

IFAD Gender Awards 2017

Honouring achievements in gender
equality and women's empowerment

Bangladesh, Mozambique, Colombia,
Morocco and Mauritania



Investing in rural people

Asia and the Pacific

Char Development and Settlement Project – Phase IV, Bangladesh

Secure access to land for poor women and men living on newly accreted coastal islands in Bangladesh is one of many benefits resulting from the Char Development and Settlement Project. Over 10,000 families have gained land titles, and a further 4,000 are in the process of doing so.

Land titles are registered in the names of both wife and husband, with equal ownership shares. The wife is named first on the title, which means that if she is widowed, divorced or abandoned, the land belongs entirely to her.

The land titles are strengthening women's influence in the family and giving them a legal role in many decisions. Rates of child marriage have fallen – with 93 early marriages prevented during 2012-2016 – and violence against women is also less common. Legal registration of marriage has increased.

With land as collateral and project support to microcredit groups, women have been able to access credit and acquire machinery that reduces their manual labour, such as small irrigation pumps and rice threshers. They have also taken training to improve their skills in livestock and crop production, and in other money-making activities, including tailoring.

Access to water for domestic use has been vastly improved and the average distance to a safe water source has fallen from 382 to 55 metres, saving women and girls time and energy. All households now have hygienic latrines. As farming in the project area becomes more productive and market-oriented, men are less likely to migrate in search of work.

Read more about the project

https://operations.ifad.org/web/ifad/operations/country/project/tags/bangladesh/1537/project_overview

Video:

Bangladesh: Land of Our Own https://youtu.be/UdWqOzY_E80





East and Southern Africa

Rural Markets Promotion Programme, Mozambique

Women are increasingly getting their fair share of opportunities and advantages through participation in the Rural Markets Promotion Programme in Mozambique. In order to empower smallholders and enable them to connect to markets, the programme supports 500 farmer organizations, with women making up a full 50 per cent of the membership.

As a result of capacity-building and awareness-raising, women are also increasingly taking on leadership roles. In 2012, less than half of the organizations supported by the programme had women in leadership positions, and many of these were secretary or treasurer, traditional roles for women. By 2016, 75 per cent of the organizations had women leaders, with some holding important decision-making roles, such as presidency of farmer associations and unions.

At the household level, the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) is empowering participants to challenge entrenched gender stereotypes and renegotiate domestic chores.

The programme also offers functional adult literacy training, which has been taken up by 18,600 farmers, 55 per cent of them women. Thanks to the training, the women are now able to conduct business, and read and sign contracts, without fear of being cheated by traders or their husbands.

As a result, the programme is increasing the percentage of women who sign marketing contracts, giving them benefits that include guaranteed markets, better prices and inputs on credit. In 2012, only 4 per cent of contracts were signed by women, but by 2017 this had risen to 25 per cent and average earnings per contract had increased from US\$56 to US\$190.

Read more about the project

https://operations.ifad.org/web/ifad/operations/country/project/tags/mozambique/1423/project_overview

Video:

Mozambique: The business of farming <https://youtu.be/K8FoWU78iD4>

Latin America and the Caribbean

Building Rural Entrepreneurial Capacities Programme: Trust and Opportunity (TOP), Colombia

Empowering disadvantaged indigenous and Afro-descendant women and men is essential to lasting peace in Colombia, which is rebuilding following 50 years of conflict. The IFAD-funded programme known as TOP supports efforts to boost incomes and improve working conditions for 50,000 rural families living in extreme poverty. In line with government policy, the programme is using an inclusive strategy to overcome discriminatory practices and include women in all activities.

Of the 13,300 extremely poor families so far reached by TOP, 57 per cent are headed solely by women. This represents over 60 per cent of the total programme goal, which is to reach 12,500 vulnerable rural households headed by women. Incentives are also being provided for women's participation within other targeted population groups, including young people and victims of armed conflict.

With programme support, local associations of indigenous and Afro-descendant women have started a wide range of income-generating and post-conflict reconciliation activities, including eco-tourism, tailoring, agrifood enterprises, environmental rehabilitation and reforestation. In a vital contribution to post-conflict recovery, they are also displacing illicit crops and replacing them with food crops.

As participation in activities promoted by the programme increases women's confidence and skills, they are also becoming active in areas that were previously men's domain, including livestock raising. A group of women in Cauca Pacifico are now raising and fattening cattle for meat production.

TOP has developed a knowledge management and communications strategy to ensure that it gives high visibility to women who take initiatives and drive change in their communities.

Read more about the project

https://operations.ifad.org/web/ifad/operations/country/project/tags/colombia/1491/project_overview





Near East, North Africa and Europe

Agricultural Value Chain Development Project in the Mountain Zones of Al-Haouz Province, Morocco

Women in remote mountain villages in Morocco are making and managing their own money and gaining skills and independence through this IFAD-supported value chain project. The project started work in 2012, building on a previous project implemented between 2000 and 2011. About 11,000 women are taking part – of a total of nearly 28,000 people.

The project has strengthened value chains for key local products – olives, apples, sheep and wool – enabling small farmers to increase the quantity and quality of their production and connect with markets. Twelve cooperatives have been set up, allowing members to bulk their produce, increase their bargaining power and receive agricultural services.

The project focuses on mobilizing and training women to encourage their participation along the value chains, not just at the production stage, where less money is made. Many of the women started by taking out a small loan through the project to buy two sheep. They then organized themselves together to build up their businesses, selling animals for the Eid Al-Adha religious festival and using the wool to make Berber carpets sold as far away as Marrakesh.

Results documented by the project show that the “two-sheep initiative” has increased the incomes of participating households by as much as 60 per cent.

The project has also made an impact on a sphere that is less easy to measure. Women’s activities outside the household and their membership of producers’ associations and cooperatives have enabled them to build networks outside their districts of origin, increasing their independence and freedom of movement.

Read more about the project

https://operations.ifad.org/web/ifad/operations/country/project/tags/morocco/1526/project_overview

Video:

Morocco: The two-sheep solution <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MizEzEAXW24>

West and Central Africa

Poverty Reduction Project in Aftout South and Karakoro – Phase II, Mauritania

Market gardening, harvesting forest products and rearing small livestock are a few of the activities enabling women and young people to earn an income through this IFAD-supported project in Mauritania.

Among the activities, a total of 88 income-generation micro projects are benefitting over 1,500 women and 1,000 young people. Participants receive training and inputs to enable them to increase the quantity and quality of the goods they produce.

With support to develop their commercial skills, women have also increased their competitiveness and their ability to negotiate with market traders. Cereal banks have been established so farmers can store produce and sell when the price is right.

Improvements in access to drinking water have made a huge difference to the daily lives of women and girls, saving them an average of five hours per day and freeing their time and energy for education, money-making activities and participation in the community.

Women and young people make up more than 50 per cent of participants and are benefiting from the project's multi-dimensional approach to reducing poverty. In addition to contributing to household income, they are increasing their role in family decision-making.

The women have grown in confidence and increased their voice and influence outside their households: about 40 per cent of the decision-making roles in the producer organizations are now filled by women.

The project has also invested in a wide range of educational activities, including literacy training, sensitization on gender equality and the distribution of labour, sanitation, and citizenship.

Read more about the project

https://operations.ifad.org/web/ifad/operations/country/project/tags/mauritania/1577/project_overview



The Gender Award spotlights a programme or project in each of IFAD's five regions that has taken an innovative, transformative approach to addressing gender inequalities and empowering women. This year's awards celebrate operations in Bangladesh, Mozambique, Colombia, Morocco and Mauritania.

IFAD's **Policy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment** has three interconnected strategic objectives:

- to promote **economic empowerment** for rural women and men
- to enable women and men to have **equal voice and influence**
- to achieve a more **equitable balance in workloads** between women and men.



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