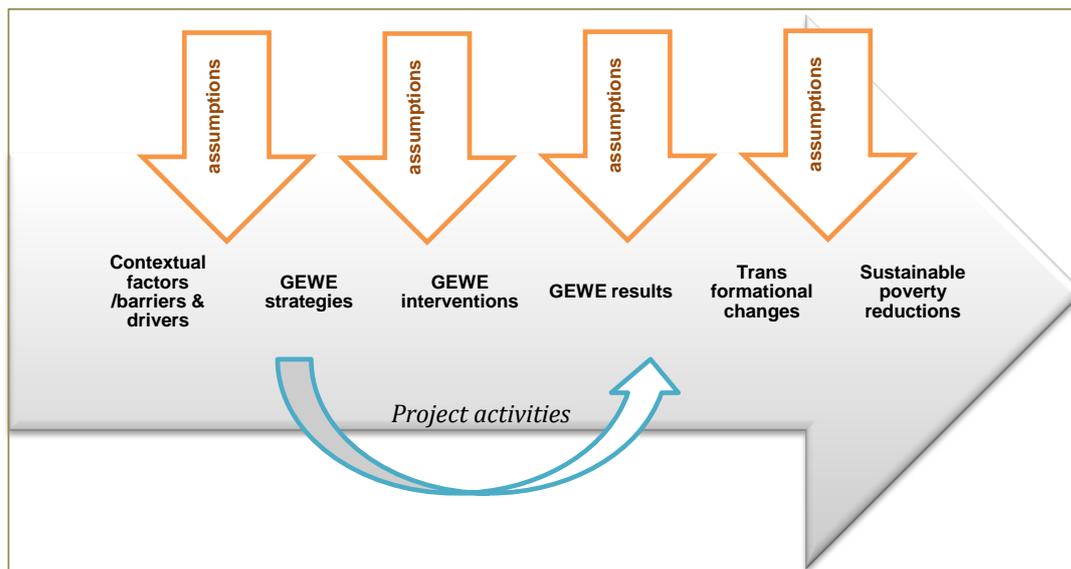
39. **IOE performance ratings.** IOE gender ratings, in principle, provide a reflection of the effectiveness of project interventions with regard to GEWE. Effectiveness is usually rated based on the level of achievements of GEWE objectives included in the IFAD gender policy. For this synthesis, IOE gender ratings (since 2010) can be disaggregated according to regional criteria, project types and years to identify patterns of GEWE effectiveness. Also possible links between gender performance and other performance criteria (project effectiveness, poverty impact and sustainability) can be explored.
40. **IOE evaluations.** IOE evaluations in principle review the effectiveness of gender interventions in terms of achievement of GEWE results, according to the three objectives of the IFAD Gender Policy (2012) or, before that, the IFAD Gender Plan of Action (2003), through questions such as:
 - a. What evidence is there to show that rural women and men had equal opportunities to participate and benefit from profitable economic activities supported by the project?
 - b. Did women and men have equal voice and influence in the rural institutions and organizations promoted by this project?
 - c. Did the project support a more equitable balance in workloads and sharing of economic and social benefits between women and men?
41. **Documented good practices.** IFAD's GEWE practices and results are very context and sector specific. While this synthesis will try to identify similar types of practices from other agencies, the mix of practices and their adaptation within the context of a given programme or country will remain very particular to that organization. Here, in particular the syntheses of good practices on GEWE prepared by the DFID/PPA partnership and Sida respectively are relevant.⁷ The joint review of In addition, evaluations that had a strong focus on GEWE practices, such as World Bank IEG evaluations and the recent UNDP evaluation of GEWE may provide some useful practices for comparison.
42. **SWAP scores.** The UN SWAP scores mainly institutional indicators, e.g. how aspects of GEWE, including gender parity, were addressed in different parts of the organisation and how they were integrated into organizational processes. These ratings provide only limited clues on how practices on the ground are improving.

D. Analytical framework

43. The purpose of this synthesis is to identify practices that have delivered GEWE results, as stated in IFAD's gender policy, in particular those that are transformative and have potential for scaling up within the Agenda 2030. The conceptual framework for this synthesis will be developed around a theory of change (ToC) capturing pathways from strategies to GEWE results. The following graphic presents the framework for the ToC that will be further developed as a first step in this synthesis. The ToC will be developed around the three objectives of the IFAD Gender policy (GEWE results). It will serve as a useful tool to explore pathways of towards transformational change towards women's empowerment, gender equality and poverty reduction impacts.

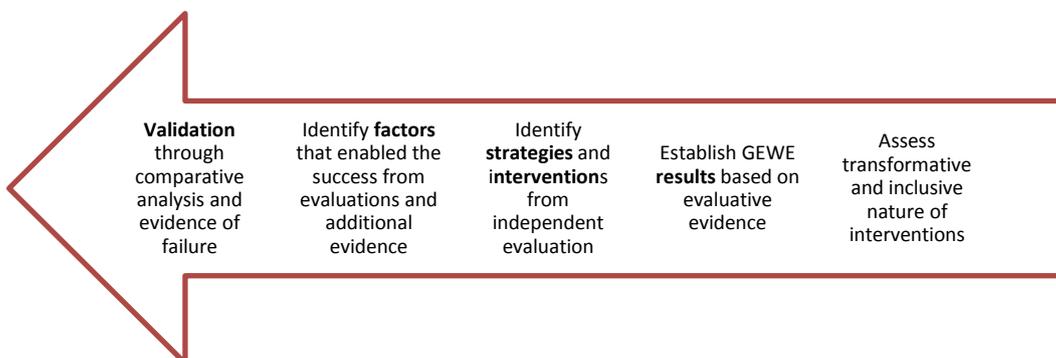
⁷ Farnworth, Cathy, Melinda Fones Sundell, Akinyi Nzioki, Violet Shivutse, and Marion Davis. Transforming Gender Relations in Agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa. 2013. (Sida publication). DFID PPA Learning Partnership Gender Group. 2015. What works to achieve gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment? London.

Figure 3
Framework for a Theory of Change on GEWE



44. The conceptual approach for this synthesis will start with a review of the results that have been achieved and that are documented through independent IOE evaluations. The analysis will then work “backwards” on the theory of change to identify the GEWE interventions that have contributed to the results. GEWE results are in principle documented in most IOE products. The evaluation’s rating of the GEWE criterion itself should indicate the extent to which GEWE results were achieved.

Figure 4
Analytical steps involved in the synthesis



45. The analytical steps for this synthesis are described in further detail in the following section on methodology.

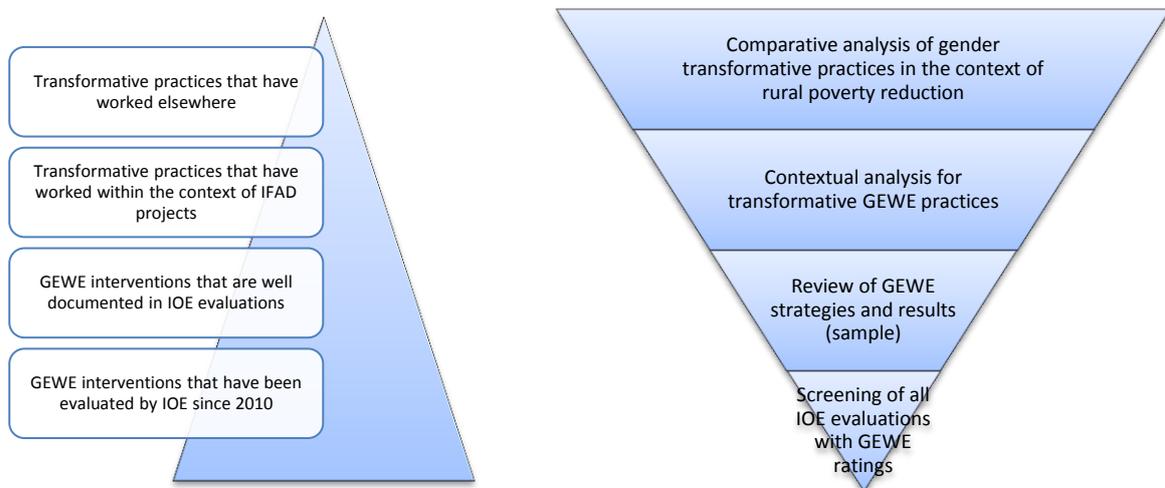
E. Methodology

46. **Building blocks.** The methodological steps for this synthesis include the following: (1) review of relevant literature on gender equality and women’s empowerment to elaborate the draft theory of change and typology of interventions included in this approach paper; (2) a review of portfolio and background information on GEWE strategy and policy implementation; (3) screening the available evaluative evidence to determine the sample for review; (4) systematic review of the project sample to identify successful GEWE practices as well as those that have failed; (5)

comparative analysis of GEWE practices (including those from other organizations); (6) developing a typology of GEWE practices; and finally (7) synthesize findings according to IOE evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability).

47. The methodology will use a progressive sampling approach to identify successful GEWE practices for further in-depth analysis. Establishing the external validity of those practices will require a comparative analysis of similar practices documented elsewhere. The following diagram illustrates the process of “zooming in” on a small sample of practices, which will go along with a widening the potential sources of evidence consulted.

Figure 5
Balancing breadth and depth during analysis



48. **Sampling approach.** For IFAD, the period 2011 – 2015 includes 163 evaluation products with gender ratings. The evaluation products to be covered by this synthesis include: 33 project evaluations; 66 PCRVs; 62 projects that had been reviewed as part of a country programme evaluation; and 2 impact evaluations. The sample of evaluation products that will provide the evidence for this synthesis will be determined through a rigorous screening process. Based on the criteria below, the screening is expected to identify a sample of 40 to 50 evaluations that will provide the evidence for this review. The general characteristics of the evaluation sample will be analysed, to ensure that these are in line with the overall population of evaluation reports (in terms of regional distribution, type of project, rating etc.).
49. **Screening of evaluation products.** The synthesis will screen the available evaluation reports to assess the robustness of the evaluation findings with regard to GEWE. Evaluation reports will be included in the gender synthesis sample if they
- Describe gender outcomes along the three domains of the Gender Plan of Action (GPoA)
 - Report behaviour changing outcome results that were achieved (outcomes); it should explicitly mention how the aforementioned results were achieved (by doing x, y, z)
 - Include supporting evidence on gender results, e.g. from impact studies and counterfactuals
50. The following additional criteria will be recorded during the screening process:
- Clearly identifies and explains factors contributing to GEWE practices
 - Explains programme gender practice and strategy failures

- Description of alignment with national policy and the IFAD GPoA
 - Substantive discussion of gender issues under other evaluation criteria (in particular relevance, efficiency, and poverty impact)
51. The final sample will aim at reaching a good balance with regard to project types, geographic regions and performance ratings.
 52. **Review of GEWE practice sample.** The practices sampled will be reviewed systematically, using the evaluation questions for this synthesis. The findings and observations will be recorded in a template. The interventions reviewed will be classified using the typology below, and then located within the GEWE Transformation Index developed for this synthesis (Annex 1). The index is based on the six-scale gender marker system developed by the PTA gender desk, but has a greater focus on transformative gender results. For this synthesis, the definitions for specific markers such as transformative (= 6) have been unpacked and linked to the applicable IOE evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, impact, sustainability) to enable assessment of GEWE practices as well as their outcomes.
 53. As a further step, the analysis will establish the **contextual factors** that may have enabled realization of results. Acknowledging the fact that not all evaluations will contain an exhaustive description of the factors that have enabled GEWE interventions to achieve results, the synthesis will consult additional studies that may provide further in-depth analysis on GEWE results, such as SKD impact studies or project completion reports.
 54. For this synthesis, identifying what practices on GEWE are likely to work *elsewhere* will also require understanding why they work and under what conditions. Because GEWE results, and in particular transformative GEWE results, are highly contextualised, it is likely that some practices have worked well under very specific circumstances, but may not work elsewhere. Also, practices that are transformative within one context may not be transformative within another context. Thus, the synthesis will review the extent in which results are embedded in the specific programme or country.

Box 1. Typology of GEWE Interventions

Source: DFID PPA Learning Partnership Gender Group. 2015

55. **Establishing external validity.** The final step of the analysis will be to generalize findings from the review of the project sample through a typology of GEWE practices (see box). The aim will be to draw general conclusions and lessons about what practices are likely to be successful elsewhere (or not). This will be done through comparative analysis of similar types of practices that have worked elsewhere under similar or different conditions. At this point the analysis will also review evidence of similar practices failing under certain conditions. The process of validation will require a review of documented practices from IFAD and other organizations. However, it may well be that a

Individual level: Interventions aimed to strengthen

- Women's access to knowledge and skills
- Women's access to resources
- Women's influence in decision-making

Household level: interventions

- Targeting all members of a household to influence family dynamics
- Recognising and redefining gender roles within the household
- Women's economic empowerment

Community level interventions

- Community education and health
- Women's participation in producer groups
- Women's participation in resource management
- Women's participation in community decision making
- Working with and supporting women's organizations
- Working with community and/or faith leaders

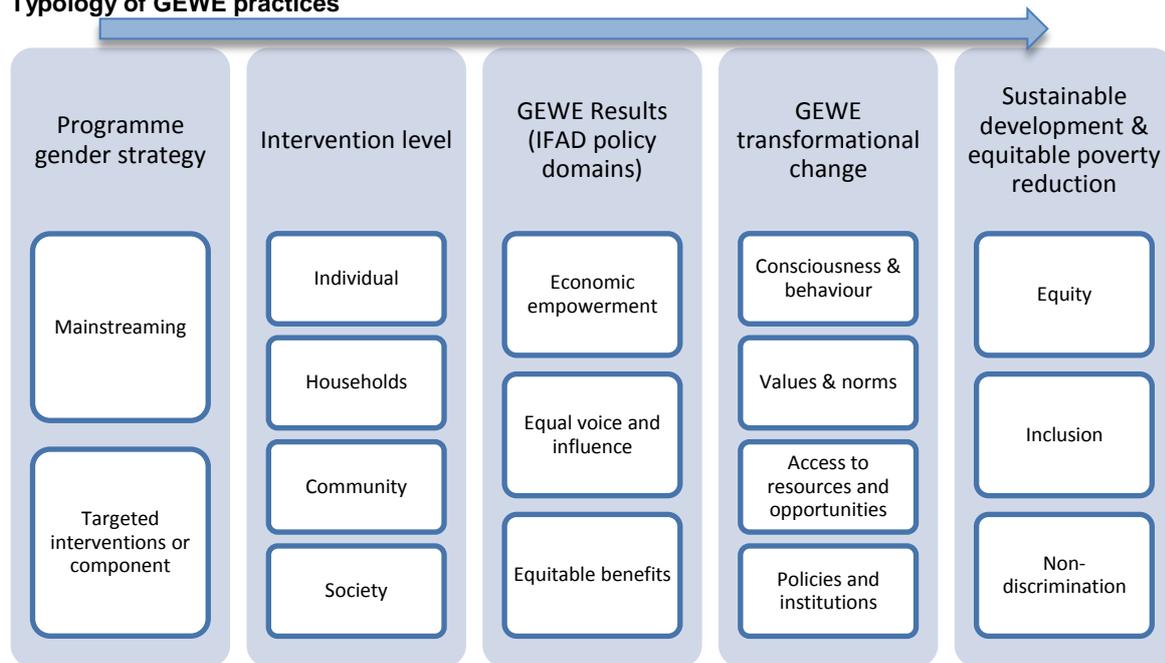
Society level interventions - policies and institutions to promote

- Women's leadership
- Women's financial inclusion
- Land ownership

number of practices are successful within a certain context only and thus the external validity may be limited.

Typology of GEWE practices. To enable generalization of findings, the synthesis uses a typology to classify GEWE practices. The typology will follow the main elements of the ToC from design to results and longer term impacts. The synthesis will classify interventions according to the intervention level and based on the programme's gender strategy. It will assess the extent to which different types of strategies and interventions have been successful in achieving the stated GEWE results and, beyond that, contributed to transformational change within the wider agenda of sustainable development and equitable poverty reduction.

Figure 6
Typology of GEWE practices



56. **Identifying transformative practices.** The identification of transformative practices that should be scaled-up by IFAD within the 2030 Agenda will be done through comparative analysis, using the findings from the review of sample IOE evaluations and transformative GEWE practices in the context of sustainable rural poverty reduction documented elsewhere.
57. **Benchmarking good practices.** The synthesis proposes a two pronged approach to benchmarking IFAD's performance: Comparative analysis will help to establish to what extent principles of transformative practices that were identified by other organizations are also reflected in IFAD's GEWE practices. For internal benchmarking, the review of IOE GEWE ratings over time and across different regions may underscore broader performance trends with regard to GEWE results.
58. **Synthesis of findings.** The final report will synthesise findings on the relevance, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of GEWE practices drawing from the analysis of evaluation reports sampled and the comparative analysis of GEWE practices done during this review. The report will present lessons and conclusions on practices that should be considered for scaling up in future IFAD interventions within the Agenda 2030.
59. **Limitations.** The most important limitation for this as well as for any IOE synthesis is the limited depth of the analysis included in IOE evaluations with regard to GEWE. Screening the quality of the available evidence will help in identifying a suitable sample of evaluations which include a sufficient analysis of GEWE results as well as the underlying strategies. However, the available evidence

inevitably puts a limitation on the range and diversity of practices that can be reviewed by this synthesis. The synthesis will include a wider range of relevant practices through the comparative analysis, but for those there may be limited evidence on their effectiveness as yet.

60. Related to this is another major limitation linked to the time lag between implementation and evaluation. For the period under consideration, the majority of approaches to implement the IFAD GPoA (and the following Gender Policy) evidenced through IOE evaluations had been focussing primarily at the community level. More recent advancements of the IFAD gender strategy, such as the introduction of household methodologies which are part of the design and implementation of more recent operations, are still ongoing and have therefore not yet been evaluated.

V. Implementation arrangements

A. Evaluation management and team

61. The IFAD team will be led by IOE Lead Evaluation Officer Johanna Pennarz. She will be supported by IOE Evaluation Officer Catrina Perch and Research Analyst Nick Bourguignon who will document the available evidence from IOE evaluations. The Evaluation Assistant will be Shaun Ryan. During the documents review phase, the team will be supported by two experienced gender consultants, Stella Odiase (Nigeria) and Ranjani Murthy (India).
62. **Senior Consultant.** The senior consultant for this synthesis will be Arjan de Haan. Arjan is a researcher with expertise on social exclusion, gender, and public policy and is co-editor of the Canadian Journal of Development Studies. He is currently Program Leader of the Employment and Growth Program at the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). He will provide intellectual leadership in the process. His contribution will come during the preparation of the analytical framework and the analysis.
63. **External reviewer.** To ensure good quality of this evaluation synthesis IOE will engage a Senior Gender Advisor as external reviewer. Dasa Silovic has been a Senior Policy Advisor at UNDP for more than 10 years with a special focus on effective development cooperation under the MDGs and the Busan Agreement. She is also the Founder and Chair, International Board Central and Eastern Network for Gender Issues and organiser of the annual Think Tank Korčula School on Gender Issues. She will assess the soundness of the approach and the key issues and recommendations emerging from this evaluation synthesis.

B. Learning partnership

64. IOE evaluations commonly establish a Core Learning Partnership (CLP) which include the intended users of the evaluation. The CLP provides inputs, insights and comments into the evaluations at certain stages of the process. The CLP is important in ensuring ownership of the evaluation results by the main stakeholders and utilization of its recommendations. Since evaluation syntheses are desk-based exercises they usually do not include a CLP. However, in this case IOE proposes a workshop as part of the process. The purpose of the workshop is to discuss the Theory of Change prepared by this synthesis and further elaborate it into more specific theories of changes, based on key IFAD themes (including rural finance, NRM, marketing, agricultural technology). The elaboration of specific theories of change is expected to be an important contribution to the further improvement and fine-tuning of GEWE interventions. IOE will approach PMD and SKD to invite key personnel to participate in this workshop.

Table 5
Time line for this synthesis

<i>Time</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Note</i>
April 2016	Prepare draft approach paper for discussion	Draft prepared by IFAD Lead Evaluation Officer
April/May 2016	Initial discussions with PTA	Lead Evaluation Officer
April - May	Assess evidence base and establish sample	Nick Bourguignon
June	Draft Approach Paper sent to PMD and SKD	Director IOE
July	Finalise Approach Paper	Lead Evaluation Officer
July	Systematic review of project sample; document findings,	Catrina Perch, Nick Bourguignon
August - Sept.	Review findings; additional documents review; prepare draft report chapters	Senior consultant with Catrina Perch and Nick Bourguignon
9/10 September	GEWE Theory of Change workshop	IOE to organise jointly with PTA
October	Draft synthesis report	Lead Evaluation Officer
November	Peer review	IOE
November	Report sent to PMD and SKD for comments	Director IOE
December	Final report	Lead Evaluation Officer
January 2017	Presentation of findings at learning event	Lead Evaluation Officer

Annex I: IFAD GEWE Transformation Index

IOE Evaluation Criteria	Assessment criteria		Indicators	1	2	3	4	5	6
Relevance	Relevance of GEWE strategy		Strategy addresses drivers of exclusion, discrimination and/or unequal power relations	No	Strategy addresses 1 of 3 types of drivers (exclusion, discrimination, or unequal power relations)	Strategy addresses 2 of 3 types of drivers (exclusion, discrimination, or unequal power relations)	Strategy addresses GEWE-specific drivers	Strategy addresses drivers across multiple domains	Strategy holistically addresses drivers across multiple domains
Effectiveness	GEWE intervention results		Successful intervention, e.g. in terms of equitable benefits	GEWE objectives not achieved	GEWE objectives partially achieved	Has achieved outputs under all GEWE objectives	Has achieved outcomes under gender policy objectives	GEWE outcomes across all three gender policy objectives.	Contribution to GEWE policy dialogue.
	GEWE transformative change	Depth of change	Intervention addresses roots of gender inequality; fundamentally empowers women	No transformative change detected				Addresses root causes of gender exclusion/empowers women	Addresses root causes/empowers women across multiple domains
Impact		Scale of change	Gender roles and equality changes beyond immediate beneficiaries	No transformative change detected				Causes change beyond immediate beneficiaries	Causes change of institutions and policies
	Poverty transformative change		Intervention empowers women to address roots of deprivation and poverty	Women remain disempowered to address poverty causes	Women address some poverty causes, but within traditional roles	Some change of roles, but limited to few dimension or unlikely to be sustainable	Women empowered, but poverty impact seems limited	Women empowered to address single cause of poverty	Women empowered to address multiple causes of poverty
	Equitable poverty outcomes		Socially, culturally, economically equitable outcomes	Highly unequal outcomes	Unequal, some groups remain excluded	Unequal, but majority benefits somehow	Mostly equitable, only few remain excluded	Equitable outcomes	Highly equitable outcomes across the board
Sustainability	Sustainability of change introduced by the intervention		Impact is sustainable in the long term	Not sustainable	Financial support of interventions likely to continue	Activities likely continue	Project initiated processes and institutions likely to continue	Structural changes are likely to continue	Changes are sustainable in the long term



Annex 2: Evaluation Framework

	Review of project samples following screening	Review of contextual information for projects rated high (≥ 5) or low (≤ 3)	Review of gender transformative practices from other partners
<i>Relevance:</i>	Relevance index		
What were the gender-specific objectives and targets, and how consistent were they with the policies and frameworks at the time of design?	√	√	√
To what extent can the interventions reviewed be considered as “fit for purpose” with regard to the 2030/SDG Agenda?	√		√
To what extent did the GEWE strategies address the drivers of exclusion, discrimination and unequal power relations?	√		√
How important were the gender-related interventions to achieve IFAD’s objectives on sustainable poverty reduction?	√	√	
To what extent has the project been able to address the expressed priorities of women?	√	√	
To what extent did it challenge established gender beliefs and norms?	√	√	
<i>Effectiveness:</i>	Effectiveness index		
To what extent have GEWE objectives been achieved, in terms of equitable benefits?	√		
What is the supporting evidence that (gender disaggregated) results were achieved (or not)?	√		
How “transformative” was the intervention: To what extent did the interventions address the root causes of gender inequality, exclusion and discrimination? Did it cause wider change beyond the immediate beneficiaries?	√		√
Which interventions worked and under what circumstances? What are the factors explaining the success? Is the practice likely to work elsewhere?	√	√	√
What have been the key change agents on GEWE?	√	√	√

<i>Impact:</i>	Impact index		
What impact did GEWE interventions have on rural poverty?	√		
How did women's lives change as a result of these interventions?	√		√
To what extent has the project contributed to a sustainable change of gender roles and relations (transformative change)?	√	√	
<i>Sustainability:</i>	Sustainability index		
Which practices and results have been sustainable?	√		√
And what were the factors supporting sustainability?	√	√	√
<i>Lesson learned.</i>			
Which types of GEWE practices have supported transformative change? What were the conditions under which they worked? Which practices would work elsewhere?	√		√

Annex 3: Review questions for comparative analysis

Evaluation questions	Review questions for comparative analysis
<i>Relevance:</i>	
What were the gender-specific objectives and targets, and how consistent were they with the policies and frameworks at the time of design?	What would be relevant practices on GEWE, given IFAD's mandate and corporate objectives on sustainable poverty reduction?
To what extent can the interventions reviewed be considered as "fit for purpose" with regard to the 2030/SDG Agenda?	Which successful practices identified through this review could be considered as "fit for purport" within the Agenda 2030?
To what extent did the GEWE strategies address the drivers of exclusion, discrimination and unequal power relations?	How did the IFAD practices reviewed by this synthesis (successfully or unsuccessfully) address the drivers of exclusion, discrimination and unequal power relations and what lessons can be drawn for IFAD? How could the practices be improved through lessons from other partners?
<i>Effectiveness:</i>	
How "transformative" was the intervention: To what extent did the interventions address the root causes of gender inequality, exclusion and discrimination? Did it cause wider change beyond the immediate beneficiaries?	How did the practices reviewed by this synthesis (successfully or unsuccessfully) address the root causes of gender inequality, exclusion and discrimination? What lessons can be learned for IFAD? How could the practices be improved through lessons from other partners?
Which interventions worked and under what circumstances? What are the factors explaining the success? Is the practice likely to work elsewhere?	How important are contextual factors in explaining the success or failure? Would the practice would elsewhere?
What have been the key change agents on GEWE?	What lessons can be learned with regards to the key change agents driving transformative GEWE results?
<i>Impact:</i>	
How did poor women's lives change as a result of these interventions?	What are the GEWE – poverty linkages in the documented practices and how could they be strengthened?
<i>Sustainability:</i>	
Which practices and results have been sustainable?	ditto
And what were the factors supporting sustainability?	ditto
<i>Lesson learned.</i>	
Which types of GEWE practices have supported transformative change? What were the conditions under which they worked? Which practices would work elsewhere?	ditto

Annex 4. Outline of synthesis report

Report chapter	Responsibility	Note
I. Introduction		
A. Background	Johanna Pennarz	
B. Objectives and key questions	Johanna Pennarz	
C. Scope, methodology and process	Johanna Pennarz	
D. Limitations	Johanna Pennarz	
II. Context		
A. IFAD's strategic and policy framework on GEWE	Nick Bourguignon	Updated parts from the approach paper
B. Focus on transformational GEWE strategies in IFAD	Nick Bourguignon	
C. IOE evaluations of gender	Nick Bourguignon	Analysis of IOE gender ratings
D. GEWE within the Agenda 2030	Arjan de Haan	Should be informed by the debate on GEWE in the context of the Agenda 2030
III. Analytical framework		
A. IFAD's GEWE Theory of Change	Arjan de Haan	Updated ToC to be prepared after review of selected IFAD background documentation
B. Typology of GEWE practices	Arjan de Haan	To be elaborated after review, based on typology from approach paper
IV. Synthesis findings		
A. Relevance of GEWE strategies	Catrina Perch	Inputs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparative analysis (Arjan) • Review of project sample (Catrina, Nick) • Analysis of project sample ratings (Nick)
B. Effectiveness of GEWE strategies	Catrina Perch	
C. Impact of GEWE strategies	Catrina Perch	
D. Sustainability of GEWE strategies	Catrina Perch	
V. Transformative practices and lessons learned on GEWE	Arjan de Haan	Based on review of project sample and comparative analysis
VI. Conclusions and recommendations	Johanna Pennarz	

Annex 5: Gender in the Agenda 2030

1. **Lessons from the MDGs.** An important concern was that the MDGs never really tackled the larger macroeconomic and development framework within which policies and programmes for gender equality are located. Another criticism was that the MDGs missed the interconnected character of the risks and vulnerability faced by the very poor people. A major lesson for the 2030 Agenda was therefore that the cross-cutting and multidimensional nature of gender power and inequality cannot be effectively addressed through a single target. The roots of deprivation and inequality lie in power relations that cut across multiple aspects of people's lives and are not specific to particular issues such as education or health or hunger. The evidence on the MDGs shows that, across different goals, certain groups or people recur in terms of the observed achievement GPOAs for many targets. These include poor women, young women, migrants, *dalits*, ethnic,, religious or racial minorities, and indigenous people, *inter alia*.⁸
2. The drive to achieve the MDGs has also meant that areas not explicitly covered within the MDG framework have received less attention, leading to uneven progress or even regression. The need for a transformative goal on gender equality women's rights and women's empowerment within the SDG Agenda was seen as a priority, given the commitment by UN Member States to gender equality and advancing women's rights.⁹ The expectation is that a transformative will support promote and monitor transformation in the structural determinants of gender-based inequality. It recognises the instrumental role that gender equality plays in helping to bring about progress that benefits everyone.¹⁰
3. **Gender within the Sustainable Development Goals.** From a gender perspective, the proposed 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 Targets address development in its three dimensions of economic, social and environmental, and therefore represent a significant step forward from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). There is a strong realization this time around that gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls is essential to achieve progress across all the goals and targets (UN Women). For example, with regard to women's economic empowerment SDG 2 on Ending Hunger includes a target to "double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment" by 2030.
4. The new Agenda emphasises that universal human rights and social and economic inclusion are at the heart of sustainable development. Sustainable development means eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, combating inequality, preserving the planet, creating sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth and fostering social inclusion (p. 5). The Agenda envisages a just, equitable, tolerant, open and socially inclusive world in which the needs of the most vulnerable are met. Its pledge that "no one will be left behind" requires

⁸ Gita Sen. 2013. Gender Equality in the Post-2015 Development Agenda. Lessons from the MDGs. IDS Bulletin Volume 44, No. 5-6.

⁹ These commitments are enshrined in global treaties, most notably CEDAW; in policy commitments such as the Programme of Action agreed at the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 and the resulting Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and, more recently, the outcome of Rio+20; in relevant outcomes of the General Assembly (GA), including the Millennium Declaration which led to the creation of the MDGs; in the resolutions of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC); and, in the agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), including, most recently, on the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls at CSW 57.

¹⁰ UN Women. 2013. A Transformative Stand-Alone Goal on Achieving Gender Equality, Women's Rights and Women's Empowerment: Imperatives and Key Components.

attention to those who are at risk of being missed out by development (p. 3). 'Leave no one behind' puts social justice and equity at the heart of the wider agenda for eradicating extreme poverty by 2030. Research has shown that, leaving aside the ethical considerations raised by extreme concentrations of wealth, rising inequality is hampering poverty-reduction efforts (see ODI research, as highlighted by Kevin Watkins 2013).

5. **Women's empowerment.** Economic empowerment of women features strongly within the SDGs, reflecting global recognition of its multiplier effect for development. Analyses of gender equality have highlighted the fact that economic empowerment does not necessarily lead to a break in traditional gender roles. However, economic independence does give women opportunities and choices, thus contributing to social empowerment. Empowerment as a political process on the other hand requires not only a change in power relations at the family and community levels, but also at societal level in terms of the recognition of the needs and rights of women on an equal footing to men. Thus, women's empowerment is an important step towards reducing inequalities in the economic, social and political spheres.¹¹ Ultimately, empowerment is about expanding opportunities and acquiring the power to make choices.
6. **Focus on inequality.** The SDG agenda brings in a new focus on horizontal inequality and marginalised groups as well as on the multiple dimensions of well-being. Addressing inequalities in the post-2015 development agenda means looking at both equality of opportunities (or lack thereof), and entrenched structural factors, including discrimination, all of which effect equality of outcomes. The SDG indicators aim to monitor meaningful transformations towards equality in the relations between women and men, while being attentive to the variations in women's subordination caused by factors such as class, race, ethnicity, geographical location, disability, sexuality, and other vectors of discrimination and exclusion. The commitment to "leave no one behind" implies increased attention on the drivers of marginalisation and the different dimensions of social exclusion, layering disadvantage upon disadvantage (for example being poor and a woman and a member of an ethnic minority). This requires a sharpened lens also for socio-economic and gender analysis, targeting and M&E, for example to look at data beyond sex disaggregation, but also disaggregate data for marginalized groups, people with disabilities, migrants, indigenous people, etc.

Box 1

The importance of intersectionality in approach inequality

The need to unpack the seemingly homogenous category of gender within the Agenda 2030 has been highlighted by Maria Bustelo and others (2015) as part of the Gender+ initiative. Gender+ emphasises the importance of **intersectionality**, understood as the interaction produced when crossing gender inequality with other inequalities. Thus, interventions that address one concrete inequality may not be neutral to other inequalities. For example, promoting greater gender equality may unintentionally lead to increased discrimination against already marginalized groups, such as women with ethnic diversity, migrants, elderly people or homosexuals.

7. A focus on gender within the broader agenda for poverty reduction will need to take into account the other axes of exclusion and deprivation. Women that are disadvantaged because of other factors, such as age, ethnicity and migrant status, are more likely to be affected by poverty. Exclusion usually involves forms of economic exclusion (from labour market participation and adequate income, and thus evidenced by income poverty); but it also means that the capacity of individuals or social groups to participate in society are subject to severe

¹¹ Deepta Chopra and Caterine Muller. 2016. Connecting Perspectives on Women's Empowerment. IDS Bulletin Vol. 47 No 1A.

limitations, whether due to economic, political or other social (e.g. cultural, religious, gender) factors. Thus social inclusion requires overcoming the cultural and political barriers to participation at local, national or global levels. While gender is a universal category of discrimination, so are class, race and disability. In different contexts other categories might also play important roles, such as age, ethnicity, etc. An increased focus on social inclusion not only means better social analysis and targeting tools, but also addressing the drivers and barriers of marginalization and exclusion.

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