



*PRIMA, EMPOWERING DIVERSITY,  
NURTURING PROGRESS*

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# Survey Report: Gender Dimension in PRIMA Projects **2018-2022**



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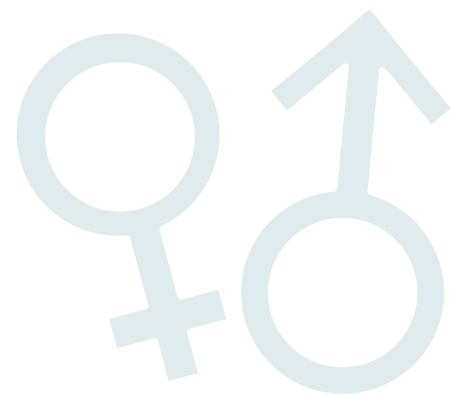
*Success stories and examples of good practices that could be replicated*

# INTRODUCTION

This survey report presents the findings of an assessment conducted to evaluate the integration of the gender dimension in PRIMA (Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area) projects from 2018 to 2022.

PRIMA aims to foster collaboration around the Mediterranean region, emphasizing inclusivity as an added value. The objective of the survey was to understand the extent to which gender equality and women's empowerment were considered in the design, implementation, and outcomes of the funded projects.

The survey was distributed to project coordinators involved in the 202 PRIMA projects during the specified period.



# METHODOLOGY

The survey utilized a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques.

An online questionnaire was distributed to project managers, containing closed and open-ended questions to gather comprehensive insights into the integration of the gender dimension in PRIMA projects.

The survey link was disseminated on 23rd May 2023, and data collection was completed by 15th June 2023.



# SAMPLES

A total of **85** project coordinators responded to the survey, representing **42%** of the 202 PRIMA projects funded between 2018 and 2022.

The projects covered various sectors within the PRIMA thematic, including Water management, WEFE Nexus, Farming systems, and Agrifood value chain.

Notably, **50% of Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems (WEFE) Nexus projects** responded to the questionnaire.



# KEY FINDINGS

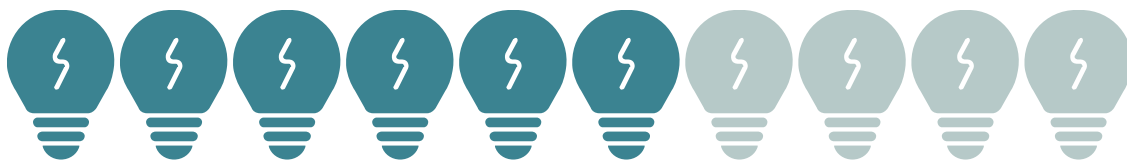
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## 01 Awareness and Understanding of Gender Dimension

- **98%** of respondents demonstrated a moderate to high level of awareness regarding the importance of gender dimension integration.
- **21%** participants understand the integration of gender dimension as achieving gender balance within the project's consortium, indicating a possible need for further clarification of the concept.

## 02 Participation and Representation of Women in Projects

- **98%** of projects reported working to achieve gender balance in their research teams.
- **61%** of projects had mechanisms in place to ensure the participation and representation of both women and men in their consortia.



## 03 Scale of Gender Dimensions Integration

These project statements reflect different perspectives on incorporating gender dimensions into scientific research. Let's go through 6 projects statements to revise and rationalize their positions:

### MEDACORNET

MEDACORNET aims to develop new products based on acorns, an ancient traditional Mediterranean food, produced by native oak species, while promoting the actors involved in its production and processing. This project involves diverse groups, including distinct ethnicities, genders, ages, and health conditions, in its organoleptic assays and market surveys. This approach using gender as a criterion among others, ensures that the project outcomes cater to the needs of a wide range of individuals, promoting inclusivity and relevance.

### PULPING



This project, that aims at reevaluating pumpkin use in the Med region, focuses on targeting women and young farmers in their stakeholder's engagement strategies, and encourage the transfer of knowledge through organising visit of international labs for groups of women. In this project integrating gender dimensions led to increased women's participation in knowledge transfer activities, and to more gender equality within the project and its target communities. This highlights how addressing gender disparities within a project can create a positive feedback loop of empowerment.

### LAB 4 SUPPLY



This project wants to empower Mediterranean smallholders and farmers by providing them practical solutions and acknowledges that incorporating the gender dimension has positively affected women entrepreneurs in the agri-food sector, which has traditionally been male-dominated. Women are considered part of the target group, encouraged to participate to specific trainings and be part of the Living labs. Specific gender monitoring, such as collecting the percentage of women leading a farm, helps achieving a global picture of problems and solutions.

This demonstrates that considering gender aspects can lead to positive social impacts and promote inclusivity in sectors where women are underrepresented.

## ECHINO SAFE MED



This project strives to improve small ruminants' livestock in the Mediterranean through sustainable farming and innovative cystic echinococcosis control (EC). The project recognizes that parasitic diseases may affect men and women differently in a community. They have integrated gender dimension since the definition of the project by discussing a gender action plan. The project tackles gender balance in their research team, but also in the decision-making position, and integrates gender in the scientific content.

By considering a gender-aware approach, the project aims to better understand and combat these diseases in the Mediterranean area. This perspective highlights the importance of recognizing gender-specific health disparities and tailoring interventions accordingly.

## SWITCHtoHEALTHY



SWITCHtoHEALTHY is a project aiming at introducing a greater adherence to Mediterranean Diet in families, and it has integrated gender-sensitive research and development activities by acknowledging gender in every aspect of the project (formulation, methodology and outcome planning).

To address gender dimensions SWITCHtoHEALTHY project counts with a leadership and co-leadership of women, targets beneficiaries acknowledging and exploring gender differences in risk behaviours, and implements digital-based educational tools and empowerment activities that follow a gender-related strategy. Communication and knowledge materials are as well designed with gender responsive content to ensure equal relatability in the target audience.

## NEXUS NESS



This project employs participatory and innovation ecosystem approaches to facilitate the technological and socio-cultural change needed to transition to WEFE Nexus approaches. Tailored stakeholder engagement actions are implemented in NEXUS-NESS integrating capacity building and training to support the PRIMA WEFE Nexus community of practice in embracing gender dimension principles. Those actions will make sure marginalized communities and gender, social, cultural and environmental ethics and inequities are considered to make sure no one is left behind while operationalizing WEFE Nexus innovations.

## Lessons learnt

*While some projects may initially perceive a lack of gender relevance in their specific scientific focus, **they should consider broader implications, indirect effects, and potential social impacts.** Incorporating gender dimensions can lead to more inclusive research, improved outcomes, and greater societal benefits. Acknowledging gender disparities and promoting gender balance within the projects can enrich perspectives and contribute to scientific excellence.*



# KEY FINDINGS

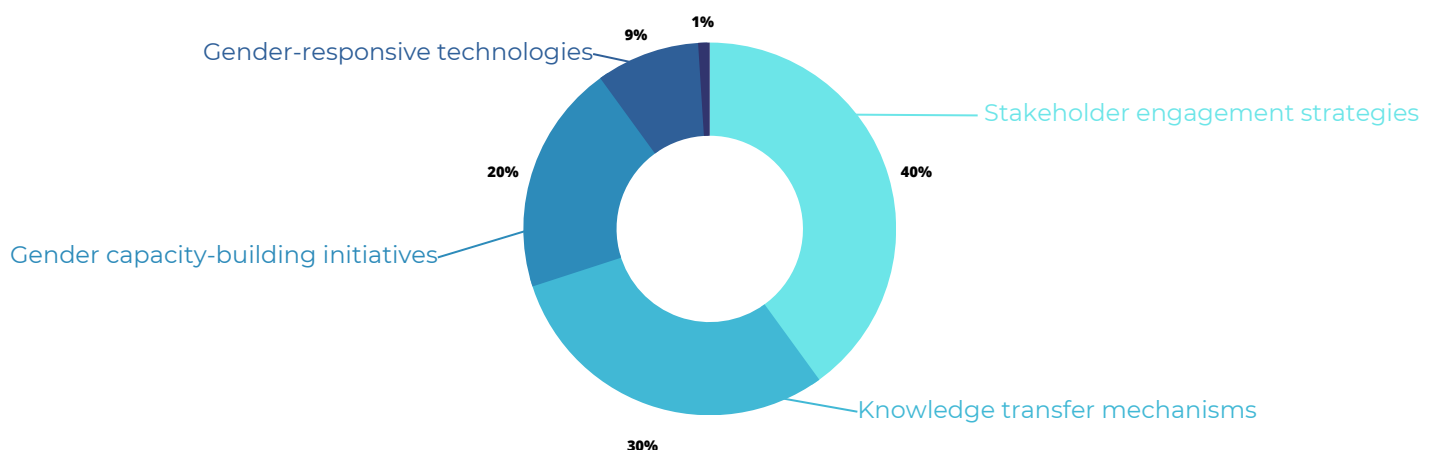
## 04 Gender Mainstreaming in Project Design

- **78%** of projects reported considering gender equality during the project design phase.
- **18 %** of projects incorporated specific gender related indicators and targets in their monitoring and evaluation frameworks.



## 05 Specific gender activities developed in PRIMA projects

- **59% of projects** have developed specific R&I activities gender-oriented. In the activities proposed, the most developed are the stakeholder engagement strategies, (40% of the activities developed), then the knowledge transfer mechanisms 30%, Gender capacity-building initiatives 20 %, and Gender-responsive technologies, 9% + others: 1%).



# KEY FINDINGS

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## 06 Impact & outcomes of integrating gender dimension in project

- **54%** of the project coordinators saw a positive impact on the acceptance of innovation after integrating gender dimension to their project



- **44%** of projects declared that integrating gender dimensions had influenced their outcomes or impact.



- Some projects reported that it is too early to identify outcomes and impacts related to gender integration as they were still in the beginning of their implementation.

# CHALLENGES & RECOMMENDATIONS

## **Challenges:**

- Limited understanding of how to integrate gender dimensions in specific cases.
- Cultural and social norms in the Mediterranean, particularly in the agrifood system, may hinder the promotion of women to decision-making positions.
- Time limitations within the projects' duration to achieve substantial societal impact.

## **Recommendations:**

- Incorporate gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation systems into project planning to collect gender-disaggregated data and use relevant gender-indicators from the project's outset.
- Designing a gender-sensitive approach, identifying potential barriers at the project definition stage.
- Conduct gender sensitization and training programs for project staff and stakeholders and decision-maker positions.
- Allocate dedicated resources for gender mainstreaming activities within PRIMA projects, allowing to share experiences, lessons learnt, failures and successes.
- Partner with gender experts and organizations to enhance gender dimension integration.



# CONCLUSIONS

The survey results indicate a moderate level of gender dimension integration in PRIMA projects, even if most projects are demonstrating a good gender balance in their consortia.

While some projects have made significant strides in addressing gender issues, there are still gaps that need attention.

Implementing the provided recommendations can help PRIMA projects enhance their gender responsiveness and contribute to achieving gender equality and women's empowerment goals.



# ANNEXES

*Success stories and examples of good practices that could be replicated*

The report highlights several good practices that could be replicated, such as strategies to bridge the gender gap, technological solutions enhancing women's capabilities, improving job quality in agriculture, and granting better accessibility for women in the productive, social and economic cycle. The examples also encompass securing water savings, transforming job nature, and creating opportunities for women in various industries.



Project  
NEXUS NESS



Project  
LAB4SUPPLY



Project  
HaloFarms



# PROJECT NEXUS NESS

Empowering Women Farmers for Sustainable WEFE Nexus Transition

## Overview:

The NEXUS-NESS project aimed to facilitate a Participatory Transition towards sustainable resource planning and management in the agroecosystem, with a specific focus on water, energy, food, and ecosystems (WEFE). The project embraced Responsible Research and Innovation through the RRI Roadmap™©, seeking active involvement from local stakeholders to co-create a shared vision and action plan for the WEFE Nexus transition.

## Integration of Gender Dimension:

Recognizing the crucial role of women in daily agricultural activities, NEXUS-NESS prioritized addressing gender issues and promoting women's empowerment. As decisions related to water and energy significantly impacted women's contributions, workload, and well-being, the project identified gender awareness as a critical aspect of capacity building for fair and sustainable allocation of environmental and food resources. Moreover, NEXUS-NESS embraced Gender Dimension principles fostering the addressing of all social and cultural inequities and diversities for empowering and engaging marginalized communities and any citizen that may risk to be left behind. To achieve this, NEXUS-NESS developed four practical steps for integrating the gender dimension into its Nexus Ecosystem Labs (NEL) located in Italy, Spain, Tunisia, and Egypt.

## Gender-Inclusive Training:

The project organized training activities aimed at raising awareness among NEL leaders and Project partners on gender concepts, gender issues, and gender equality and socio-cultural inequities. By promoting understanding and dialogue, NEXUS-NESS team were equipped to make informed decisions and foster inclusive training and WEFE Nexus awareness for local stakeholders to embrace the gender dimension while considering the needs and perspectives of women in the agricultural sector.



## Empowering Women in Decision-Making:

NEXUS-NESS implemented a "gender-balanced" strategy to ensure equal representation of women in all stakeholder groups involved in the WEFE Nexus transition. By actively involving women in decision-making processes, the project sought to empower women farmers and elevate their voices in shaping the future of the agricultural community.

*Photo: Enrica Caporali and Alessandra Petrucci during the side event dedicated to the Gender Dimension of the General Assembly in Florence in November 2022.*



# PROJECT NEXUS NESS

Empowering Women Farmers for Sustainable WEF E Nexus Transition

## Gender-Inclusive Workshops:

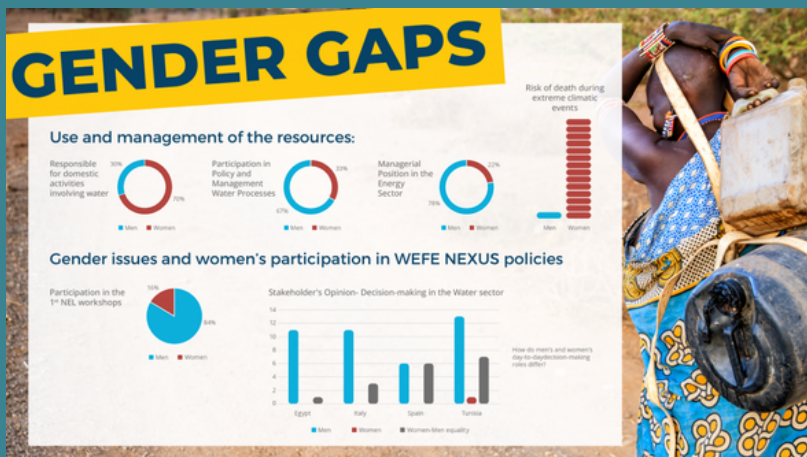
The project introduced the gender dimension during NEL workshops, emphasizing the importance of involving women and marginalized communities in WEF E-Nexus decision-making. This approach aimed to foster an inclusive environment where women's perspectives and experiences were considered in designing sustainable resource management strategies.

## Awareness-Raising Initiatives:

NEXUS-NESS established targeted awareness-raising campaigns, highlighting the significance of women's participation in the WEF E Nexus transition. By advocating for gender equality and women's empowerment, the project aimed to create a more equitable and sustainable agricultural landscape.

Impact: The integration of the gender dimension in the NEXUS-NESS project yielded significant positive outcomes. By actively involving women farmers and promoting their inclusion in decision-making processes, their participation in workshops and training sessions increased significantly. This empowerment translated into more informed decision-making, leading to sustainable resource planning and management practices in the agroecosystem.

Furthermore, NEXUS-NESS's commitment to addressing gender issues and promoting women's empowerment created a ripple effect, fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment for women in agriculture. As a result, women's well-being improved, and their valuable contributions were duly recognized, leading to enhanced agricultural productivity and resilience in the face of environmental challenges.



In summary, the NEXUS-NESS project's successful integration of the gender dimension not only strengthened its Participatory Transition approach but also contributed to fostering equal rights, gender equality and women's empowerment within the WEF E Nexus context. By recognizing and addressing the unique needs and roles of women in agriculture, NEXUS-NESS demonstrated the transformative power of inclusivity for sustainable development.

Photo Social media adaptation of the Poster "Gender Gaps in the Water, Energy, Food, and Ecosystems Nexus" presented at EGU 2023 by the NEXUS-NESS Project team (Bianca Maria Rizzo and Enrica Caporali - UNIFI, and Xenia Schneider - XPRO Consulting Limited).



# PROJECT LAB4SUPPLY

## Overview:

LAB4SUPPLY aims to enhance women entrepreneurs' conditions in the agri-food sector, which traditionally had male dominance. The goal of this project is to strengthen food distribution channels for small producers, which coincides with the fact that there is a significant percentage of women in both the primary production and sales sectors in our case studies. As a result, they are part of the target group for the project's design and innovation activities.

## Integration of Gender Dimension:

The project took a gender-balanced approach right from its inception. By actively involving both women and men in the project's leadership and decision-making roles, LAB4SUPPLY created an inclusive environment.

One of the key components of the project involves the establishment of a living lab (LL), where stakeholders actively express their needs and collaborate closely with the research team to identify solutions to various challenges. The inclusion of women within these LLs contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of both the issues at hand and potential solutions. It also enables us to address specific concerns that might otherwise be overlooked if the collaboration were limited to men alone.

## Impact:

This heightened diversity in leadership roles enhanced decision-making and introduced novel viewpoints to the industry. Integrating the gender dimension into the project not only expanded its reach but also made a contribution to enhancing the status of women entrepreneurs in the agri-food sector.







# PROJECT HALOFARMS

## **Overview:**

HaloFarms focused on stakeholder engagement and the inclusion of women in decision-making processes within the saline agricultural sector.

## **Integration of Gender Dimension:**

The project implemented a "gender-balanced" strategy to ensure equal representation of women in all stakeholder groups. The project involved both women and men in the project's leadership and decision-making roles. The project has also sought to achieve a gender balance at all levels of the staff involved in the action.

## **Gender-Inclusive outreach activities:**

In all training, conferences and workshops organized by the project, sessions are always co-chaired by women and men. The participation of women in all our events is very remarkable, coming mainly from the academic, research, and civil society and agriculture sectors.

## **Women empowerment and job creation:**

In the frame of the project, a start-up enterprise was created by a Tunisian women, already hired by the project, with the aim of producing a halophyte nursery for economic and ecological purposes. This results in new market opportunities. Furthermore at least 4 agricultural associations/farmer and NGOs, one of them led by women, are involved in the project which are accelerating the creation of cooperation networks between farmers and a new business model including high-variety local systems by hybridizing local women with different skills and opportunities.

**Impact:** As a result, women's participation in HaloFarms' workshops and training sessions increased significantly. This increased involvement empowered women farmers and led to more informed decision-making, positively impacting the entire agricultural community.



PRIMA extends its sincere appreciation to all those who contributed to the development of this report

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