

Info Note

Expanding Opportunities: Scaling Up Gender and Social Inclusion in Climate-Resilient Agriculture

An Equality and Empowerment Approach

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Key messages

- A gender and socially-inclusive approach to scaling can identify the mechanisms needed to bridge the gap between the wider approaches required for scaling and the participatory approaches needed to address the priorities and needs of different groups in society.
- Scaling can be consistent with gender equality conditions if it is participatory, inclusive and localized.
- CCAFS experience in four scaling areas (policy, climate information, inclusive finance and collective action) demonstrates models for gender and socially inclusive scaling strategies.

Limiting global warming to the 2°C target in the 2015 Paris Agreement, and reaching the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, will require large-scale expansion of climate-resilient approaches in food systems. Coordinated action is needed from global to local levels, with research, policy and investment, across private, public and civil society sectors. At the same time, these approaches need to address gender equality and social inclusion. More attention needs to be given to the factors that constrain change and innovation in the poorest and most vulnerable groups. Participatory approaches that embed equality, more equal power relations and social justice into the design and practice of climate-resilient agriculture are critical.

Can scaling-up of climate-resilient agriculture approaches be consistent with gender equality, and integrate the conditions and mechanisms necessary to address inequality? Are small-scale, participatory, inclusive, and

localized approaches to address cultural and socio-economic differences consistent with the broad-brush approaches required to scale up? Scaling takes place at both vertical and horizontal levels, or combinations of the two, in different contextual, geographical, socioeconomic and environmental contexts. Key aspects include government strategies; private-sector business models and investment plans; mainstreaming of institutional changes; and/or informing policy. Vertical scaling translates from household to local to national to global levels, through one or more of these mechanisms, while horizontal scaling may translate across regions, communities or countries (Aggarwal et al., 2018).

This framework integrates CCAFS experience in gender and socially-inclusive approaches to reach women, youth and under-represented groups, to develop a model for scaling up climate resilient agriculture that integrates equality and empowerment.

Gender and social inclusion in climate-resilient agriculture: a framework for scaling up

CCAFS has taken a four dimensional-approach to gender and socially inclusive climate resilient agriculture (see Figure 1):

- Building evidence: what are the gender and social inclusion results, benefits and differences of adoption CSA?
- Enhancing the capacity of local institutions and services, including women's and community-based organizations, to close the gender and social inclusion gap.

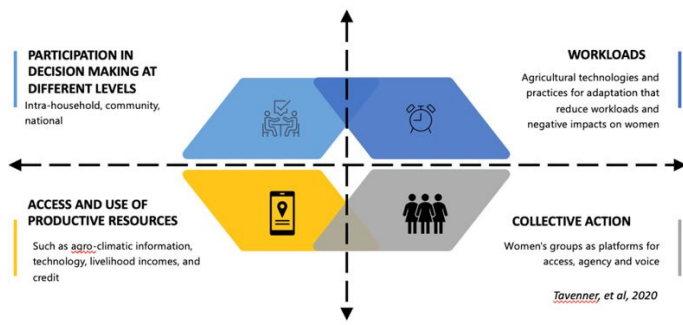


Figure 2. Four gender inequality dimensions of climate resilience.

- Ensuring that gender and women’s empowerment are dealt with in coordinated climate and agricultural policy, and promoting the participation and leadership of women, youth and under-represented groups in policy making at all levels from local to global.
- Building mechanisms to promote finance and investment with a gender and social inclusion lens (Huyer et al., 2016).

While women often do not have the resources to implement adaptation solutions in farming, even if they are equally aware of its impacts (Assan et al., 2020), initial research indicates that women can experience empowerment from the adoption of CSA practices and technologies. This can take the form of increased decision making over household and farming expenditures, access to employment and incomes, and participation in community decision making (Huyer & Partey, 2020).

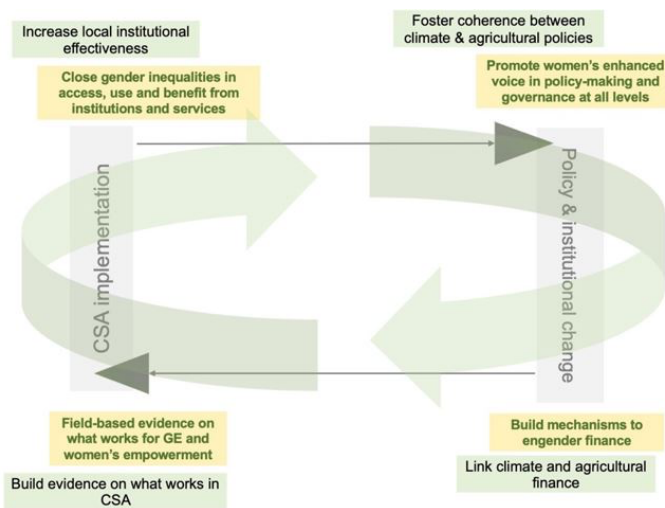


Figure 1. Gender and socially-inclusive climate-resilient agriculture.

A review of CCAFS gender research (Huyer et al., 2020) has found that to be empowering and promote equality, gender and socially-inclusive scaling needs to integrate intersectionality with four dimensions of gender equality in climate-resilient agriculture for resilience and agency (see Figure 2): Participation in decision making at household, community, national and global levels; reduced work

burdens; access and use of productive resources including information; and collective action.

Collective action and organizing is a crucial ingredient of gender-and socially-inclusive scaling. Women’s, youth, farmers’ and community based organizations can act as platforms for establishing and spreading information, new technologies and practices, and provide a base for joint purchase and management of technologies. Community organizations in Kenya and Tanzania are platforms for delivery of farmer advisory services and agricultural inputs, mobilization of financial resources for loans and mobilization of labour, for example in the construction of soil and water conservation structures. They also serve as platforms for demonstration farms and agricultural knowledge. Comprised of mixed, women-only and youth groups (with 50-80% women members), the CBO platforms in these communities are adoption platform for technologies and innovations such as resilient varieties of root crops (cassava and sweet potato), cereals (maize, millet, sorghum) and soil and water conservation (Recha et al., 2017).

Gender and socially-inclusive scaling for equality and empowerment

A scaling approach that addresses inequalities and promotes empowerment (Figure 3) crosscuts the four areas of gender equality for CRA (Figure 2), in relation to the key aspects of CRA (Figure 1). It extends across scales of household, community, landscape and region, with policy, information and finance as key scaling vectors for adoption of climate-resilient agriculture. Targetting the key gender equality dimensions of participation in decision making, access and benefits from resources (including benefits from technology and information), and reduction of workloads, in an intersectional manner building on collective action, will generate momentum to gender equality, empowerment (agency) and means to confront gender norms (Huyer et al, 2019; 2021).

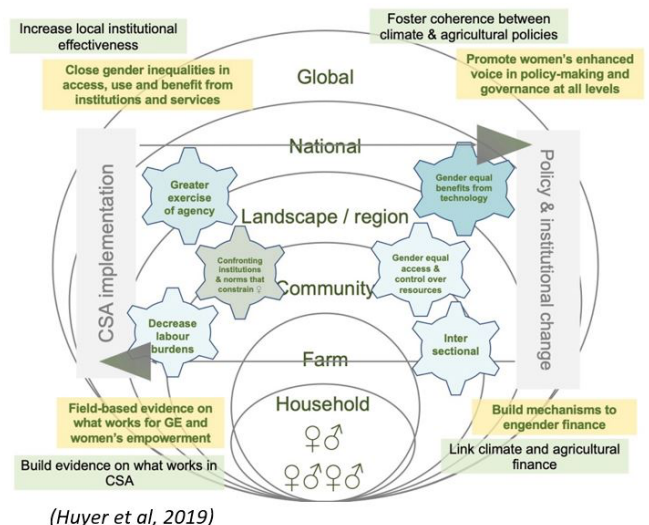


Figure 3. Gender and socially inclusive scaling for empowerment and equality.

Experience and examples from CCAFS and elsewhere demonstrate how this approach can be actualized:

- As one vector for scaling, **climate services** disseminate agro- and climate-information to farmers through extension systems, digital and other media, capacity development, and the private sector. Climate services can contribute to gender equality if they address the needs and priorities of both women and men, increase their resilience to cope with climate change, increase their incomes and production, and provide a means for women to challenge gender norms through public discussions and airing of their views (Huyer, 2019; Sterling & Huyer, 2010). Access to weather forecasts and CSA information supports women to make informed agricultural decisions, increases their confidence and decision making on the farm, and increases food security (Gumucio et al, 2020; Mittal, 2016). In Madhya Pradesh, it also encouraged them to implement new adaptation practices, which were transmitted to other women farmers in the area (Chanana et al., 2018).

- **Integrating equality and empowerment into climate policy, decision making and leadership.** Policy at regional, national and global levels is one common scaling avenue, although success in integrating gender into climate policy is limited.

Women's groups have long been active in environmental policymaking (Chen, 1995). Women's NGOs played a big role in shaping policy debates in the leadup to and during three major UN conferences: the Rio conference on environment (1992), the Vienna conference on human rights (1993) and the Cairo conference on population (1994). Coordinated action by women's groups contributed to preparatory policy processes (Chen, 1995). Activism by women's and social groups remains a major strategy to influence global climate policy, through groups such as WEDO and the Women's Constituency.

At the national level, women's and other civil society representative groups are increasingly becoming involved in consultative processes in different aspects of climate policy, including the Ghana CSA Policy Platform. In its roadmap to integrating gender equality in NDCs, UNDP notes the important of engaging in consultations with women's stakeholder organizations for representation of key concerns, perspectives, and in turn empowerment of women in national policy processes (UNDP, 2016).

- **Inclusive finance strategies for scaling resilience.** Finance plays a role in scaling out climate-resilient agriculture by providing the resource base and livelihoods framework for implementation and expansion of climate-resilient practices. Inclusive finance is about banking products and financial

services that are available to poor populations, such as mobile money.

Gender equality finance strategies include working through local women's groups, self-help groups, village savings and loans (VSLAs) and other group-based economic mutual support groups to support credit access and production support. Membership of VSLAs in Vietnam promoted access to finance and training on coffee production and was linked to increased equality in household decision-making and increased sharing of domestic responsibilities (Simelton et al., 2021). In Ghana, IFAD scaled up this approach in its work with District Value Chain Committees (DVCCs) across the country, building on local women's groups to access finance and production support. In Northern Ghana, DVCCs manage planning, implementation, coordination and monitoring of activities in maize, soya and sorghum value chains. DVCCs include buyers, input providers (seeds and fertilizers), service providers (extension and tractor services), financial institutions like rural banks, and farmer-based organizations (FBOs). Empowerment results for women farmers included: ability to buy additional pieces of land, attending management training, decision making power over their own income, engaging in non-traditional activities such as buying and operating a truck, employing other people in small and medium sized enterprises (IFAD, 2016).

Conclusion

When integrated into vertical and horizontal scaling mechanisms – policy at local, national and global levels; climate information; inclusive finance mechanisms and investment incentives; and gender- and socially-inclusive collective action for agency and empowerment in rural areas – a set of pathways for scaling of different CRA dimensions can be developed that will be more inclusive. A gender and socially-inclusive approach to scaling can identify the mechanisms needed to bridge the gap between the wider approaches required to scale innovative CRA and participatory approaches that address the priorities and needs of different groups in society.

Further reading

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