



GENDER EMPOWERMENT AND INTEGRATION

Historical Timeline, Summary of Activities, and Lessons Learned

SECURING
WATER
FOR FOOD:
A GRAND CHALLENGE
FOR DEVELOPMENT



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Securing Water for Food is committed to addressing the constraints that women and girls face with respect to both access to and use of SWFF innovations and, where feasible, seeks to further understand the context, attitudes, and norms in their communities that affect gender and impact water and agricultural processes. Throughout the life of the program, there's been an emphasis on gender. In addition, many of the program-level decisions and technical assistance support offerings have been influenced by a gender focus (e.g., gender specific indicators for SWFF innovators, inclusion of a gender-related service capacity in the SWFF TA Facility acceleration portfolio, gender training for innovators, gender specialists on the IIAC, removing gender biases in hiring decisions, etc.). This document represents an analysis and summary of the gender accomplishments, activities, and lessons learned from the start of the Securing Water for Food program (2014) through present day (January 2019) and will be updated each project reporting period.

SWFF Program Incorporates Gender Specific Indicators

SWFF has always supported efforts to address gender programming, having required gender specific indicators on customer/end-user adoption since the program's inception. The fact that gender analysis was not integrated into the early budget recommendations for SWFF innovators was identified as a constraint, as most innovators did not budget funds specifically for gender analysis and gender integration. However, gender was mentioned as a thematic area (e.g., as was sustainability) to applicants at the concept note stage, and specific questions about gender were asked by the Sida gender representative during the video teleconference interviews for Round 1, Round 3, and Round 4 innovators.



SWFF TA Facility Includes Gender in “Approved Menu of Services”

The SWFF TA Facility developed and implemented its Voucher System of Support Vendors, which allows rapid procurement of services on an as-needed basis in a manner compliant with USAID regulations. Gender-Related Services is offered as an acceleration service category in the slate of services offered to SWFF innovators.

Global Forum for Innovation in Agriculture in Abu Dhabi

The TA Facility facilitated Sida’s delivery of a workshop on “Basic Gender Analysis,” a workshop focused on integrating gender equality considerations into business plans and implementation. SWFF innovators gave the workshop very low ratings because it was too “theoretical” and didn’t address their individual situations and needs.

SWFF Adds a Gender Specialist to the IIAC

The Innovation Investment Advisory Committee (IIAC) is a standing panel of technical experts, business specialists, sustainable development experts, and researchers with extensive experience in water and agriculture innovation. In 2015, SWFF added a gender specialist and technical experts from South Africa to improve the representative nature of the IIAC.

Amsterdam International Water Week

The event featured acceleration workshops on metrics and milestones, partnerships, business model development, gender, legal, investment, and a dynamic matchmaking session with social impact investors. Though gender wasn't a focus, SWFF tried to facilitate investments in its women-owned businesses, though these efforts did not yield direct investments or the results expected.

SWFF Site Visit Protocols and Reporting Include Women Customers/Users

The SWFF team uses site visits to confirm reported impact on customers and places special emphasis on meeting with women customers/users to gather feedback on the SWFF innovation and the innovator's approach to reaching female customers. The team also meets with project leaders to discuss the role of women in implementing the project and the extent of female adoption of the innovation.



Sida Funds Analysis of Gender Perspectives and Integration in SWFF

Sweden, through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), funded a report prepared by the International Law and Policy Institute in January 2016 titled *Gender in the Challenge Funds: Securing Water for Food and Powering Agriculture*. The project included an analysis of gender perspectives and gender integration in Securing Water for Food and another challenge fund in the energy-agriculture nexus, Powering Agriculture – An Energy Grand Challenge for Development to assess the extent to which innovators had integrated gender within their organizations and value chains, and to provide recommendations for gender integration.



SWFF TA Facility Publishes the Gender Report

This report examines the context in which the SWFF program (which includes the SWFF Founding Partners, the SWFF TA Facility, and the SWFF innovators) was operating and showcased evidence of how the program was moving from analysis and theoretical considerations to developing practical activities, early actions, and recommendations for SWFF innovators.

The report addressed and examined gender and its influence in the assurance of development outcomes; the distinct benefits in addressing gender, gender-based barriers faced by SWFF innovators and others working in water and agriculture; the broad challenges experienced when selling to bottom-of-the-pyramid male and female customers; actions taken by SWFF innovators to integrate gender; operational changes, challenges, and lessons learned as it relates to gender for the SWFF TA Facility operations; and feedback from the SWFF innovators.

The report detailed practical recommendations and early actions that can have a positive impact on the broader goals of development, the communities and customers served by SWFF innovators, and ones that could directly benefit the growth and sustainability of SWFF innovators. Key lesson learned: While SWFF recognizes the potential value of gender workshops the evidence above indicates that any future gender workshops for innovators must provide direct and specific actionable value to each individual innovator, and should be planned and organized by taking into account the lessons learned.

The report also revealed a trend that some innovators who led private enterprises struggled to demonstrate an understanding of gender barriers, opportunities, and impact beyond the anecdotal level. SWFF innovators that are publicly-funded and have past experience reporting to donor institutions were more likely to have structured gender outreach and a more clear understanding of how to engage their customers for gender-related insights.

Some innovators mentioned the local context, religion, societal norms, organizational capacity, industry constraints, and other society-induced constraints as barriers to productive gains in gender. About two-thirds of SWFF innovators include women in their technology development and design feedback loop and used informal discussion, interviews, focus groups, surveys and other (e.g., trainings, market visits, farmer meetings, etc.), to gather gender-inspired insights.

Integration of gender-focused data collection and analysis was impacted by the resources of their organization and the context with which they operated. Several innovators were proactive in considering and implementing ways to target women as customers or engage them in their business model. Other innovators focused on gender from an employee or business partner perspective, integrating women-owned businesses in their value chains, or focusing attention on the hiring and professional development of women.

About half of SWFF innovators' technologies were designed to meet the needs and preferences of the end user, regardless of gender. Several innovators purposefully include women in pilots and trials and seek ways to empower women and incorporate gender-balanced feedback into the resulting value and distribution chains. Over half incorporated women's needs and preferences into the design of their innovations prior to the SWFF award.

Most SWFF innovators do not collect data on longer-term outcomes and impacts of their innovations, instead focusing on metrics that are nearer-term and more directly tied to their business/enterprise activities, such as the number of customers and the immediate benefits of using their products or increased crop yield. It is

often the case that gender concerns are not overtly being integrated into planning and implementation. However, innovators are often addressing these issues in the early stages of implementation, when women farmer's challenges are being identified.



Gender Expert Evaluates Innovations' Impact on Women

During the SWFF Round 3 selection process, the IIAC Gender Expert, Åsa Torkelsson, evaluated stage 1 and stage 2 applications on the innovations' overall impact on women and the strategies the organizations put in place to reduce the gap between men and women.

Gender Principles/Lens Applied to SWFF TA Facility Portfolios

In 2016, SWFF's activities focused on improving gender integration in all organizational processes. Each portfolio developed work outputs and activities under the gender lens, and the SWFF TA Facility Voucher System expanded the services categories to include gender assessments and support and gender consultants. [i.e., Gender Assessments / Considerations General Category. Description: This category would include primary and/or secondary research to support country gender assessments, gender assessments by sector, company gender assessments, and gender impact assessments. It may also include training on gender, gender sensitization, and other gender-related categories of work (e.g., understanding the challenges facing smallholder farmers and advising on participatory extension programs, identify and establishing relevant PPPs, etc.)].

The Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist developed a standard reporting form to capture consistent data across site visits, with training provided to non-M&E staff and a separate app to allow geo-tagged data to be captured. The use of this reporting form and corresponding app has allowed the team to begin capturing consistent gender and livelihood data across farmer interviews.





SWFF Requires Gender Component in All TA Facility Acceleration Scopes of Work

In each acceleration scope of work a gender component is required. For the sales and marketing strategies, the research must include an examination of female customers and how the innovator’s value proposition may or may not differ from the value proposition of the product or service from the male perspective.

The related gap analysis must also consider the effectiveness of the sales and marketing activities to reach female customers, specifically, in addition to reaching the company’s customers generally. Additional items to address in the research include: 1) Effectiveness of the product value proposition overall. Does the value proposition differ between female and male customers? 2) Appropriateness of customer segmentation. 3) Effectiveness of customer engagement. Should customer engagement differ between male and female customers? 4) Identifying the most productive sales channels. Is a sales channel more effective for reaching female customers? 5) Identifying effective distribution channels. Usage of the most effective marketing channels. Are certain channels more effective for reaching women?

The sales and marketing playbook should include either a dedicated section or included in relevant sections throughout any recommendations for differentiating sales and marketing activities between male and female customers based on value proposition, perceived risks, desired communications channels, effective sales methods, and other facets of demand generation to reach the female customer segment.

SWFF Identifies Gaps in the Ag Value Chain: The Missing Market of Women As Consumers

In late 2016, the USAID Ag Cluster [SWFF, the Powering Ag Grand Challenge for Development, and Bureau of Food Security's Partnering for Innovation (P4I)] identified the need to create a practical guidebook to address the "missing market" of women farmers, entrepreneurs, heads of households, etc. SWFF put the plan in motion to create a document that reviewed the current resources and tools for designing and marketing products to women in agriculture; provided a market assessment of agricultural technology for women, including barriers and opportunities for reaching the missing market; provided specific recommendations for tools/processes for product redesign considerations for women consumers; and developed a model product promotional strategy that can be customized to innovators' needs.



SWFF Increases Gender Considerations in the Round 4 Call for Innovations

In Round 4, SWFF purposely sought innovations that at least addressed women and men equitably rather than focusing on men, and sought women-focused innovations that highlight the roles, skills, and capacities of women. SWFF refocused the Round 4 Request for Applications (RFA) to engage applicants upfront on gender considerations as well as to pose questions that required applicants to describe gender issues that may affect implementation of and access to the innovation by women (e.g., describe target end users and their gender, the potential growth foreseen by including gender in their activities and value chains, and the implementation risks if the project was gender-blind).

Applicants were required to show that their innovations should contribute, directly or indirectly, to more equal gender relations and how it would benefit women. The Round 4 application and innovator interview process engaged and challenged applicants to consider key gender issues that affect implementation of access to innovation and how to develop an effective gender integration strategy. By requiring applicants to think about gender strategies early in the process, SWFF was able to make a greater impact on gender integration over the course of working with the Round 4 innovators.

This gave the program the best assurance that a gender focus would be embedded in the project once implementation began.



SWFF TA Facility Offers Innovator-Contextualized Gender Support

At the Global Entrepreneurship Congress in Johannesburg, SWFF experts were assigned to work with SWFF innovators on gender issues: Åsa Torkelsson, a gender expert from Sida and advisor on the SWFF International Investment Advisory Committee (IIAC), and Sattva, a vendor in the Voucher System of Support Vendors. The team provided office hours during which innovators could explore gender-related challenges and goals.

During these one-on-one meetings, the experts helped innovators identify gender-related opportunities, provided context-specific recommendations and action items, and addressed gender-related issues affecting innovators' technology, marketing, and sales efforts. As a result, gender support has shifted from a poorly-rated support category to one of our highest-rated categories.

SWFF Innovators Report Uptake in Gender Programming and Implementation of Gender-Related Activities

Overall, 77 percent of current SWFF innovators had successfully taken gender into account in their programming or plan to implement gender strategies based on SWFF recommendations. Many innovators reported positive outcomes of gender-related efforts, such as the hiring of women field agents and the creation of partnerships to help increase adoption of products and services by women. Eight innovators reported increased gender activities in programming, including piloting a women-led seed treater/distribution model and improving an innovation design to make it easier for women to use. During site visits, SWFF gained further insights into gender and found that at least six innovators had underreported their gender impact.



SWFF Publishes “Missing Markets” Innovator Workbook

The Untapped Market for Agricultural Innovations in Emerging Economies: A Practical Workbook to Help Innovators Reach Women Smallholder Farmers was published May 2017. Initially discussed at the USAID Ag Cluster meeting in December 2016, P4I created the working concept. SWFF TA Facility Chief of Party, Dr. Donna Vincent Roa, with technical support from Sattva Consulting and input from multiple gender experts representing SWFF Founding Partners, created the workbook.



The document is a practical tool for innovators working in the agricultural sector, to help them: 1) Reach and effectively serve the untapped or missing market of women smallholder farmers in emerging economies, 2) Target business growth with a focus on women smallholder farmers, 3) Highlight resources and tools for designing and marketing products, services, and technologies to reach this market, 4) Guide assessment of barriers and opportunities to reach the missing market of women smallholder farmers, 5) Create a framework for expanding to other countries and markets, and 6) Examine the entire business cycle, from product design to market entry, to plan for customer retention and company growth.

SWFF Receives High Satisfaction Score on Gender

An area of progress for SWFF is helping innovators integrate gender-equitable concepts. Early in the SWFF program, innovators were unsatisfied with the program’s focus on high-level gender concepts instead of a focus on concrete, actionable next steps. Through innovator support calls, site visits, the Gender Report, the Missing Markets report, and subsequent technical assistance, the SWFF program now receives positive remarks from innovators on gender, with a satisfaction score of 4.44 out of 5.



Gender Empowerment and Integration in the SWFF Program (Semi-Annual Reporting)

More than 1.7 million of the approximate 3.6 million customers and end users of SWFF-supported innovations are women. During the past six months, SWFF added a Round 4 cohort of innovators that have expanded SWFF's overall gender focus. Many innovators have implemented strategies that promote the participation of women smallholder farmers and are actively looking for ways to include gender-inclusive activities in their programming.

Many innovators continue to report positive outcomes of gender-related efforts such as the hiring of women field agents and the creation of partnerships to help increase adoption of products and services by women. Overall, 90 percent of current SWFF innovators have successfully taken gender into account in their programming or plan to implement gender strategies based on SWFF recommendations. In 2018, 14 active innovators reported increased gender activities in programming, including expanding gender-sensitive trainings and increasing focus on women smallholder farmers as customers.

During site visits, SWFF gained further insights into gender and found that all 10 Round 4 innovators had underreported their gender impact. SWFF found that some innovators directly pursue women customers as a central part of their business model and address gender barriers specific to their country's context.

Round 4 innovators have made gender integration one of their major foci that is beginning to yield significant results in their customer bases and within their organizations.

Gender Empowerment and Integration in the SWFF Program (Annual Reporting)

More than 3 million of the approximate 6.2 million end users/customers of SWFF-supported innovations are women. SWFF Round 4 innovators, in their Year 2 annual reporting period, have expanded SWFF's overall gender focus. Many innovators have implemented strategies that promote the participation of women smallholder farmers, are actively looking for ways to include gender-inclusive activities in their programming, and continue to report positive outcomes of gender-related efforts (e.g., hiring of women field agents and the creation of partnerships to help increase adoption of products and services by women).

All current SWFF innovators as of December 2018 have successfully taken gender into account in their programming or plan to implement gender strategies based on SWFF recommendations. In 2018, 14 active and graduate innovators reported increased gender activities in programming, including expanding gender-sensitive trainings and increasing focus on women smallholder farmers as customers.

During site visits, SWFF gained further insights into gender and found that all Round 4 innovators had underreported their gender impact. Some innovators directly pursue women customers as a central part of their business model and address gender barriers specific to their country's context.



SWFF Lessons Learned and Renewed Focus on Strategies and Practical Recommendations

SWFF continues to focus on actionable and concrete strategies that incorporate gender in a way that is accessible to and useful for the early and mid-stage innovators that the program is supporting. We believe that gender isn't just about women and that integrating gender into SWFF programming requires gender analyses that examine how differences in power, status, and gender norms affect people's lives. SWFF is committed to addressing the constraints that women and girls face with respect to both access to and use of SWFF innovations and, where feasible, seek to further understand the context, attitudes, and norms in their communities that affect gender and impact water and agricultural processes. Here are our 15 key lessons learned:



- Solutions and changes cannot be imposed. If you want innovators to integrate gender, it should be in ways that improve innovators' processes without added technical and financial burden.
- Expectations for gender programming and gender implications need to be set as early as the application process so that there are no surprises.
- Innovators struggle with gender prescriptions when they do not fit with their business model, cultural context, religious practices, or capability to implement.
- Gender programming must take into account different socio-economic contexts of the areas where SWFF innovators are working.
- Many innovators have concrete gender strategies in place, but have limited resources to address issues that are beyond their control (i.e., women's access to land and other resources).
- Most innovators can provide evidence of gender influence on some aspect of their businesses (e.g., marketing strategies).

- Innovators are “doing gender” but are often not labeling it as such.
- Gender programming may be better received by the innovators if the focus is on understanding context of “gender situations,” relationships, and issues to foster equality rather than just focus on women’s issues.
- Innovators show evidence of women’s empowerment, count gender issues as integral in their operations, and in the gender training sessions felt like facilitators were “preaching to the choir.”
- Gender recommendations need to be actionable so that if a commitment is made, it is clear what is expected of all parties.
- Innovators want SWFF to help their business address the issue of gender with practical recommendations (e.g., an HR training program that focuses on hiring and developing women; implementation of pragmatic, doable, and low cost/high impact tailored measures).
- A gender lens should be used as early as project design, in implementation, and in all evaluation tools, and innovators need assistance to do this.
- If you push gender, you must be a partner in helping to increase its applicability.
- Theoretical gender information is not seen as useful by SWFF innovators and is not the most effective way to convince others of the utility and effectiveness of gender integration.
- Capacity to collect gender-related insights varies greatly among innovators, with small private enterprises struggling the most given the necessity of using their limited resources efficiently.

SWFF has taken significant strides toward finding the right balance between supporting and strengthening innovators’ gender focus without imposing gender norms that lack cultural context and sensitivity. We will continue to grow, adapt, and evolve to address these challenges over the coming years.



SWFF Publications that Include Gender Information and Data

2018 SWFF Annual Report

SWFF Mid-Term Evaluation Report

2018 SWFF Annual Report 11×17
Executive Summary

2016 SWFF Annual Report

2018 SWFF Semi-Annual Report

2016 SWFF Semi-Annual Report

2018 SWFF Semi-Annual Report
11×17 Executive Summary

2016 SWFF Annual Report 11×17
Executive Summary

2017 SWFF Annual Report

2016 SWFF Gender Report

2017 The Untapped Market for
Agricultural Innovations: A Practical
Workbook to Help Innovators Reach
Women Smallholder Farmers

2016 SWFF Innovator
Commercialization & Readiness 11×17

2017 SWFF Semi-Annual Report

2015 SWFF Annual Report

2017 SWFF Semi-Annual Report
11×17 Executive Summary

2015 SWFF Annual Report 11×17
Executive Summary



This document was compiled on December 18, 2018 by Donna Vincent Roa, Chief of Party, Securing Water for Food TA Technical Assistance Facility, a project of The Kaizen Company. For more information, visit the SWFF website at:
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