

Gender Equality and Food Systems Transformation: Enhancing Synergies in Climate Change Hot Spots

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Photo: Adam Öjdahl/IWMI.

KEY MESSAGES

- Gender inequities are growing in climate ‘hot spots’, and providing solutions to reduce these inequities is the aim of an ongoing [CGIAR GENDER Platform](#) research project.
- Women in agriculture are extremely vulnerable in hot spots where climate change manifests, women are highly engaged in agriculture, and gender inequalities are significant.
- Mali, Zambia, Bangladesh and Pakistan have been identified as hot spots, and situational analysis in sub-national hot spots will identify how and where inequities happen and where transformation is necessary.
- Identifying six or seven ongoing interventions in the sub-national hot spots will allow for collaboration on and implementation of experimental interventions that can trigger transformation, ultimately informing design of future interventions for food systems transformation and gender equality under climate change.

The goals of food system transformation extend to always providing affordable and nutritious food to all. Climate change, however, undermines global efforts to end hunger, food insecurity and malnourishment. Various vulnerabilities, such as lack of productive assets and resources as well as limited access to finance and information, are exacerbated by climate change, and in combination these factors put smallholder farming households and women farmers’ livelihoods at a greater risk.

These different vulnerabilities often overlap in complex ways. Hot spots are defined as geographic locations where strong physical and ecological effects of climate change come together with large numbers of vulnerable people and communities. It is imperative to ensure that women in these places are not left behind, but can seize opportunities in food production, food packaging and distribution as well as food marketing to produce and consume affordable and nutritious food, even under climate change.



The CGIAR GENDER Platform, in partnership with the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), is currently carrying out a study focused on 'gender inequity–climate hot spots' where three types of vulnerabilities converge: significant physical and ecological effects of climate change manifest, women are highly exposed to climate hazards because of their high involvement in food systems, and women are highly vulnerable due to gender inequalities. We have adopted the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's climate risk framework ([IPCC 2020](#)) to identify hot spots in the Global South that experience high levels of climate hazards; high levels of women's engagement in agriculture (exposure) are identified as measured by the International Labour Organisation's women labour participation rate ([ILO 2021](#)); and high levels of women's vulnerability due to gender inequities were measured using the Social Institutions and Gender Index ([SIGI 2019](#)).

By overlaying the data for these three indicators and using principal component analysis, we have identified Mali and Zambia in Africa as well as Bangladesh and Pakistan in Asia as countries in which women in agriculture are extremely vulnerable and most threatened by climate change events. Currently, we are in the final stages of analysis to identify sub-national hot spots in the four countries where a situational analysis will then be conducted.

The design and methodology for the situational analysis are being finalized. This analysis intends to unpack the hot spots to understand how and where inequities happen within the food system, i.e., whether at consumption, value chain or production levels. The research questions, methodology and indicators within each domain (food systems, gender equality and climate change) are being developed to guide the analysis.

The situational analysis will help identify the entry points to trigger the transformations needed to optimize gender equality and food system outcomes in specific contexts. It will also allow us to identify where in the food system such transformations are needed. Those insights will then enable us to identify six or seven interventions in the study locations that, ideally, are ongoing or soon to be launched, where we can solicit support to collaborate and implement experimental interventions that can trigger transformation.

This research project is intended as a pilot to develop, test and refine the methodology for hot spot mapping, situational analysis and intervention design and testing for facilitating food systems transformations that will advance gender equality. With this proof of concept, the methodology can be applied in other contexts. This research is carried out by the CGIAR GENDER Platform, which is grateful for the support of IDRC and the [CGIAR Trust Fund Contributors](#).

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