
Sustainable Rice Platform Gender and Social Inclusion Policy



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About the Sustainable Rice Platform

The Sustainable Rice Platform e.V. (SRP) is a global multi-stakeholder alliance comprising over 100 institutional members from public, private, research, civil society and the financial sector. Originally co-convened by the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and private partners, SRP is an independent member association, working together with its partners to transform the global rice sector by improving smallholder livelihoods, reducing the social, environmental and climate footprint of rice production, and by offering the global rice market an assured supply of sustainably produced rice.

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Purpose

The **Sustainable Rice Platform Gender and Social Inclusion Policy** incorporates gender equality, social and institutional inclusion, and women's empowerment into the strategy, governance, operations, and partnerships of the Sustainable Rice Platform (SRP). It establishes a framework of commitments to advance gender mainstreaming in SRP and the global rice sector.

Scope

This Policy creates responsibilities and commitments that reflect the organization's values and guide individual conduct.

At the organizational level, it applies to all organs and units of SRP, including the General Assembly, Board, Technical Committee, and Secretariat, as well as subsidiary bodies.

At the individual participant level, it applies to Members and their representatives in their engagements with SRP, Board members, Technical Committee members, nongovernmental and private sector partners, service providers, staff, and consultants, collectively referred to as "SRP participants."

Policy Context

The FAO Report: "[The Status of Women in Agrifood Systems](#)" published in 2023 reflects not only on how gender equality and women's empowerment are central to the transition towards sustainable and resilient agrifood systems but also on how transformation of agrifood systems can contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment. The report makes a compelling case and rationale for investing in gender equality and women empowerment aligned with major UN policies and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Women drive the rice economies in developing nations, where they comprise at least 50% of rice farming labor, a figure that is rising as more men migrate for work. They simultaneously face gender discrimination in the economic, social, and political spheres, often compounded by intersectional factors, such as racism, classism, and casteism.

The mission of SRP is "to catalyze global rice sector transformation by developing tools and mobilizing rice stakeholders to promote on-farm adoption of sustainable best practice, link farmers to markets, and offer an objective normative basis for policymaking."

However, SRP recognizes that the prospects for sector transformation are inextricably linked to the following economic and social context: a female rice farmer, working in a smallholder rice paddy, located in a developing country, likely without access to training opportunities, financial credit, or land title.

Female rice farmers are more likely than men to:

- Lack landholding and landowning rights, proof of legal land title, access to training and finance opportunities, and access to mobile internet and bank accounts;

- Shoulder most child-rearing and unpaid domestic duties;
- Face occupational hazards because they are more likely to be engaged in laborious work with limited access to mechanization options.
- Prioritize income over medical attention; and
- Face forced removal from their homes due to climate change.

These forces, individually and collectively, stifle upward mobility and entrench gender inequalities, limiting the social sustainability of rice value chains. Studies also establish that gender discrimination undermines business performance and agricultural productivity.

As the leading global multi-stakeholder alliance for sustainable rice production, SRP recognizes it cannot achieve its mission without committing strategic and operational resources to understanding and overcoming the gender-specific limits to adopting SRP technologies and fostering investment in resources for deliberate action to promote gender equality and women empowerment. Such resources will need to reflect a sustained and increasingly internalized level of commitment over time.

While remaining aware of the complexities of gender and intersectional discrimination, SRP strives, to the best of its ability and within its capacity, to become a gender-transformative organization. SRP encourages its individual Members to adopt a similar ethos. Not only does SRP directly and explicitly address women's issues in its outward facing work, internally the organization pledges to actively create a safe and welcoming working environment for women and all marginalized segments of society. Discrimination, harassment, bullying, extortion or other forms of abuse against women, people of different sexual orientation or identity, religion, ethnicity, or race are unacceptable within SRP. Policies and procedures are in place for victims to seek recourse for mistreatment.

This Policy is a framework document for incorporating transformative gender perspectives within SRP's relationships and activities, consistent with the United Nations' [Fifth Sustainable Development Goal](#), to "**achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.**"

Policy Principles

SRP observes and upholds the following principles in the implementation of this Policy:

- **Accountability.** Gender mainstreaming requires a "whole-of-organization" approach to ensure SRP collectively delivers on its gender commitments and objectives. The SRP Board is ultimately accountable for this Policy and the gender-responsive strategic objectives and indicators that emanate from it.
- **Representation.** Creating and sustaining pathways for women to serve and participate in governance is an efficient and equitable entry point for SRP's work to advance gender equality and social inclusion. SRP aims for gender balance in governance as a means to foster greater institutional inclusion, credibility, and a higher performing culture.
- **Inclusion.** The degree to which women, persons with non-binary identities, and other underrepresented groups feel a sense of recognition, belonging, and mattering in SRP

is essential to unlocking the value behind gender diversity. Representation alone is a necessary but not sufficient condition for a valid, meaningful gender mainstreaming process and more productive Board, Technical Committee, and Secretariat.

- **Transparency.** Recognizing that gender mainstreaming in the global rice sector is a long-term strategic priority for many of its stakeholders, SRP believes accelerating this work requires openness, communication, and disclosure of progress, setbacks, and lessons learned with SRP's stakeholder community.

Terms and Definitions

The following definitions have been adapted from the UN Women Training Center, United Nations Population Information Network, and the European Institute for Gender Equality.

Term	Definition
Gender	Roles, attributes, and opportunities associated with being female and male and to the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as to the relations between women and those between men. These roles, attributes, opportunities, and relationships are socially constructed and learned through socialization processes. They are context- and time-specific and changeable.
Gender balance	The equal representation of women and men in governance, together with parity in participation and decision-making.
Gender equality	Equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality refers to the notion that women's and men's rights, responsibilities, and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs, and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups. Gender equality is not a women's issue but concerns and fully engages men as well as women. Equality between women and men is a human rights issue and it is a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centered development.
Gender responsive	The quality of developing or employing specific actions, programs, or policies to address barriers to gender equality.
Gender mainstreaming	Gender mainstreaming has been embraced internationally as a strategy towards realizing gender equality. It involves the integration of a gender perspective into the preparation, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, regulatory measures and spending programmes, with a view to promoting equality between women and men, and combating discrimination.
Sex-disaggregated data (SDD)	Data collected and tabulated separately for women and men allowing the measurement of differences between women and men in terms of various social and economic dimensions and are one of the requirements to obtaining gender statistics.
Participants	Organization and individuals involved with SRP and to whom this Policy applies. Participants are Members and their representatives, Board members, Technical Committee members, nongovernmental and private sector partners, service providers, staff, and consultants.
Women's empowerment	A concept encompassing women's sense of self-worth; their right to have and to determine choices; their right to access opportunities and resources; their right to have the power to control their own lives, both within and outside the home; and their ability to influence the direction of social change to create a more just social and economic order.

Gender Responsibilities

The Board is accountable for the overall implementation, monitoring, and enforcement of this Policy, including its review and continuous improvement. It is responsible for:

- Integrating gender mainstreaming commitments into SRP's Strategic Plan
- Advocacy with governments and other agencies
- Striving toward gender balance on the SRP Board and Technical Committee
- Ensuring Board self-assessment exercises account for this Policy
- Socializing this Policy at the General Assembly, Board, and Technical Committee so that it is known, understood, valued, and applied in the working practices of those bodies.

The Secretariat is responsible for:

- Coordinating the implementation of gender mainstreaming commitments
- Reporting annually to the Board, via the Gender Lead, on implementation progress
- Socializing this Policy within the Secretariat so that it is known, understood, valued, and applied in its work, with an emphasis on assurance, training, and MEL.

See "[contact information](#)" for individuals tasked with ensuring the Board and Secretariat deliver on their responsibilities.

Gender Commitments

Translational research, studies, and best practice shape and inform the following gender mainstreaming commitments.

The Sustainable Rice Platform shall:

#	Commitment	Responsible
Strategy		
1	Integrate gender-responsive objectives and indicators into SRP's Five-Year Strategic Plan and Annual Action Plans that guide implementation.	Board
2	Evaluate, during revision periods, SRP's Theory of Change from a gender perspective and ensure its continued relevance and currency.	Board
Governance		
3	Adopt a gender target for the Board: at least 50% of Board members (including both voting and non-voting participants) be women.	Board

#	Commitment	Responsible
4	Adopt a gender target for the Technical Committee: that at least 50% of voting members be women.	Board
5	Budget for and require gender and social inclusion training for all Board members, Secretariat staff and Technical Committee members.	Board
6	Ensure induction and onboarding activities for new Board members incorporate gender, equity, diversity, and inclusion practices.	Board
7	Explicitly integrate SRP's gender work into annual self-assessment exercises (incl. these commitments and relevant indicators per No. 1).	Board
8	Incorporate gender expertise as a required skillset within the Board (Bylaws v 2.2 §4.10).	Board
9	Review implementation of this Gender and Social Inclusion Policy on an annual basis, as reported by the Board Gender Lead in consultation with the Secretariat.	Secretariat /Board
Operations		
10	Identify opportunities and objectives to advance gender mainstreaming in the global rice sector and include progress in Members' Annual Reports.	Members
11	Budget and require gender training for all current and new staff.	Secretariat
12	Incorporate gender expertise into the Technical Committee Candidate Profile guiding nominations to that body (BL §8.4).	Secretariat
13	Ensure the Technical Committee applies a gender-responsive methodology in the development and revision of normative documents.	Secretariat
14	Require the collection of sex-disaggregated and gender-sensitive data in the implementation of the Assurance Scheme 2.0 and Authorized Training Program.	Secretariat
15	Review and assess the SRP Procurement Policy for its gender sensitivity and propose gender-responsive enhancements.	Secretariat
16	Ensure SRP due diligence processes include sufficient screening criteria related to gender, inclusion, and women's empowerment.	Secretariat

#	Commitment	Responsible
17	Disclose progress against these commitments and relevant strategic objectives and indicators (per No. 1 above) in the SRP Annual Report.	Secretariat /Board

Tools and Resources

SRP enlists tools and resources to aid implementation of this Policy's commitments:

- Global Code of Conduct.** The Global Code of Conduct establishes a set of commitments, behaviors and expectations for participants to observe and uphold in their engagement with SRP. The Code serves to help foster a mission-driven and values-based culture in SRP's membership, governance, operations, and partnerships, including a commitment to supporting gender equality and social inclusion.
- Due diligence.** SRP requires stakeholders to complete due diligence questionnaires prior to commencing their relationship SRP screens for positive and negative criteria related to human rights, gender, and social sustainability.
- Board Gender Lead.** SRP designates a Gender Lead on the Board to foster and drive strategic accountability for this Policy and the gender-responsive objectives and indicators in the SRP Strategic Plan. The Gender Lead works closely with the Executive Director to design and oversee SRP's approach to gender mainstreaming.
- Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs).** SRP is a signatory to [WEPs](#), co-developed by UN Women and the United Nations Global Compact. The Secretariat leverages WEPs' courses and community of practice to enhance its gender capacity and help delivery on this Policy's commitments. It also provides an annual progress report on its gender mainstreaming work.

Contact Information

We encourage SRP participants and stakeholders with questions, comments, or concerns about the practical application of this Policy to contact the Board Gender Lead at gender@sustainablerice.org

Review Schedule

The Board will review this Policy annually to ensure alignment with the SRP Five-Year Strategic Plan. The Secretariat will notify participants of any future versions and publish on the SRP website.

Related Documents

SRP Articles of Association v 2.1	SRP Board Manual v 1,0
SRP Bylaws and Rules of Procedure v 2.2	SRP Global Code of Conduct
SRP Standard for Sustainable Rice Cultivation v 2.2	SRP Procurement Policy v 3.0
SRP Performance Indicators v 2.1	SRP 5-Year Strategic Plan
SRP Assurance Scheme v 2.0	SRP Theory of Change 2.0