

Gender integration in the Health of Ethiopian Animals for Rural Development (HEARD) project: Approaches and methodologies



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Contents

Acknowledgements	iv
Introduction	1
Basic gender concepts	3
Why gender: Arguments for integrating gender	5
Gender integration methodologies and actions	6
Monitoring, documentation and learning	8
Monitoring gender integration process and outcomes	9
Further reading	10
Annexes	11
Annexe 1. Tasks of gender focal persons	11
Annexe 2. Exemplary gender outcome story checklist	11

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Introduction

The technical assistance team of the Health of Ethiopian Animals for Rural Development (HEARD) project contracted a gender short term expert to investigate the gender responsiveness of the HEARD project and strengthen the gender focus of project implementation. Accordingly, the consultant developed a two-year gender strategy action plan. The strategic objectives of the strategy are:

- Staff have the knowledge, skills and tools needed to effectively integrate gender in their project
- HEARD project has the necessary structure in place to integrate gender in the project life
- The project has built linkages with relevant stakeholders to ensure the sustainability of the gender activities in the project and beyond
- The project has integrated gender innovative activities to ensure gender equity
- The project has a gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation system in place.

The main actions of the strategy include:

- Building gender capacity of HEARD project staff via training and workshops
- Assigning and/or strengthening the gender structure of HEARD project implementers
- Revising HEARD project staff performance and development plans to include measurable gender related objectives/ activities
- Organizing workshops involving gender departments of relevant sectors (i.e. Ministry of Agriculture, International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), regional gender experts working on livestock production etc.)
- Coordinating experience sharing and learning events with project partners
- Piloting innovative and gender sensitive animal health approaches
- Developing/adapting and monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) system to track progress on gender action plan
- Collect sex-disaggregated data.

Responding to the gender strategy action plan, the guideline aims to create shared understanding and alignment among HEARD project partners related to gender equity objectives, gender targets and content, gender integration approaches and methodologies, gender-disaggregated reporting and gender outcome documentation. It aims to provide a guiding structure for project partners to accelerate the gender integration process into ongoing interventions and aid documentation of innovative gender integration practices and outcomes.

The guideline emphasizes that integrating gender aspect is a requirement for planning, implementation and reporting of HEARD interventions and focuses on the following major activities:

- Identify key gender integration elements in HEARD interventions
- Organize sensitization training workshop for partners to align on gender integration elements, approaches and processes
- Provide coaching, problem-solving and documenting support for key partners.

Basic gender concepts

Sex is a biological difference between men and women. For example, women give birth and breastfeed, but men do not.

Gender is a socially given attributes, roles, activities, behaviours and responsibilities connected to being a male or a female in a society. Gender differences and inequalities are produced and maintained through social norms and institutions: rules (how things get done), resources (what is used and/or produced), people (who is in/out, who does what), activities (what is done) and power (who decides and whose interests are served).

Gender roles are tasks, activities and responsibilities culturally assigned to women and men in a society. The gender division of labour can shape freedom of movement, the allocation of time and ability to participate, autonomy, access to information and opportunities, how women and men engage in development activities and who you will contact and consult with.

Practical gender needs are the immediate necessities of men and women due to their gender roles, such as water, health, firewood, technologies, information etc.

Strategic gender interests are related to structural changes in society regarding women's status and equity, for example, decision-making power, ownership, representation etc.

Access refers to the opportunity to use a resource or benefit; whereas control is being able to define and decide on its use.

Gender equality means men and women are treated equally regardless of their gender differences and inequalities.

Gender equity means being fair to women and men to redress gender inequalities and differences.

Gender stereotypes are beliefs, assumptions and generalizations of characteristics, differences and attributes of men and women based on their sex. For example, women are emotional, women like chocolates or men are bad at housework etc.

Gender bias is a behaviour that shows favouritism towards one gender over another. For example, male extension agents preferring to work with male livestock keepers, using male words etc.

Gender analysis explores the relationships of women and men and the inequalities in those relationships, by asking: Who does what? Who has what? Who decides? Who gains? Who loses?

Sex-disaggregated data are collected and analysed separately on males and females. For example, 30 training participants (13 women and 17 men).

Gender-disaggregated data analyse gender differences, allowing a more accurate understanding of the situation of men and women. For example, of the 13 women, about 60% are female-headed households.

Gender integration is the process of identifying and addressing gender norms, gender relations and the differences and inequalities between males and females in program planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation.

The Integrating gender continuum is a conceptual framework that illustrates the different approaches to integrating gender and their potential consequences. It categorizes approaches by how they treat gender norms and inequality in the planning, designing, implementing and monitoring and evaluation of a program or policy.

Gender blind approach lacks information on women and men's roles, participation, access and control to resources, power relations between them and other gender aspects. It does not consider how gender norms and unequal power relations will affect the achievement of objectives or how program or policy will affect gender norms and relations.

Gender exploitative approach intentionally or unintentionally reinforces gender inequalities and stereotypes in pursuit of economic outcomes. For example, increasing women's workload by involving them in time-intensive activities without direct benefit to themselves, income controlled by husbands etc.

Gender accommodating approach recognizes and responds to the specific needs and realities of men and women based on their existing roles and responsibilities: works around existing gender differences and inequalities; integrates women into the existing social and economic context, but do not question the barriers put up by that context. For example, improving women's access to information, resources, technologies, training etc.

Gender transformative approach explicitly engages both women and men to examine, question and change institutions and norms that reinforce gender inequalities and, through that process, achieve both economic growth and gender equality objectives. The approach sees the socio-cultural and economic context as not just something to understand and work within, but as something to act on. For example, empowering women, promoting women's rights, improving women's access and control over resources and technologies, organizing women and creating awareness of their rights, increasing women's ownership of livestock and their ability to market livestock on their own terms, interventions at household level that improve intrahousehold decision-making on managing livestock, including sales and distribution of income from sales (Mulema et al. 2021b).

Why gender: Arguments for integrating gender

For HEARD project, the following are the basic reasons for integrating gender:

1. **Justice and equality:** Democratic principles and basic human rights; equal representation and participation of both sexes. Article 35 of the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) states that 'women have equal rights with men in all economic, social and political activities'.
2. **Credibility and accountability:** Responsibility to ensure social justice and sustainable human development. 'Improving project accountability to women and men increases credibility by funding organizations, community and society.'
3. **Efficiency and sustainability:** Welfare and prosperity of a nation. 'Removing gender disparity and ensuring gender equality and women's empowerment accelerate economic growth and social development.'

Gender integration methodologies and actions

- Ensuring partners' ownership and commitment to gender equity/equality through strengthening gender focal persons who have decision-making and oversight roles in their organizations (see Annexe 1 for role description). The HEARD regional coordinators and gender focal persons of public and private partners (PPP) together will make gender integration taskforces at the regional level who will oversee and monitor gender integration progress at the delivery/implementation level (districts and communities). These will be mentored and supervised by project staff during field visits and virtually.
- Promoting value proposition of, or arguments for, integrating gender through organizing awareness raising, sharing and learning events at the organizational and community levels.
- Ensuring couple's participation in trainings, community meetings or discussions.
- Work with and gain the support of men/husbands to promote positive attitudes towards women's participation.
- Women-friendly training approaches, such as making sessions shorter or spreading them out over a few days to cater for daily workloads, use of illustrations, open discussions, practical sessions (role plays, community drama, reflective discussions etc.).
- Women-only experience sharing and learning events, for example, field days, women's discussion circles.
- Women-specific participatory training (community conversations) on basic animal health care and husbandry practices (e.g. transmission and prevention of diseases; biosecurity; poultry vaccination; youngstock mortality; zoonotic and antimicrobial resistance (AMR) risks etc.).
- Women-specific extension messages, for example, zoonotic disease risks and AMR, veterinary drugs.
- Women-only meetings to discuss their needs and challenges in animal health management.
- Women and men group discussions during trainings or community meetings to explore gender perspectives and create community gender awareness.
- Using female trainers and advisors to reduce cultural barriers and social distance.
- Household-based coaching and advisory services: Involve both husband, wife and other household members during home or farm visits to advise livestock keepers or monitor their animal health management practices; holding household discussions that question how tasks, responsibilities, resources and knowledge can be more equitably shared in a household.
- Men and women animal health management groups that facilitate collaborative learning and sharing among community groups: Lead/volunteer women and men livestock keepers train, coach and support other livestock keepers following animal health training, demonstrations or advisory services. Community animal health workers can easily work with women and men animal health management groups, creating networks of groups for sharing and influencing within the community and beyond.

- Posters or pictures that show both women and men in animal health management actions at household or community level, for example, during vaccination or treatment services.
- Picture supported experiential and discussion based training and community engagement methods that are culturally appropriate and accessible by women and men livestock keepers.
- Training for livestock producers and service providers: 40% female participation.
- Gender components and implications in interventions (trainings, workshops, study tours, community meetings, communication, herd health interventions/PPP models, credit services etc.).
- Accessible and convenient place and time for women livestock keepers: Trainings, meetings, demonstrations, vaccination or treatment services etc.
- Resourcing of gender-related materials in animal health resource centres.
- Curriculum/training materials: Gender aspects in course description, objectives, learning activities and outcomes.
- PPP operationalization guidelines: Gender dimensions, empowerment of women service providers.
- Taskforce and coordinators' meetings: Reinforcing gender training, monitoring of gender progress, sharing of good practices, lessons learned etc.
- Plans and reports: Gender sensitive language (awareness of gender stereotypes and gender biases), gender indicators and targets, gender-sensitive use of visual materials (inclusive, diverse and balanced).

Monitoring, documentation and learning

Monitoring is a regular collection of information to measure the progress of gender integration activities based on established indicators and make corrections as work progresses.

Process monitoring measures progress (tasks, activities, processes and methods) towards integrating gender into project interventions for systematic and collective learning, reflection and corrective action. It answers the questions 'What has been done so far? Where, when and how has it been done? What needs to be changed?'

Outcome monitoring provides information about changes due to gender integration activities and processes.

Process documentation is an ongoing activity to capture the process, results and experiences of integrating gender into ongoing project interventions. It is a systematic and rigorous process of recording activities, processes and their results and sharing of useful information.

Monitoring gender integration process and outcomes

- Review activity plans, reports, training materials, guidelines, research protocols etc. for evidence of gender sensitivity or integration.
- HEARD project coordinators will require project staff/partners to share project outputs (activity plans, reports, training materials etc.) with the project's capacity development (CapDev) expert to review gender integration process/progress and take adaptive/corrective actions.
- The M&E officer of the project will also conduct scoring/gender auditing of reported activities for the extent to which project outputs integrate gender components, resulting in a gender report card for the project. Furthermore, reporting on gender integration will include ongoing progress updates and communication with project management and teams.

Process documentation of gender integration approaches, methods and outcomes:

- Project staff will use a guiding outcome case story documentation checklist (Annexe 2).
- They will be required to include outcome stories in activity/quarterly reports, for example, women animal health service providers; female livestock keepers; gender-responsive animal health approaches; PPP models etc.
- The CapDev expert and the M&E officer will also make field observations and interviews with partners (gender focal persons) and male and female livestock keepers.
- In addition, gender aspects from activity and quarterly reports will be collated into gender integration progress report and innovation brief at the project level.

Indicative gender outcome areas:

- **Reaching and benefiting women:** Women's participation; access to technologies and services (including markets, credit, information, advice or training); equitable sharing of domestic work; recognition of reproductive work; satisfaction with veterinary and training services.
- **Empowering women:** Challenging and transforming gender norms and practices; supporting and enabling women to make decisions within the household and community; strengthening women's capability to control resources and benefits; strengthening women's representation and influence in community-based decision-making and management structures; women's networks; relational, engagement and demand capacity.
- **Changes at household and community level:** Collaborative action and joint decision-making within the household; family support for women's participation; positive community images of women, their roles and their contributions; gender-equitable attitudes; gender capacity of service providers; women's engagement and influencing capacity.

Further reading

- Fischer, G. and Odhong, J. 2017. *Seeing through the gender lens: Capturing gender-sensitive stories in agricultural research and development*. Ibadan, Nigeria: International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA). https://genderinagr.files.wordpress.com/2017/09/ar_gender_stories_lowres.pdf
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Annexes

Annexe 1. Tasks of gender focal persons

- Advocate for and ensure that gender dimensions are integrated in planning, implementation and reporting of project interventions
- Monitor and report on gender integration process and progress
- Document cases and examples of innovative gender integration approaches and outcomes
- Provide mentoring, problem-solving and documenting support to project partners
- Ensure that animal health resource centres are resourced with gender-related materials, such as gender mainstreaming guidelines, gender training materials etc.
- Ensure that activity and quarterly reports are gendered and include gender outcome stories
- Create collaborations with gender units of public and non-government partners.

Annexe 2. Exemplary gender outcome story checklist

A good outcome story has power to inspire, energize and move people to action:

- make people feel
- help you learn and improve
- build learning culture
- share your success
- advocate for change
- learn about what works and what does not
- persuade or influence others
- motivate change
- inform others

Background information	Context: Location, agro-ecological description Story subject: Name, age, gender, family size
Problem situation	What constraints do female livestock keepers (female-headed households and women in male-headed households) face to access and use animal health services (training, advisory services, preventive and treatment services, community meetings etc.)? What constraints do female animal health service providers face to participate in PPP service delivery models?
Intervention	What actions are taken to reach and empower female livestock keepers and increase their access to and use of animal health services? What actions are taken to increase female animal health service providers' involvement in PPP service delivery models?
Outcomes	To what extent do female livestock keepers benefit from project interventions? How does women's involvement in the project help increase project outcomes?
Evidence	What evidence (qualitative or quantitative) support gender changes?
Sustainability and replicability	What drivers and success factors enable the gender changes? What mechanisms are in place or required to sustain and replicate the gender changes?

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