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COUNTRY GENDER ASSESSMENT SERIES



COUNTRY GENDER ASSESSMENT

Gender, agriculture and rural development in Armenia

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ARG ICARE	Agribusiness Research Group of the International Center for Agribusiness Research and Education
ARMSTAT	National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia
AWHHE	Armenian Women for Health and Healthy Environment
AYWA	Armenian Young Women's Association
CARD	Center for Agribusiness and Rural Development
CARMAC	Community Agricultural Resource Management and Competitiveness Project
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CPF	FAO Country Programming Framework
CSTO	Collective Security Treaty Organization
EAEU	Eurasian Economic Union
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
EU	European Union
FAA	Federation of Agricultural Associations
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEI	Gender Equity Index
GFP	Gender Focal Point
GII	Gender Inequality Index
GIZ	German Agency for International Cooperation
HDI	Human Development Index
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MASCs	Marz Agricultural Support Centres
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoLSI	Ministry of Labour and Social Issues
MoTA	Ministry of Territorial Administration
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NSS	National Statistical Service
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
RESCAD	Rural Enterprise and Small-scale Commercial Agriculture Development Project
RoA	Republic of Armenia
SFAK	Small Farmers' Association of Kapan
SIGI	Social Institutions and Gender Index
SWRCN	Syunik Women's Resource Centers' Network
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
USDA-MAP	United States Department of Agriculture – Marketing Assistance Program
WUA	Water User Association

Executive summary

“Gender equality is central to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations’ (FAO’s) mandate to achieve food security for all by raising levels of nutrition, improving agricultural productivity and natural resource management, and improving the lives of rural populations. FAO can achieve its goals only if it simultaneously works towards gender equality and supports women’s diverse roles in agriculture and rural development. Gender equality is not only an essential means by which FAO can achieve its mandate, it is also a basic human right.” (FAO, 2013a, p. 1)

Gender equality is key to eliminating poverty and hunger, and this has been demonstrated by FAO throughout its research across the world. FAO is committed to interventions that seek to reduce gender inequalities and this report has been produced as part of its efforts to generate evidence and knowledge in compliance with FAO’s Policy on Gender Equality (FAO, 2013a). It is only through closing the gender gap that strategies on sustainable agriculture and rural development can reach their full potential.

This Gender Assessment has already served as a resource for the Country Programming Framework, which was prepared by FAO and the Government of the Republic of Armenia, and was in the process of being approved when this report was being finalized. The report also aims to inform FAO professionals, other UN agencies, staff from the Government of the Republic of Armenia, NGOs and professionals who work in agriculture and rural development in the Republic of Armenia. Additionally, it is an awareness-raising tool for the wider public.

The report highlights the major gender inequalities found within the available data that need to be considered by policy-makers and project managers, and identifies the need for further research in a wide range of areas, including fishery, forestry, local farmers’ cooperation and women’s real contribution to GDP, particularly considering their overwhelming involvement as contributing family workers.

Based on the main challenges discussed below, a set of recommendations is presented at the end of this report.

/// Main gender inequalities in agriculture and rural development:

1. There is a gap between legislation and implementation

- Despite efforts to reduce gender inequalities by the government in the last two decades, a gap between legislation and implementation exists.
- Solid interlinkages between the Gender Action Plan and the Action Plans and Policies on agriculture and rural development are still needed.
- Gender inequalities are still socially accepted or tolerated, especially in rural areas where gender inequalities are more entrenched, which makes it more difficult to implement policies on gender equality.
- Gender statistics in the agricultural sector need to be improved considerably, in line with CEDAW’s concluding observations in the combined third and fourth periodic reports on Armenia (CEDAW Committee, 2009).

2. Women are overrepresented in informal employment, unpaid work in family farming, and in domestic and reproductive activities

- Approximately 34.8 percent of employed people are involved in agriculture (ARMSTAT, 2015b, p. 61), of whom almost 56 percent are women.
- The share of women engaged in informal employment in agriculture is 82.1 percent, compared with 60.8 percent of male informal workers (ARMSTAT, 2015b). In terms of informal employment, men account for more than 80 percent of employers, while women represent 83 percent of the so-called “others” (ARMSTAT, 2015c). This may be related to the overrepresentation of women as contributing family workers in family farming.
- There is strong *vertical* and *horizontal* segregation in the labour market, which results in a significant gender pay gap: women’s average wages are approximately 65.9 percent of men’s average wages (ARMSTAT, 2015b).
- The high rate of male long-term labour migration increases the prevalence of women headed households, and 27.2 percent of rural households are headed by women (ARMSTAT, 2015a). Female-headed households are slightly more likely to be in extreme poverty than male-headed households. While this is partly because of the more limited range of income opportunities for women in rural areas and the gender pay gap, it is mainly because female-headed households tend to be single-headed households, which limits the number of working-age persons who can contribute to income generation in the family.
- Rural women working informally on family farms do not receive any compensation as defined by the Labour Code, such as sick leave and child care allowances, because they are considered to be either self-employed or economically inactive. In rural communities, two-thirds of employed women are not remunerated with cash earnings when they are self-employed (Yerevan State University, 2015).
- In family farming, a rigid distribution of tasks persists: men tend to be more involved in capital-intensive tasks, involving a greater amount of machinery and technology, and in tasks that are better paid. This distribution of activities results in women’s limited access to, and control over, agricultural assets and decision-making.

3. Women have unsatisfactory access to technical knowledge on agriculture, and face barriers to accessing information, extension services and training

- Women’s low levels of agricultural education mean that they are far less likely to hold decision-making and management positions in agricultural spheres. Therefore, women’s voices in and knowledge about agriculture are missing in policy development. This also constrains innovation in the value chain, which is subsequently reflected across multiple dimensions in food security and nutrition.
- Although women are more likely to enter postgraduate and higher professional education, they are less likely to obtain an academic degree (ARMSTAT, 2015c). For example, the World Economic Forum (2015) found that women account for only 28 percent of PhD graduates. There is also horizontal segregation at university level. Males outnumber females in state and non-state higher educational institutions in the agro-food sector by 70 to 30 percent, and only 38 percent of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) graduates are women (World Economic Forum, 2015).
- Women’s participation in training, and knowledge and information sharing, in agriculture and rural development is low. The reasons for their low participation in extension services’ training include:
 - Male-dominated channels of communication that control the flow of information and fail to reach and mobilize women farmers;
 - The identification of men as “heads of households and holdings”: as a result, women tend to be seen as “wives of farmers” instead of farmers in their own right;
 - Stereotypical linkages between machinery, technology and men;
 - Land registered in the name of men as “heads of households”;
 - Women’s reduced self-confidence in areas outside those that are socially attributed to them based on gender roles and stereotypes;

-
- The location of training and meetings: women have limited access to means of transportation, some locations discourage women's attendance and some women may be expected to ask for permission from their husbands to attend.

4. Infrastructure has a direct impact on time use

- Women are the major users of water in households, because they undertake the domestic activities that are linked with female gender roles. Therefore, they are severely affected by water restrictions (ADB, 2015). When there is no centralized water supply, women are also responsible for fetching water (ADB, 2015), which adds an extra burden to their workload.
- Infrastructural development and modernization of households is lower in rural areas. Rural households have less access to labour-saving technologies such as washing machines, dishwashers, and other domestic appliances, as well as lower access to transportation and restricted mobility.
- This has a direct impact on rural women's workload, since domestic activities are stereotypically linked with female gender roles. Research shows that rural women spend 6 hours 6 minutes per day, from Monday to Sunday, on their domestic workload, while urban women spend 4 hours and 53 minutes and rural men spend 2 hours and 37 minutes (ARMSTAT, 2015c).

5. Most of the land is registered and managed by men and women's *de facto* enjoyment of their ownership rights over land is hindered

- Women's limited access to land ownership is explained by:
 - *Registry practices*: Even though land was provided to citizens regardless of their sex, the actual distribution and registration of land was carried out by those identified as "heads of the households".
 - *Patrilocal marriages*: Patrilocal marriages, which are more common in rural areas, are those in which brides go to live with their husbands' families. Within this traditional form of marriage, women usually do not claim their ownership rights over land either within their own families or within their new step-families, because of the fear that this might be seen as confrontational.
 - *Inheritance practices*: There is a preference for giving land to male descendants, especially in the context of patrilocal marriages where sons usually remain in the household and are expected to manage the family holding.
 - *A lack of knowledge about women's rights over land among rural populations, land professionals and civil servants*.
- Women's limited *de facto* enjoyment of their ownership rights over land has direct implications for their access to: decision-making on the use of the land; irrigation and extension services; and collateral for credit and entrepreneurship.
- No sex-disaggregated data on land registration are currently available. However, only 26.5 percent of rural households are headed by women (ARMSTAT, 2015c).

6. Women have limited access to credit and entrepreneurship, markets, mobility and agricultural inputs

- Women's limited access to, and control over, equipment and transportation constrains their income earning opportunities and their access to markets.
- The city and large markets are stereotypically regarded as "male territory".
- Other obstacles that women have to overcome before they go into business include: feelings of uncertainty and risk aversion; limited self-confidence in areas that are not socially or stereotypically attributed to women; a lack of business contacts; and entrenched and perpetuated stereotypes about women's roles and their participation in the economy, and in business in particular.
- Material barriers to engaging in entrepreneurship include: difficulties in obtaining loans; limited access to monetary funds and property for collateral; burdensome interest rates; an unfavourable business environment; mobility constraints; limited access to large markets; and the challenges of making informal payments to male officials to facilitate business, including a

lack of economic resources and the gendered dimensions of social interaction and networking (USAID, 2010).

- Limited access to productive resources is a serious constraint for rural women who wish to engage in agricultural entrepreneurship or farm management. For instance, rural women have little or no direct access to farm equipment such as tractors and combine harvesters. Machinery is stereotypically linked with male gender roles (ACDI/VOCA, 2011). Moreover, in rural areas, more than 95 percent of car owners, and 100 percent of agricultural machinery operators in the marzes, are men (ACDI/VOCA, 2011).
- Dealing with providers and accessing large markets outside the villages are also activities that are associated with male gender roles.

7. Food security and nutrition have a gender dimension

- Research shows that children in poorer households headed by women can have better nutritional outcomes than children living in male-headed households, and that when women are empowered, the nutrition of the whole family improves (Kennedy & Peters, 1992).
- Gender-based inequalities in labour allocation and resource access, ownership and control in the household economy have a direct impact on the health of the whole household. Moreover, the health and nutrition of the whole family improves when there is shared and responsible parenthood by both mothers and fathers.

8. Women from rural areas have a lower social status than men and face persistent gender stereotypes

- Women are usually associated with child care and housework, whether they are employed outside the home or not, and men are usually seen as responsible for the economic well-being and survival of their families in their role as the main bread winner and “head of household” (Armenian Association of Women with University Education, 2005, 2014). This is directly linked with stereotypical gender roles and has a direct impact on uneven access to resources and economic opportunities, and on women’s overwhelming workload in relation to unpaid domestic activities. This may result in time poverty, the limitation of women’s capabilities in engaging in gainful activities, the reduction of women’s self-confidence in areas that are not stereotypically attributed to them, and the economic dependence of women.
- With a sex ratio at birth of 1.13 males for every female, and 27.5 induced abortions per 100 live births and stillbirths at birth¹, sex-selective abortion is still prevalent in Armenia. This is further evidence for the preference of boys over girls (UNFPA, 2012, 2013; Das Gupta, 2015) and the lower status of women in society.
- Patrilocal marriages are another possible reason for the preference of sons over daughters.
- An additional indicator of the status of women in society is control over their own earnings. Women in urban areas are three times more likely to make decisions about their earnings than women from rural areas (34 and 11 percent of women respectively, ARMSTAT, Ministry of Health & ICF International, 2012).
- In relation to women’s voice, the results of the 2012 elections in local self-governance bodies demonstrate the low level of women’s access to political power: there were only 43 women (or 3.5 percent) out of 1 237 candidates running for the position of “Head” in 638 rural communities; and less than two percent of the women candidates were elected to this position. Furthermore, women account for only 8.6 percent of members of elected local Councils (Armenian Association of Women with University Education, 2014, p. 17).
- Another important indicator in assessing the social status of rural women is the attitude of women and men towards spousal abuse. Women from the lowest wealth quintile, with the lowest educational levels and from rural areas are the most likely to accept this subordination in the form of domestic violence: 11.8 percent of women and 28 percent of men from rural areas consider this aggression justifiable in some cases.
- The identification and even registration of men as “heads of households” and representatives of the families (for example, in land registration), also contributes to the maintenance of the uneven and hierarchical status of women and men in rural areas.

¹ After years of population decline, the Armenian government proposed a ban on the practice of sex-selective abortion. Submitted to Parliament in 2015, the bill, drafted by the Ministry of Health, explicitly bans all sex-selective abortion and, in a bid to close any loopholes, specifically prevents abortion without a doctor’s consent between the 12th and 22nd weeks of pregnancy. It is during this gestational period that a child’s sex manifests itself. Changes will also be made to the Republic of Armenia’s “Law on Human Reproductive Health and Reproductive Rights” and the Republic of Armenia’s “Code of Administrative Offences” (see for example, ARMENPRESS. 2016).

1. Introduction

1.1 Background to the gender assessment

Gender equality is key to eliminating poverty and hunger, and this has been demonstrated by FAO throughout its research across the world. As part of FAO's efforts to generate evidence and knowledge, and in compliance with FAO's Policy on Gender Equality, the purpose of this report is to make a contribution to the production of knowledge that results in more informed, targeted and gender sensitive actions in agriculture and rural development. It is only by closing the gender gap that strategies on sustainable agriculture and rural development can reach their full potential.

FAO's Policy on Gender Equality (FAO, 2013a) identifies gender mainstreaming and women-targeted actions as a twin-track strategy for the achievement of gender equality in the agricultural and rural sector. Consequently, the Policy sets out a number of minimum standards for gender mainstreaming. These include a requirement to undertake a Country Gender Assessment in the formulation of country programmes by FAO and member country governments (known as Country Programming Frameworks or CPFs), and to carry out gender analysis in the identification and formulation stages of technical assistance projects.²

The objective of this gender assessment is to analyse the agricultural and rural sector in Armenia from a gender perspective and provide recommendations and guidance on how to ensure gender sensitivity in further programming and how to identify possible partners for gender-related activities.

This gender assessment identifies some of the major gender inequalities found within the available data that need to be considered by policy-makers and project managers, and identifies the need for further research in a wide range of areas, including fishery, forestry, local farmers' cooperation, and women's real contribution to GDP, particularly considering their overwhelming involvement as contributing family workers.

The assessment aims to assist the Government of Armenia, FAO staff, and other stakeholders in reducing gender-based inequalities more effectively, facilitating rural women's empowerment in development interventions, and providing background information and baseline data that incorporates essential gender-related information.

1.2 Methodology

The methodology of the Country Gender Assessment involved the collation and analysis of quantitative and qualitative secondary data through a desk-based review of the relevant materials. The review focused on selected documents pertaining to current rural and agricultural development programmes and a range of reports, briefings and articles from other donor agencies, international organizations, NGOs and farmers' associations. The report also draws upon a significant amount of data from the National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia (ARMSTAT). Additionally, national legislation and normative acts relating to national gender policy and gender mainstreaming were reviewed (see the list of references in Annex 1). Complementary primary, qualitative data were gathered in 2014 and used to enrich the analysis. This included interviews and focus groups with selected, relevant national and international stakeholders, and meetings with the implementing partners of FAO projects, farmers' associations, NGOs and farmer groups (see Annex 2 for a list of research participants).

² This is also in line with the recommendations of FAO's *Guide to the Project Cycle* (2012), which calls for gender analysis in the preparation of programme and project concept notes, and of the REU/SEC Stocktaking Report carried out in 2012, which recommends that a gender assessment be carried out before any project is formulated.

1.3 FAO in Armenia

The Republic of Armenia became a member of FAO in November 1993, and the FAO Representation Office in Armenia was established in September 2004. FAO-Government of Armenia cooperation focused on six priority areas during the 2012–2015 Country Programme Framework (CPF), which have also contributed to some of the priorities within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2010–2015 (UN Armenia, 2010). The priority focus areas of the CPF in Armenia for 2012 to 2015 were:

- Policies and instruments to support rural development and regional economic integration
- Animal health and production
- Crop production and plant protection
- Food safety and consumer protection
- Forestry
- Development of fisheries and aquaculture

2. Brief profile of the Republic of Armenia

2.1 Socio-economic profile

The Republic of Armenia is a mountainous country encompassing 29 743 square kilometres. It is bordered by Turkey to the northwest, Georgia to the north, Iran to the south, and Azerbaijan to the southwest and east.

Ethnic Armenians represent 98.1 percent of the population and the main minority ethnic groups are Yezidis (1.2 percent) and Russians (0.4 percent). Other minorities include Assyrians, Ukrainians, Caucasus Greeks, Kurds, Georgians and Belarusians (ARMSTAT, 2013b). The Armenian Apostolic Church is the predominant religion in Armenia.

The population of Armenia is 3 018 854 people, with a sex ratio in the *de facto* population of 88 men for every 100 women.³ In rural areas, where 38.7 percent of the total population lives, the sex ratio of the *de facto* population is 93.5 men for every 100 women (ARMSTAT, 2011). High levels of out-migration, especially male migration, have led to population decline and explain this uneven sex ratio. It is estimated that between 700 000 and 1 000 000 people have emigrated since 1991, and about 20 percent of Armenian households have household members who have migrated.⁴ Apart from those who left during the 1990s conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, about 96 percent of migrants have moved to Russia (ILO, 2010).

With an estimated per-capita GDP of USD 3 830, Armenia is classified as a lower middle income country (World Bank, 2016). Agriculture in Armenia is still the primary driver of growth, along with a modest contribution from industry and services. In 2012, the value added in agriculture accounted for 19.1 percent of GDP; when combined with agricultural processing it comprised around 26 percent of GDP. As of 2012, gross agricultural production represented AMD 764 billion (the equivalent of USD 1.9 billion), with plant cultivation accounting for 60 percent and animal production for 40 percent. Agriculture occupies a unique place in maintaining the country's food security (Government of the Republic of Armenia, 2014).

The global financial crisis has been responsible for increases in both rural and urban poverty.⁵ According to the RoA NSS, in 2014 the poverty rate was 30 percent (World Bank, 2016), which means that almost every third person lived in a household below the national poverty line of 40 264 AMD per month (or USD 96.8 per month).⁶ Among this group of the population, every fifth person (19.1 percent) was very poor and, 2.3 percent were extremely poor (ARMSTAT, 2015a). Households with three or more children below six years of age (54.9 percent) are exposed to a poverty risk which is around 1.8 times higher than the national average (30.0 percent).

In 2014, the poverty rate did not significantly differ between urban (30.0 percent) and rural (29.9 percent) locations. Yet, there is a striking difference between poverty rates in the capital city of Yerevan (25.0 percent) and other urban areas (35.1 percent) in the country. The majority of poor and extremely poor people are from towns within the Armenian marzes. This data shows that subsistence agriculture plays an important role in helping rural women and men to overcome extreme poverty.

³ The sex ratios are calculated using the *de facto* population rather than the *de jure* population. (for further information, see ARMSTAT, 2011).

⁴ A large number of Armenians reside abroad as temporary workers. The reasons for migration identified by potential migrants include: "Absence of jobs" (40.1 percent); "Impossibility of sufficient earnings to ensure adequate living standards" (32.5 percent); "Absence of any prospects for the development of the country / settlement area" (7.3 percent); and "Family circumstances (for example, reunion, marriage and divorce)" - (7.2 percent, ARMSTAT, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia & UNFPA, 2008).

⁵ Since 2009, a consumption aggregate has been used to estimate well-being in Armenia. The consumption aggregate is calculated using the Armenian Integrated Living Conditions Survey (ILCS) and comprises the following components: (i) the value of food and non-food consumption including consumption from home production, in addition to aid received from humanitarian organizations and other sources; and (ii) the rental value of durable goods. Poverty measurement in Armenia is based on the absolute poverty line. (ARMSTAT, 2015a)

⁶ In 2014, the total – both upper and lower – and the extreme poverty lines per adult equivalent per month were estimated to be AMD 40 264 (or USD 96.8), AMD 33 101 (or USD 79.6) and AMD 23 384 (or USD 56.2), respectively.

In rural communities, 27.2 percent of households are female-headed households (FHHs, ARMSTAT, 2015a). The high rate of long-term, male labour migration has increased the prevalence of women-headed households, since women tend to be regarded as heads of the households only in the absence of men. FHHs are more likely to suffer from extreme poverty compared with male-headed households (31.5 percent and 29.4 percent respectively) due to women's limited economic opportunities, the gender pay gap and, above all, because FHHs tend to be single-parent households, with fewer economically active family members who bring in household income.

On an individual basis, the proportion of women suffering from poverty is higher than that of men (54.7 and 45.3 percent respectively), which is, *inter alia*, a reflection of women's limited economic opportunities in comparison with men.

The 2014 UNDP Human Development Index (HDI) score for Armenia was 0.73, ranking it 87th out of 187 countries (UNDP, 2015). The Gender Inequality Index (GII) of that same year was 0.318, with Armenia ranking 62nd out of 155 countries (UNDP, 2015). Another global indicator, the World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Index (GGI)⁷, ranks Armenia at 105 out of 145 countries, and the country's position has steadily deteriorated since 2007 (World Economic Forum, 2015). The most problematic spheres in the Gender Gap Index are the economy, politics and the health sector.

2.2 Political and institutional profile

After centuries of rule divided between the Ottoman and Persian empires, followed by Russian rule over Eastern Armenia from the mid-19th century, Armenia first became an independent republic in 1918, before falling under Bolshevik rule in 1920. After the breakup of the Soviet Union, the modern, independent Republic of Armenia was established in 1991.

The early years of the new republic were dominated by the Nagorno-Karabakh War with neighbouring Azerbaijan. A Russian brokered ceasefire brought an end to the military conflict in 1994, by which time an estimated 30 000 people had been killed and over 1 000 000 had been displaced. Despite peace talks conducted since then, the legal status of Nagorno-Karabakh remains unresolved and relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan continue to be strained. Ceasefire violations have escalated sharply since 2014, causing dozens of casualties on both sides.

Armenia has a semi-presidential, multi-party political system. The President is the head of the government, which exercises executive power, and legislative power is vested in both the government and the parliament.⁸ The unicameral parliament (National Assembly) has been controlled by the Republican Party⁹ since the 2012 election.

Administratively, the territory of the Republic of Armenia is comprised of ten marzes (provinces) and Yerevan city. Public administration in the marzes is governed by the President's decree, "On public administration in the marzes of the Republic of Armenia", and other legal acts.

Marz governors are appointed and dismissed by government decrees, subject to ratification by the President of the Republic of Armenia. Within the bounds of the authority they are vested with by law, marz governors implement the government's regional policy in their respective marzes, coordinating the activities of local branches of the executive authority in the following areas: finance, urban development, housing and utilities, transport and road construction, agriculture and land use, education, health care, social security, culture and sports, nature and environmental protection, commerce, public catering and other services.¹⁰

⁷ The Index is calculated by the World Economic Forum (WEF) in four key areas: economy, politics, education and health. The Index accurately reflects the problem of ineffective use of human capital and establishes that countries which make ineffective use of half of their labour resources risk diminishing competitiveness.

⁸ A constitutional referendum was held in Armenia on 06 December 2015. The proposed amendments to the constitution would change the country from having a semi-presidential system to being a parliamentary republic. The changes are planned to take place during the 2017-18 electoral cycle.

⁹ Information on the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia is available at <http://www.parliament.am/?lang=eng>.

¹⁰ Information on the regions of Armenia is available at <http://gov.am/en/regions>.

The marz level administration and officials therefore play an important role in the interpretation and implementation of national policy and strategy at local level, including those relating to gender equality and rural development.

Armenia is a member of more than 40 international organizations, including the United Nations; the Council of Europe; the Asian Development Bank; the Commonwealth of Independent States; the World Trade Organization; World Customs Organization; the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation; and La Francophonie.

Preserving a careful balance in international relations between east and west Armenia is both a member of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO: a military alliance of Russia and ex-Soviet states) and a participant in NATO's Partnership for Peace programme. The country is part of the European Union's European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and has been negotiating to become an associate partner of the European Union. In January 2015, Armenia officially joined another economic block, the Russia-led Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU).

The Republic of Armenia accessed to the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* in 1994.

Table 1: Republic of Armenia's legally-binding documents and political commitments to reduce gender inequalities

Year	
1993	Accession to the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and its optional protocol
1994	Accession to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
1994	Ratification of the Equal Remuneration Convention
1998	Decree No. 242 "On the Basics of the Programme for the Improvement of the Status of Women in the Republic of Armenia"
1998	Decree No. 406 "On Approving the National Plan for the Improvement of Women's Status and Enhancement of Their Role in the Society for the Period 1998–2000 in the Republic of Armenia"
2002	Ratification of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms
2003	Ratification of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and related protocols
2004	Adoption of the "National Action Plan on Improving the Status of Women and Enhancing Their Role in the Society for the Period 2004–2010"
2006	Accession to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
2008	Republic of Armenia Government Programme for 2008–2012
2010	RoA Gender Policy Concept Paper
2011	Protocol Decree No. 19 "On approving the 'Republic of Armenia Gender Policy Strategic Action Plan for 2011–2015'"
2013	Law of the Republic of Armenia on provision of equal rights and equal opportunities for women and men
2015	Amendments to the Constitution
2015	Commitments at the Global Leader's Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in September 2015 on Beijing +20
2015	Republic of Armenia's commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals

The approach to "gender equality" in the Soviet period had a profound effect on women's rights in Armenia. The Soviet Union had an official policy of gender equality, and during Soviet rule women were strongly encouraged to participate actively in the professional, social and political life of the country. Even though one of the reasons for women's emancipation was to increase the qualified labour force in a weak economy, these policies led to positive changes in legislation and improvement in the social status of women through positive discrimination and affirmative action. Legal protections, however, did not necessarily bring about a change in underlying attitudes. The new Soviet woman had an increased role in society, but gender roles at home remained unchanged (USAID, 2010).

Since independence, the Government of the Republic of Armenia has been steadily incorporating the international *acquis* on gender equality, and establishing a number of laws and policies to address gender inequalities. In 1998, the Armenian Government issued Decree No. 242, "On the Basics of the Programme for the Improvement of the Status of Women in the Republic of Armenia" and Decree No. 406, "On Approving the National Plan for the Improvement of Women's Status and Enhancement of Their Role in the Society for the Period 1998–2000 in the Republic of Armenia". In April 2004, the Armenian Government adopted the first National Action Plan on Improving the Status of Women, and, since then, increased efforts have been carried out to contribute to the reduction of gender inequalities in the country.

The main document that reflects Armenia's current commitment to gender equality policy is the *RoA Gender Policy Concept Paper*, approved by the Armenian Government in February 2010 (Government of the Republic of Armenia, 2010). The mission of the *Gender Policy Concept Paper* is to facilitate *gender mainstreaming* in all spheres of socio-political and socio-economic life and in policies at all levels of government, as a *tool* for ensuring the sustainable, democratic development of society and for consolidating a democratic, open and just civil society and the rule-of-law State.

On 20 May 2011, the Armenian Government adopted the Protocol Decree No. 19, "On approving the 'Republic of Armenia Gender Policy Strategic Action Plan for 2011–2015'" (Government of the Republic of Armenia, 2011). The Action Plan was in line with the main directions of the *RoA Gender Policy Concept Paper* and set, *inter alia*, an objective of, "improving agricultural and rural infrastructures and of expanding women's opportunities for participation in socio-economic development of rural communities" (Government of the Republic of Armenia, 2011).

Of great significance for gender policy implementation and for addressing the issues of imbalanced rights and opportunities, was the "Law of the Republic of Armenia on provision of equal rights and equal opportunities for women and men"¹¹ that was adopted in 2013. This law regulates the issue of ensuring equal rights and equal opportunities to women and men in the fields of politics, public administration, labour and employment, entrepreneurship, health care and education.

In line with the recommendations established by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in 2010 (CEDAW Committee, 2009), amendments to the Constitution made in December 2015 included important articles and provisions such as: *General Equality before the Law* (Article 28), *Prohibition of Discrimination* (Article 29) and *Equality of Rights for Women and Men* (Article 30).¹²

In their 2009 and 2016 recommendations, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (2009, 2016), observed that rural women face significantly greater levels of discrimination than urban women. Furthermore, the committee documented the need to make specific efforts to reduce gender stereotypes and the socially implicit and accepted subordination of women in rural areas, in addition to improving access to education, health care and economic empowerment for rural women and girls. The General Recommendation number 35 on the rights of rural women, approved by CEDAW on the 04 March 2016 (CEDAW, 2016), is a useful guideline to support the Government of the Republic of

Rural women

30. The Committee notes that the State party has taken economic empowerment measures for rural women, supporting co-operatives and making credit and grant programmes available in rural environments. The Committee is however concerned by the lack of social, health and economic infrastructure in rural environments, as well as by the concentration of rural women in the informal sector. The Committee is moreover concerned that rural women are particularly affected by labour migration of partners, which exposes them to higher risks of economic distress and high HIV/AIDS infection rates.

31. In line with General Recommendation Nr. 34 (2016) on the rights of rural women, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Pay special attention to the needs of rural women in state policies and ensure that rural women have equal access to basic services and infrastructure;

(b) Ensure that rural women participate in decision-making processes, including community decision-making processes and development planning;

(c) Guarantee the access of rural women to economic opportunities, including income-generating projects and credit facilities, on an equal and equitable basis with men and also with their urban counterparts;

(d) Raise awareness in rural communities on ways to protect themselves from HIV/AIDS and especially address the issue of labour migration.

(CEDAW Committee, 2016, p. 10).

¹¹ The Armenian version is available at <http://www.parliament.am/legislation.php?sel=show&ID=4761>.

¹² Amendments to the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, December 2015, Armenian version available at <http://www.president.am/hy/constitution-2015>.

Armenia in pursuing gender equality in rural areas.

In the context of the Beijing +20 and the establishment of the new Sustainable Development Goals, the Government of the Republic of Armenia made a commitment at the Global Leader's Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in September 2015 to ensure the effective implementation of the Law of the Republic of Armenia on "*Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities of Women and Men*", and to sign the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence.

The 2010–2020 Strategy of Sustainable Development of Armenia's Agriculture is the main current framework for development of the agricultural sector and rural areas, and identifies the following as major priorities for the development of the country's agro-food sector (Government of the Republic of Armenia, no date):

- Addressing the effects of the logistics crisis in agriculture and the agro-food industry and strengthening the integration links;
- Developing agricultural inter-field cooperation to ensure farm management in the agrarian sector;
- Improving agricultural and agro-processing products sale and increasing export volumes;
- Enhancing agricultural competitiveness and fostering "know-how" technologies;
- Ensuring effective use of land, water, labour and intellectual resources to improve the productive potential of the agriculture sector;
- Developing a food safety system in line with international standards;
- Expanding non-agricultural employment in rural areas and improving the farm income of the rural population;
- Developing community infrastructure in rural areas;
- Strengthening agricultural support services and improving their accessibility;
- Protecting natural and environmental landscapes and developing agro-tourism and organic agriculture.

In 2014, based on the 2014–2020 Strategy of Sustainable Development of Armenia, a new Strategy for Sustainable Agricultural and Rural Development for 2016–2025 was developed. The draft version of the Strategy passed through gender mainstreaming and was submitted to the RA Government for approval at the time of the finalization of this report.

Gender statistics in the agricultural sector need to be improved considerably. Even in its Concluding observations on the combined third and fourth periodic reports of Armenia, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAWC) noted the, "lack of information and statistics about vulnerable groups of women, particularly rural women, ... who often suffer from multiple forms of discrimination, especially in regard to access to employment, health care, education and social benefits." (CEDAW Committee, 2009, p. 8). The UN agencies, UN Foundations, the World Bank, EU and OECD, *inter alia*, have made a strong case for "a gender data revolution" globally, regionally and nationally (Brandon, 2014; Debusscher, 2015, p. 30). It is clear that nothing short of the gender data revolution is one of the preconditions for tracking the progress of reforms and their successful, evidence-based implementation, including reforms in the agricultural and food security areas in Armenia, if and when these focus on achieving gender equality.

2.3 Demographic profile

2.3.1 Sex ratios, life expectancy and health

While most health statistics are disaggregated by sex, few are disaggregated by residence (urban and rural).

The population of Armenia is 3 018 854 people with a sex ratio in the *de facto* population of 88 men for every 100 women.¹³ In rural areas, where 38.7 percent of the total population lives, the sex ratio of the *de facto* population is 93.5 men for every 100 women (ARMSTAT, 2011). High levels of out-migration, especially male migration, have led to population decline and explain this uneven sex ratio.

However, the picture at birth is different, with a sex ratio of 1.13 males for every female at birth. Furthermore, there are 27.5 induced abortions per 100 live births and stillbirths at birth.¹⁴ Therefore, the reason behind the uneven sex ratio is the widespread prevalence of sex-selective abortion, where there is a greater preference for boys rather than girls (UNFPA, 2012, 2013; Das Gupta, 2015). At the time of the finalization of this report, the Government of the Republic of Armenia had submitted a package of bills to the National Assembly to change the "*Law on Human and Reproductive Health and Reproductive Rights*", as well as making amendments to the "*Code on Administrative Offences*", which proposes to forbid sex-selective abortion by law.

Women have a higher life expectancy at birth than men: 78 years compared with 72 years. The USAID gender assessment suggests that, "Cultural definitions of masculinity in Armenia are closely connected to men's risk-taking and unhealthy behaviour choices, such as abuse of alcohol and drugs, practicing unsafe sex and even reluctance to use seat belts" (USAID, 2010, p. 19). The difference in life expectancy is also reflected in the disproportionate number of women in receipt of pensions compared with men.

Overall, women are more likely than men to describe their health as good or very good, in both urban and rural areas (49.8 percent of women compared with 42.3 percent of men); and 50.9 percent of urban women describe their health as good or very good, compared with 48.1 of rural women (ARMSTAT, 2013a).

Reduced health care facilities in rural areas, and limited access to mobility (discussed in section 3.6), mean that women in rural areas are dependent on their male counterparts to access health services.

2.3.2 Migration

When looking at the *de facto* population, rather than the *de jure* population, the sex ratio in the country is 88 men for every 100 women, and in rural areas it is 93.5 men per 100 women, demonstrating evidence of male-dominated migration. It is estimated that between 700 000 and 1 000 000 people have emigrated since 1991, and about 20 percent of Armenian households have household members who have migrated.¹⁵ Notwithstanding those migrants who left during the 1990s conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, about 96 percent of migrants have moved to Russia (ILO, 2010).

¹³ The sex ratios are calculated using the *de facto* population rather than the *de jure* population (ARMSTAT, 2011).

¹⁴ After years of population decline, the Armenian government proposed a ban on the practice of sex-selective abortion. Submitted to Parliament in 2015, the bill, drafted by the Ministry of Health, explicitly bans all sex-selective abortion and, in a bid to close any loopholes, specifically prevents abortion without a doctor's consent between the 12th and 22nd weeks of pregnancy. It is during this gestational period that a child's sex manifests itself. Changes will also be made to the Republic of Armenia's "*Law on Human Reproductive Health and Reproductive Rights*" and the Republic of Armenia's "*Code of Administrative Offences*" (ARMENPRESS, 2016).

¹⁵ A large number of Armenians reside abroad as temporary workers. The reasons for migration identified by potential migrants include: "Absence of jobs" (40.1 percent); "Impossibility of sufficient earnings to ensure adequate living standards" (32.5 percent); "Absence of any prospects for the development of the country / settlement area" (7.3 percent); and "Family circumstances (for example, reunion, marriage and divorce)" (7.2 percent, ARMSTAT, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia & UNFPA, 2008).

Seventy-eight percent of all emigrants are men, and only 22 percent are women; out of all male emigrants, 93.9 percent are aged between 15 and 59 years; and out of all female emigrants, 83.5 are aged between 15 and 59 years. In the communities of origin, when husbands migrate, the women who remain behind may change their status. For example, as women become the *de facto* heads of households, they may gain more decision-making power over the allocation of household resources for the education and health of their children. At the same time, women may become more vulnerable to poverty when their husbands do not send remittances. Similarly, older people, most of whom are women, may become more vulnerable to poverty when their children move out of their communities of origin and do not provide economic support. Compared with men, women tend to send a larger proportion of their income home, and on a more regular basis, possibly because of gender-based expectations regarding the support of parents (UNDP, 2009). However, the absolute amounts of money are smaller because women tend to earn less than men, due to fewer and less advantageous economic opportunities that women have compared with men.

3. Gender and the rural economy

3.1 Education

Educational access and attainment in Armenia show a relatively high level of equality, as indicated in the Gender Gap Index scores, although some gender differences are revealed in the analysis of the statistics.

Table 2: Educational enrolment 2013/14

Enrolment 2013/14	Percentage of girls	Percentage of boys
In preschool institutions (0–5 years of age)	48.5	51.5
In general schools (6–17 years of age)	47.9	52.1
In preliminary vocational education	24.1	75.9
In middle vocational education	53.3	46.7
In higher education	52.4	47.6

Source: ARMSTAT, 2014, p. 72

The enrolment figures for 2013 / 14 (in Table 2) show a smaller proportion of girls among children enrolled but this difference is reversed in the middle and higher educational enrolment figures. This shift could perhaps be related to the significant differential in preliminary vocational institutions, with only 24 percent of girls enrolled, reflecting both traditional gender differences in the skilled trade and technical employment sectors, and the numbers of boys opting for these rather than pursuing higher qualifications.

Although women are more likely to enter postgraduate and higher professional education, they are less likely to finally obtain an academic degree (ARMSTAT, 2015c), with women accounting for only 28 percent of PhD graduates (World Economic Forum, 2015). There is also horizontal segregation at university level. Males outnumber females in state and non-state higher educational institutions in the agro-food sector, by 70 to 30 percent, and only 38 percent of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) graduates are women (World Economic Forum, 2015).

The stereotypical linkage between men and machinery / technology has important effects in later stages of life, with women having less access to machinery and technology in agriculture. This directly reduces women's economic advancement in agriculture, and slows down agricultural modernization and rural development, particularly in light of data which shows that women account for 56 percent and men for 44 percent of those employed in agriculture.

3.2 Formal and informal labour markets in rural areas of the Republic of Armenia

3.2.1 Labour market

The share of active women in the labour force is larger than that of men.¹⁶ However, only 55.2 percent of women are considered to be economically active, compared with 73.2 percent of men. Women comprise 48 percent and men 52 percent of the total employed population. At the same time, women represent 54 percent of the unemployed, and 72 percent of the officially registered unemployed,

¹⁶ The analysis of the labour market presented here mostly comprises agriculture and livestock. Further research for assessing the situation of women and men in fisheries and forestry is needed.

in the Republic of Armenia, and labour migration occupies a significant place in the employment structure of men (ARMSTAT, 2015c).

Women seem to have more difficulty in finding employment when they lose their jobs¹⁷. Out of those who took less than three months to find other work, 45 percent were women, whereas out of those who took over four years to find another job, 64 percent were women (ARMSTAT, 2015c, p. 128).

Approximately 34.8 percent of employed people are involved in agriculture, of whom almost 56 percent are women (ARMSTAT, 2015b, p. 61). Livestock production is predominant in the agricultural sector, employing about 75 percent of the agricultural labour force, and utilizing about 80 percent of agricultural land (Welton, Asatryan & Jijelava, 2013). In the structure of men's employment, the share of agriculture stands at nearly 30 percent; and in the structure of women's employment, agriculture comprises more than 40 percent, which makes women crucial participants in agricultural development.

The share of women in agriculture engaged in non-formal employment is 82.1 percent, compared with 60.8 percent of male informal workers (Welton, Asatryan & Jijelava, 2013). In terms of informal employment, men account for more than 80 percent of employers, and women represent 83 percent of the so-called "others" in informal employment (ARMSTAT, 2015c). This may be related to the overrepresentation of women as contributing family workers in family farming, as is widely documented in the region of Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Fifty-six percent of those "informally" employed in agriculture are women (ARMSTAT, 2015c).

The overall level of professional qualifications held by rural women is low in comparison with urban women. Veterinarians and agronomists are mostly men. Apart from the agricultural sector, rural women are also employed in educational and in health care institutions, mainly in middle-level posts, yet in low paid sectors (ARMSTAT, 2015c).

The existence of *vertical* (unequal access to career hierarchies) and *horizontal* (in jobs and employment spheres) segregation in the labour market, which results in a significant gender pay gap, are strongly present in the Republic of Armenia, including in the sector of agriculture. The gender pay gap in agriculture and rural areas, lower opportunities for women than men, and higher economic dependency rates among women can be explained by women's lower access to credit, property (including land) and entrepreneurship, alongside the stereotypical linkages of machinery and technology with men.¹⁸

According to 2014 data, women's average wages were about 65.9 percent of men's average wages (ARMSTAT, 2015c). In agriculture, fishery and forestry the wage gap is documented to be 90 cents earned by a woman for every US dollar earned by a man (ARMSTAT, 2015c). However, this does not account for all of the women engaged in informal and in unpaid work. In relation to informal work, and according to data from 2010, when it comes to the informal sector women's average earnings were only 47 percent of men's (ADB & ARMSTAT, 2011). Furthermore, women are overrepresented in unpaid work in agriculture, especially in family farming. ARMSTAT data (2015c) demonstrate that many of these women may be registered under the category "Other" within the self-employed population. They can also be registered as a member of the "inactive population" under the category of "housekeepers", who account for almost 21 percent of all women of working age in Armenia. There are 41 times more women in this category than there are men (ARMSTAT, 2015c).

In relation to animal health, the number of women involved as specialists in this sector is quite low.¹⁹ There are almost no female veterinarians, particularly in rural areas, despite the presence of women in veterinary science courses. The reasons that female veterinary science students do not become veterinarians vary. Some decide to get married and not to work (Pro-Media NGO & OXFAM, 2014). Others migrate to Yerevan or other cities to find employment in laboratories. A key constraint for women specialists in the veterinary sector is the irregular working hours, including evening call

¹⁷ The WEF (2015) ranks Armenia 79th in relation to the indicators of a gender imbalance in the economic sphere (which includes employment rates for women and men, women's and men's pay for equal work and the proportion of women and men among specialists and technical staff).

¹⁸ Based on the share of women who are inactive, and among them, housekeepers (ARMSTAT, 2015c).

¹⁹ According to the "Workshop accomplishment report delivered for selected veterinarians in Shirak, Lori, Tavush, Aragatsotn, Gegharkunik and Syunik Marzes of Armenia" only three out of 78 participants were women (CARD Foundation, 2013).

outs. Husbands prefer their wives not to work in the evening or at night-time. Women also have more limited access to transport than men. Rural women rarely drive cars and they depend on their husbands or male relatives for transportation (OXFAM, 2013).

Amendments to a number of legislative acts, primarily to the Republic of Armenia Labour Code, aimed to improve women's access to social protection schemes, and to facilitate a better balance between the careers and family responsibilities of workers. For example, pregnant women and employees raising a child under three years of age may only be assigned to night work and overtime work, as well as to work at weekends or during holidays, with their consent (Government of the Republic of Armenia, 2004). However, further measures to promote responsible fatherhood and co-responsibility of care by both parents are still greatly needed, especially to reduce the stereotypical and implicit associations of care work as a "solely feminine" responsibility.

3.2.2 Family farming

The agricultural sector currently comprises approximately 340 000 holdings, with an average of 1.3 hectares of land per holding (FAO, 2012a). Of these, only around 200 000 are functioning farms, with half operating on a subsistence or semi-subsistence basis. Large-scale cash crop farming is conducted by a minority of farmers. It is estimated that there are approximately 20 000 to 30 000 farms with at least three to five hectares per farmer, and that only six percent of all farms have more than ten hectares of land.²⁰ Smallholder farming households in Armenia produce around 90 percent of the gross agricultural product. Wheat is the main staple crop grown, followed by potatoes, then other vegetables, legumes and oil seed crops. Livestock include cattle, pigs, and some sheep and poultry. There are about 350 registered fish farms, with 5 500 tonnes of yearly fish farming output.

While sex-disaggregated data on farm registration or land ownership are not available, 26.5 percent of rural households are headed by women, and in many cases this is linked with male out-migration. About 38 percent of income in rural communities in 2010 came from agriculture, with a little less than half of this generated by the sale of agricultural products. Wage employment accounted for 29 percent of rural income, 20 percent came from pensions and social payments and about nine percent came from remittances (ARMSTAT, 2015c).

Rural women working informally on family farms do not receive any compensation as defined by the Labour Code, such as sick leave and child care allowances, because they are considered to be either self-employed or economically inactive. In rural communities, two-thirds of employed women do not receive cash earnings when they are self-employed (Yerevan State University, 2015).

In family farming a strong gender-based segregation of tasks exists. Men tend to be more present in tasks that are capital-intensive, involving a greater amount of machinery and technology, and in those tasks that are better paid.

Women from rural communities are strongly involved in livestock farming, particularly in dairy production (including milking, milk processing, and the marketing of milk and other dairy products). Sometimes, due to the high level of importance of dairy production for the household, family members (both women and men) mutually support each other in performing livestock-related activities: a man milks cows if the woman is not at home and a woman cleans out the cattle shed if the man is absent (Fortson *et al.*, 2013).

Cattle breeding, including cattle-shed disinfection, grass harvesting, grass delivery, baling, mowing, animal slaughtering and sale of meat, usually carried out by men, were described as the most difficult tasks in animal production and women are usually not expected to be involved in these tasks. However, the gender division of labour in livestock production varies by marz, depending on social perceptions about the roles and responsibilities of women and men.

²⁰ As calculated by ACIDI/VOCA, an American international development non-profit agency (Welton, Asatryan & Jijelava, 2013).

Women are the main decision-makers about dairy sales and processing: they decide on what quantity of milk, cheese and yoghurt is needed for family consumption and how much milk and dairy products should be sold. Women are also responsible for deciding how the income generated by these market activities is used, and for making decisions on daily expenses. Decision-making concerning cattle shed repair and / or other investments into the farm is mostly carried out by men (Martirosyan, 2013).

Poultry production in Armenia is almost completely the responsibility of women, including feeding, watering, slaughtering and small-scale trade of both poultry and eggs.²¹

Both women and men are deeply involved in the crop production sector, with clear-cut roles and responsibilities. Women are generally responsible for seeds – including buying, sowing and marketing – and are strongly engaged in the harvesting of most crops where this is done by hand, as they do not usually drive tractors or operate other agricultural machinery, (Fortson et al., 2013). A study conducted among farmer members and non-members of the Federation of Agricultural Associations in 2007 shows that the majority of harvesting activities are done by women. In this specific study, 45.7 percent of women and around 30 percent of men engaged in agriculture do the harvesting (ICARE & FAA, 2007, p. 28). Both women and men are engaged in kitchen gardens.

Regarding the two main cash crops cultivated in Armenia, apricots and grapes, women are mainly responsible for arranging the apricots in boxes and for processing apricots, and producing dried fruits, juices and jams. Men are mostly involved in cultivation, fertilization, watering, daily maintenance and land management. Men also undertake activities related to grape processing and wine making (ICARE & FAA, 2007, p. 28).

3.3 Infrastructure and technology in rural areas, and their relationship to time use

Irrigation continues to be an issue of concern in agricultural production. Within the Soviet Union, by 1985 the amount of irrigated land had reached 300 000 ha, but towards the end of the 1990s the irrigated land area was only about 112 300 ha. This is partly due to the economic and security crises of the 1990s, but also due to the fact that the irrigation systems and maintenance structures had been designed for large-scale agricultural farms and enterprises, and were not adapted to accommodate the needs of very small-scale individual farmers with scattered land plots and holdings. Irrigation rehabilitation has been a key focus for international aid and partnerships, including FAO, and while much remains to be done, the decline has been reversed and irrigated areas have grown by five ha per year since 1995 (ICARE & FAA, 2007, p. 28).

There are no sex-disaggregated data available on access to and production on irrigated land, or of women's membership and engagement in Water User Associations (WUAs). Given the greater income potential of irrigated production, further research is needed to ascertain: (i) the extent to which female-headed households have access to irrigated land; (ii) the proportion of irrigated land registered in the names of the male householders only; and (iii) whether women are active in WUAs.

Regarding other infrastructure and access to services, considerable improvements have been made over the past two decades, but there is still a significant amount of work to be done on upgrading basic infrastructure and addressing the continuing urban-rural gap in infrastructural development. For rural communities, and in particular communities in the more remote mountainous areas, improvements in transportation infrastructure are crucial. Substantial investments in the water sector have led to improvements in both the reliability and quality of the water supply available to the population. As of 2013, over 96 percent of the rural population had access to a centralized water supply (ARMSTAT, 2015c), and the number of hours of access per day has increased since 2008. However, about 560 communities in rural areas are not connected to the grid, and 40 000 rural inhabitants do not have access to a piped water supply (ADB, 2014).

²¹ Even though there is no official statistic, women's role in poultry production has been documented by different research projects conducted throughout Armenia, including Fortson et al, 2013, as well as being reported by the participants of the focus groups carried out within the framework of the Assessment.

Around 50 percent of people from urban and rural areas surveyed for a study in 2014 did not have an uninterrupted cold water supply (ARMSTAT, 2015a).

Since women are the major users of water in households (in relation to their domestic activities that are linked with female gender roles), they are severely affected by water restrictions (ADB, 2015). The ADB report (2015) also states that when there is no centralized water supply, women are responsible for fetching water. This adds an extra burden to their workload.

Infrastructural development and the modernization of households is also lower in rural areas, including access to washing machines, dishwashers and other domestic appliances, and rural communities also have lower access to transportation and mobility. This has a direct impact on rural women's workload, since domestic activities are usually linked with female gender roles. Research shows that rural women spend 6 hours 6 minutes per day, from Monday to Sunday, on their domestic workload, while urban women spend 4 hours and 53 minutes and rural men spend 2 hours and 37 minutes (ARMSTAT, 2015c).

3.4 Property rights and *de facto* enjoyment of rights over land

One of the most important resources in rural Armenia is land and real estate. Even though no official sex-disaggregated data are available, the gender research conducted within the scope of "Livestock Development in Syunik Region" revealed that the majority of house owners in families are men, and only one-third are women.²²

Armenian law gives equal property rights to both women and men, but in practice women rarely exercise these rights. The main reasons include:

- *Registration practices.* After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Government of Armenia privatized land in 1991 and 1992 by dividing it among households. Land ownership was awarded to the person who was identified as the "head of the household". Although this could legally be a woman or a man, the majority of land was registered in the name of men as "representatives" of the whole household. Women only received land titles in the absence of a male head of the family. This implies that although women, as part of the household, also legally owned the land that was given, they did not enjoy *de facto* their ownership rights over land. Today, women are increasingly managing farms as men migrate away for work. For example, in the Tavush marz, where migration rates are significantly high, the majority of land users are women (OXFAM, 2013). However, this is management *de facto* and female landownership remains low, and registration is still carried out only in the name of men as "heads of the household".
- *Patrilocal marriages and inheritance practices.* Parents usually provide the son with the house, as inheritance, while it is expected that the daughter gets married and leaves the parents' house. Within the practice of patrilocal marriage, women go to live with their husbands' families. They rarely claim land from their families of origin, and they are not usually recognized as owners of the land of their new step-families.
- *Access to resources.* Women are less able to purchase land than men, due to their limited access to, and control over, financial resources either through income or credit.
- *Limited knowledge by women and whole communities about women's ownership rights over land.* This includes limited knowledge about rights and of the consequences of not having land registered also in their name.

²² The (unpublished) data on property ownership used in the main text was accessed from a Gender Assessment conducted by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) within the project, "Livestock Development Project in the Syunik Region". Project details are available at <https://www.eda.admin.ch/countries/armenia/en/home/international-cooperation/projects.html/content/projects/SDC/en/2006/7F03199/phase3.html?oldPagePath=/content/countries/armenia/en/home/internationale-zusammenarbeit/projekte.html>. Another report offers the following data on property ownership: 3.4 percent of respondents identified the house as the joint property of the woman and man, 62.1 percent of respondents observed that the man is the owner of the house and 34.5 percent reported that the woman is the owner (this percentage is higher among respondents from women-headed families); see Armenian Association of Women with University Education, 2014.

3.5 Access to credit and entrepreneurship

One of the primary contributors to gender inequality in Armenia is the continuing disparity in economic entrepreneurship among women and men. Rural women usually benefit from micro-credit or loan programmes provided by donor organizations, which make these funds available on the basis of a specific level of women's involvement (quotas). This development strategy has become increasingly common in the last decade (CSPN, 2012).

However, and despite the commitments of the Government of Armenia to CEDAW, the Beijing +20 and the SDGs, measures to offer training, retraining or vocational education to rural women to equip them with adequate skills and competence for agriculture and rural entrepreneurship are still pending. Work is also required on ensuring that extension services, tax policies and policies to support small and medium enterprises are gender sensitive. A national policy or strategy to enhance rural women's entrepreneurship would represent a strategic step in addressing Armenia's goals in rural development and gender equality, and strengthening synergies between them under the umbrella of article 14 of CEDAW (UN Women, no date).

The obstacles that women have to overcome before they go into business include: feelings of uncertainty and risk aversion; limited self-confidence in areas that are not socially or stereotypically attributed to women; a lack of business contacts; and entrenched and perpetuated stereotypes about women's roles and their participation in the economy, and in business in particular. The material barriers to business include: difficulties in obtaining loans; limited access to monetary funds and property for collateral; burdensome interest rates; an unfavourable business environment; mobility constraints; limited access to large markets; and the challenges of making informal payments to male officials to facilitate business, including a lack of economic resources and the gendered dimensions of social interaction and networking (USAID, 2010). Even when women are the legal owners of property, including land, full enjoyment of their ownership rights, including usage of ownership as collateral, tends to be restricted. This is mainly because properties are commonly registered only in the name of the husband (typically identified as the "head of the household").

While it is socially accepted that women run micro and small-scale businesses, it is also documented that women who run larger enterprises may feel the need for the backing of influential men.²³ Many business negotiations take place in informal contexts, such as over meals, but in some regions of Armenia it would be socially unacceptable for a businesswoman to meet with a male business partner without a male relative present. Such restrictions may limit businesswomen to interacting only within their own circles. Nevertheless, in the family, most female entrepreneurs feel that they need some male support, which is obtained from male members of the family especially once they begin to bring additional income into the household (ADB, 2015). However, some husbands do not allow their wives to work, even when a household would benefit from the additional income. The following quotation provides an example of the attitudes expressed by farmers who were interviewed for this report:

"The unemployment rate is very high in the community. If there were a job nobody would forbid women from working. But if the economic situation of the family is good enough, 20 [to] 30 percent of the husbands wouldn't like their wives to work." (In-depth interview with male project team member, Goris)

3.6 Access to information, mobility, markets and agricultural inputs

Limited access to productive resources is a serious constraint for rural women engaging in agricultural entrepreneurship or farm management. For instance, rural women have little or no direct access to farm equipment such as tractors and combine harvesters. Machinery is stereotypically linked with

²³ As documented during the field research conducted for this report.

masculine gender roles. Even female heads of households do not personally use these resources; they hire assistance or ask male relatives to help (ACDI/VOCA, 2011). The same limited access also applies to fertilizers, seeds and other agricultural inputs. Women are usually responsible for buying and dealing with seeds, but only in small-scale farming and when seeds are available in nearby locations.²⁴

Cars and machinery are rarely owned by women. In rural areas, more than 95 percent of car and machinery owners are men, and men represent 100 percent of agricultural machinery operators in the marzes as documented in the field research conducted for this report. Female car owners and female drivers are becoming increasingly present in urban areas, especially in Yerevan, but are rarely found in rural areas (ADB, 2015).

Transportation issues constrain women's opportunities for income generation. Women's limited mobility is directly related to their limited access to markets, training, information, business networks, providers and administrative paperwork. There is a stereotypical, implicit association of "city paperwork" as a "man's thing". As identified during field research conducted by the Asian Development Bank, mobility limitations and restrictions are more usually related to social norms rather than road or transport infrastructure:

"In Gavar, interviewees explained that a decade ago, it would have been considered improper for a woman to be seen taking a taxi alone. She would have needed a male chaperone or would have faced scrutiny from the community. Today, this perception has largely changed, but it is not clear if the change is attitudinal or out of necessity. Some respondents described how women do not sit in certain seats on public transport (or marshrutki), such as those close to the driver (who is male) or other men. A Yerevan-based NGO that works extensively with young people in the regions mentioned that it encounters difficulties inviting young women to attend training events in the capital, as families frequently do not want the women to travel unless they are accompanied by a male relative. The same attitudes restrict young women from travelling to the capital to study." (ADB, 2015, p. 69)

Milk and other dairy products are mostly marketed at community level rather than in city markets or processing factories. In some of the communities, milk is collected in the community by milk collectors. In the absence of milk collection systems, some may take their milk directly to the nearest market but household members do not take milk directly to the milk processing factory.²⁵ As a result, the level of access to the milk market for women, who are mostly responsible for milk production, depends on the milk collection infrastructure in the community and the distance from the community market. This is particularly relevant considering the constraints faced by rural women with regards to physical mobility.

The transportation problems are related not only to distance to Yerevan, but also within the marz, where long distances, bad intercommunity roads and insufficient public transportation create difficulties for business activities and communication between people, especially for women (Wistrand, 2007). During the field research conducted for this report, rural women complained about the difficulties they faced in accessing advisory services provided by the Agricultural Support Republican Center (ASRC)²⁶ as well as the Small and Medium Entrepreneurship Development National Center (SMEDNC).²⁷

²⁴ As documented in the field research conducted for this report.

²⁵ This (unpublished) data was accessed from a Gender Assessment conducted by the SDC-funded, "Livestock Development Project in the Syunik Region". Project details are available at <https://www.eda.admin.ch/countries/armenia/en/home/international-cooperation/projects.html/content/projects/SDC/en/2006/7F03199/phase3.html?oldPagePath=/content/countries/armenia/en/home/internationale-zusammenarbeit/projekte.html>.

²⁶ The Agricultural Support Republican Center is based in Yerevan and regional centres are situated in the central towns of the regions. Since women have limited access to transportation, they experience fewer opportunities to use these advisory services. The centre's website is available at <http://asrc.am/index.php?id=2357> [in Armenian].

²⁷ The Small and Medium Entrepreneurship Development National Center (SMEDNC) is based in Yerevan and regional centres are situated in the central towns of the regions. Since women have limited access to transportation, they experience fewer opportunities to use these services. The SMEDNC website is available at <http://www.smednc.am/en/home/>.

4. Food security and nutrition

*"Women, in most societies, have the prime role in translating available **food into nutrition security**, particularly for young children. Their ability to do this is conditioned on complementary inputs such as access to health care, water, energy, their own human capital, the environment they live in including sanitation and the competing demands on their time. Individuals may live in poor health environments, with poor hygiene and sanitation, which results in frequent ill health and compromised nutritional outcomes despite sufficient food. Infants and very young children may have mothers who are so time constrained, particularly at peak times in the agricultural calendar, they are unable to feed a child an appropriate diversified diet as often as necessary due to the small stomachs of very young children and high nutrient needs."*

37th session of the Committee on World Food Security
(CFS, 2011, p. 2)

Evidence shows that while food availability is necessary for nutrition security, it is not sufficient. For example, the World Bank (2006) observes that in relation to any given level of food availability, child underweight rates can be as low as 2 to 10 percent and as high as 40 to 70 percent. Furthermore, while poverty can limit nutritional improvements, evidence indicates that we do not have to wait for poverty reduction to achieve some nutritional improvement. It has been documented that children in poorer households headed by women can have better nutritional outcomes than children in male-headed households, and that when women are empowered, the nutrition of the whole family improves (Kennedy & Peters, 1992).

Gender-based inequalities in labour allocation, resource access, ownership, and control in the household economy have a direct impact on the health of the whole household. The health and nutrition of the whole family also improves when there is shared and responsible parenthood from both mothers and fathers.

Ensuring food security and nutrition at household and community levels requires investing in nutrition-sensitive agriculture, ensuring women's and men's enjoyment of rights, and responsible and shared parenthood.

"Long-term investments in the role of women as full and equal citizens – through better nutrition, education, economic, social, and political empowerment – will be the only way to deliver sustainable improvements in food security and nutrition."

37th session of the Committee on World Food Security
(CFS, 2011, p. 5)

5. Gender and social status in rural Armenia

5.1 Status of rural women

5.1.1 Status of women in rural Armenia: Persisting stereotypes

Women are usually associated with child care and housework, whether they are employed outside the home or not, and men are usually seen as responsible for the economic well-being and survival of their family as the main bread winner and “head of household” (Armenian Association of Women with University Education, 2005, 2014). This is directly linked with stereotypical gender roles and has a direct impact on uneven access to resources and economic opportunities, and on women’s overwhelming workload in relation to unpaid domestic activities. This may lead to time poverty, to the limitation of women’s capabilities in engaging in gainful activities, and to the economic dependence of women.

The prevalence of sex-selective abortion and a sex ratio of 1.13 males for every female at birth²⁸, provide evidence of a preference for boys rather than girls and the lower socio-economic status of women in the Republic of Armenia (UNFPA, 2012, 2013; Das Gupta, 2015). As discussed in section 2.3.1, at the time of the finalization of this report, the Government of the Republic of Armenia had submitted a package of bills to the National Assembly to change the “Law on Human and Reproductive Health and Reproductive Rights”, as well as making amendments to the “Code on Administrative Offences”, which proposes to forbid sex-selective abortion by law.

In recent years, there has been a reversion to conservatism and the status of women has worsened (ADB, 2015). In a survey conducted in 2011, 85 percent of respondents agreed with the statement that “a man should normally be the breadwinner” and only 14 percent thought that this role should be shared equally (Caucasus Research Resource Centers - Armenia & UNDP, 2011).

The widely held expectation that women’s primary role is in the domestic sphere reinforces the perception that women lack abilities as political or business leaders, and often holds women back from pursuing available opportunities. Participants in the field research for this report discussed a common perception that women only gain sufficient social capital to start a business or run for local

Tolerance of spousal abuse in rural Armenia

Another important indicator in assessing the social status of rural women is the attitudes of women and men towards spousal abuse. Women from the lowest wealth quintile, with the lowest educational levels and from rural areas are the group most likely to accept this subordination in the form of domestic violence. In the 2010 Demographic and Health Survey* respondents were asked if it was justifiable that a husband beats his wife in the following scenarios: 1) burning the food; 2) arguing with the husband; 3) going out without telling the husband; 4) neglecting the children; and 5) refusing to have intercourse. A total of 18.2 percent of women with lower educational levels consider spousal abuse to be justified in at least one of these situations, a figure that is almost four times lower in the case of women with higher education. 13.9 percent of women from the lowest wealth quintiles, and 25.1 percent of women with five children or more also consider it justifiable in one of the abovementioned situations, a figure that is three times lower in the case of women with no children or women from the highest wealth quintiles.

Women in rural areas are more permissive of spousal abuse: 11.8 percent of women from rural areas consider this aggression to be justifiable, compared with 8 percent of women from urban areas. Moreover, in the Region of Tavush, 23 percent of women accept this type of spousal abuse.

The figures are much higher among men. 28 percent of men living in rural areas consider it justifiable, compared with 14.8 percent of men from urban areas. The percentages are also higher among men with basic or secondary education and from the lowest wealth quintiles, with more than 25 percent and 31 percent of men respectively considering this type of violence to be justifiable. 56 percent of men from the Region of Lori see this kind of behaviour as acceptable and justifiable.

*ARMSTAT, Ministry of Health & ICF International, 2012.

²⁸ After years of population decline, the Armenian government proposed a ban on the practice of sex-selective abortion. Submitted to Parliament in 2015, the bill, drafted by the Ministry of Health, explicitly bans all sex-selective abortion and, in a bid to close any loopholes, specifically prevents abortion without a doctor’s consent between the 12th and 22nd weeks of pregnancy. It is during this gestational period that a child’s sex manifests itself. Changes will also be made to the Republic of Armenia’s “Law on Human Reproductive Health and Reproductive Rights” and the Republic of Armenia’s “Code of Administrative Offences” (see for example, ARMENPRESS, 2016).

office, for example, when they are in their late 40s and 50s (that is, after raising children). Several interviewees and focus group participants noted that women often have innovative and “good ideas”, but, given their role and status, it is men who put them into action and frequently take the credit for themselves.

5.1.2 Status of women in rural Armenia: Access to decision-making

The abovementioned stereotypes and strong gender-based distribution of tasks and responsibilities have a direct impact on rural women’s status. In order to assess women’s status in the Republic of Armenia, the 2010 ADHS collected information on women’s decision-making autonomy (ARMSTAT, Ministry of Health & ICF International, 2012). For this, the ADHS assessed currently married women’s participation in three different types of decisions: on their own health care, on making major household purchases, and on visits to the women’s families, friends or relatives. Around 18 percent of women with basic education surveyed during the 2010 Demographic and Health Survey affirmed that their earnings and those of their husbands were controlled by their husbands. Moreover, women in urban areas were three times more likely to decide about their earnings compared with women from rural areas (34 and 11 percent of women respectively).

Generally, few women hold the role of decision-maker in the family in relation to property, financial assets and their management. Decision-making power at household level also depends on the importance of the issue and how significantly it affects the family budget, with women having greater involvement in smaller decisions (USAID, 2010).

When it comes to decision-making at community level, men are generally the main decision-makers. Men enjoy full mobility in contrast to women (see section 3.6 on mobility), and are socially expected to engage in public life. Conversely, women’s voices are seldom present in local, community-level decision-making, and women are very rarely elected as members of community councils. The results of the 2012 elections for local self-governance bodies demonstrate the low level of women’s participation: there were only 43 women (or 3.5 percent) among 1 237 candidates running for the position of Head in 638 rural communities, and an even smaller percentage of women (less than 2 percent) were elected to that position. Women account for 8.6 percent of elected members of local Councils (Armenian Association of Women with University Education, 2014, p. 17).

While gender roles are quite rigid in Armenia, there is significant variation within regions, and some marzes (provinces) appear to be more socially conservative than others in relation to gender roles and women’s status (USAID, 2010). Nevertheless, the perception of men as “heads of household” and as principal decision-makers and leaders in society is pervasive, and affects women’s access to political positions and overall participation in public life. The influence of traditional roles shapes women’s self-confidence and social perceptions of what is appropriate, as well as the difficulties they may face in being taken seriously as leaders and decision-makers by others.

5.2 Community work in support of rural women’s empowerment

While a range of governmental bodies, UN agencies, international donors and NGOs provide support to rural women to facilitate social and economic empowerment, there are also a number of local NGOs and associations who carry out vital work in this area. An overview of these organizations is provided below, along with the relevant websites.

The Center for Agribusiness and Rural Development (CARD)²⁹ was established as a local Armenian foundation in April 2005, as a follow up to the US Department of Agriculture’s 13-year Marketing Assistance Program (USDA-MAP). CARD has three main departments: Agribusiness and Marketing; Rural Development; and Special Projects. CARD’s projects include the establishment

²⁹ Available at <http://card.am/>.

of milk marketing associations and goat's cheese production units, both of which are very relevant to rural women. There is a strong focus on technical assistance and capacity building, particularly in new product development and marketing, and they have established the Armenian Rural Youth and Gender Development Program with more than 130 clubs located in every region of Armenia. Empowerment of women and youth is one of their declared objectives, and they offer a range of related activities across the country, including local clubs and a membership network.

Heifer Armenia³⁰ is a national organization founded by Heifer International, which has been implementing smallholder agricultural development projects in the South Caucasus since 1999. Heifer Armenia's projects, including Milk for Better Livelihoods, CARMAC (Community Agricultural Resource Management and Competitiveness) Project and Milk for Money, focus on enhancing smallholder farmer livelihoods. Projects focus on working along the dairy value chain through the promotion of systematic improvements in animal and milk production, marketing and processing. By their nature, these projects are directly relevant for, and have a direct impact on, women farmers.

ICARE - The International Center for Agribusiness Research and Education Foundation³¹ is an Armenian NGO established in 2005 by Texas A&M University. It administers the Agribusiness Teaching Center (ATC) within the Armenian National Agrarian University (ANAU). ICARE has been involved in a project on gender issues, and in 2006, they conducted research on "Causality analysis of rural women's participation within the federation of agricultural associations". While they do not appear to have a specific focus on gender in their activities, they do conduct extensive research on agriculture which is relevant to FAO. They could perhaps be encouraged to focus more on issues of relevance to rural women, and on gender dimensions in their agriculture training and education courses and practice.

Armenian Young Women's Association (AYWA) is an NGO with the overall goal of strengthening the role of young women in all aspects of Armenian society. AYWA work includes: the EU funded project on "Social and Economic Empowerment of Women in Armenia" aimed at developing women's entrepreneurship in five communities in Lori region; and the "Maximising the social and economic impact of migration for better future in Armenia" and "Joint Efforts for Development" projects funded by USAID and aimed at building the capacities of rural women gathering and selling herbs and berries in Lori region.

The Armenian Women for Health and Healthy Environment (AWHHE) NGO's primary focus is the human right to live in a healthy environment. AWHHE activities are related to the management of environmental resources, and the impact of pollution, climate change and other environmental stressors on human health, as well promoting a healthy lifestyle. A strong element in their work is a focus on the role of women as agents of change as well as victims of environmental degradation, and because AWHHE link in with Women's Resource Centres and work directly with rural women, there could be possibilities for collaboration.

The Small Farmers' Association of Kapan (SFAK) is a local NGO operating in Syunik region. The organization supports rural women through capacity building, awareness raising and other activities related to rural / farmer women's empowerment.

SHEN³² NGO aims to promote the social and economic development and empowerment of remote and vulnerable communities. SHEN has significant experience in addressing the gender dimensions of agricultural livelihoods in rural Armenia and implements projects in almost all marzes of Armenia with a minimum 30 percent involvement of women beneficiaries.

Syunik Women's Resource Centers' Network (SWRCN)³³ unites Women's Resource Centres based in Meghri, Kapan and Goris. It aims to empower women through cooperation and civic engagement, and via the promotion of business women's competitiveness at national, regional and local levels. The Network was established with OSCE support and is currently self-managed.

³⁰ Available at <http://www.heifer.org>.

³¹ Available at <https://www.icare.am/icare/>.

³² Available at <http://www.shen.am/>.

³³ Available at <http://www.syunikwrc.net/gpages.php?id=5>.

“Pro-Media Gender” NGO unites journalists of print and electronic media, gender experts and academic staff specializing in the fields of gender journalism, women’s empowerment and gender mainstreaming. Experts within the NGO have experience in conducting training for journalists and organizing educational courses and vocational training in the fields of investigative, political and gender journalism. Staff also have the necessary skills, experience and know-how for conducting monitoring and other research. Between 2011 and 2015, the NGO conducted research on gender issues in agriculture, including: *Gender Mainstreaming of 2012-2015 RA Tavush Marz Socio-Economic Development Program*; *“The role and potential of women in agricultural value chain”* baseline study; a Policy Brief on *Improving Gender Mainstreaming of Agricultural Area Development Strategies*; a Manual on *Gender Mainstreaming of the Socio-Economic Development Programs*; and the *Gender Mainstreaming of RA Rural and Agricultural Sustainable Development Strategy for 2015-2025*. Between 2012 and 2015, the NGO conducted the *“Empower Rural Women – End Hunger and Poverty”* campaign on the WomenNet.am website³⁴ with more than 80 materials, and the *“Women and Healthy Nutrition”* campaign³⁵ with more than 40 materials. Between 2007 and 2015 they developed more than ten issues of the *“Woman and Politics”* newspaper dedicated to rural women’s empowerment and published the Collection of Success Stories, *“Recognition and Valuing the Role of Rural Women”*.

The Republic of Armenia Ministry of Agriculture’s Department of Science, Education and Consultancy carries out extensive agricultural research. Consultancy services, including training, field demonstrations, mass media products and marketing information, are provided to farmers through ten Marz Agricultural Support Centres (MASCs) established in 2000. The MASCs have village agents providing support in 916 communities throughout the country. The MASCs receive technical assistance from the Republican Centre for Agricultural Support, the Armenian State Agrarian University (ASAU), specialist agro-science centres, and regional agricultural state colleges. The Ministry of Agriculture established seven agricultural research organizations, operating as State Non-Commercial Organizations, which also provide extension services (introducing new technologies in horticulture and livestock production and importing new varieties of crops and breeds).

Agricultural Alliance was founded in 2011. It brings together 14 local and international organizations which combine their efforts and experience to solve existing problems in the field of agriculture. The main objectives are to: uncover and solve current problems in agriculture; promote the consumption of local agricultural production; protect the rights of smallholder farmers; undertake steps to improve the legislative framework of the agricultural sector; and create effective mechanisms for the development of the sector. In 2013, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Ministry of Agriculture and Agricultural Alliance. This aimed to provide a framework for cooperation and initiate joined-up steps towards solving the problems in agriculture. Agricultural Alliance has developed and published several Policy Papers, which have had positive impacts on bringing about changes in the field, especially in relation to the loan policy, legislative amendments affecting agricultural cooperatives and gender mainstreaming of national policies. In 2014, within the framework of Alliance activities, and in cooperation with Pro-Media Gender NGO, the gender mainstreaming of the draft Strategy for Sustainable Agricultural and Rural Development for 2015–2025 was conducted.

³⁴ Available at www.WomenNet.am.

³⁵ Available at http://womennet.am/?s=&search_404=1.

6. Conclusions and recommendations

6.1 Summary of findings and conclusions

/// Main gender inequalities in agriculture and rural development:

1. There is a gap between legislation and implementation

- Despite efforts to reduce gender inequalities by the government in the last two decades, a gap between legislation and implementation exists.
- Solid interlinkages between the Gender Action Plan and the Action Plans and Policies on agriculture and rural development are still needed.
- Gender inequalities are still socially accepted or tolerated, especially in rural areas where gender inequalities are more entrenched, which makes it more difficult to implement policies on gender equality.
 - Gender statistics in the agricultural sector need to be improved considerably, in line with CEDAW's concluding observations in the combined third and fourth periodic reports on Armenia (CEDAW Committee, 2009).

2. Women are overrepresented in informal employment, unpaid work in family farming, and in domestic and reproductive activities

- Approximately 34.8 percent of employed people are involved in agriculture (ARMSTAT, 2015b, p. 61), of whom almost 56 percent are women.
- The share of women engaged in informal employment in agriculture is 82.1 percent, compared with 60.8 percent of male informal workers (ARMSTAT, 2015b). In terms of informal employment, men account for more than 80 percent of employers, while women represent 83 percent of the so-called "others" (ARMSTAT, 2015c). This may be related to the overrepresentation of women as contributing family workers in family farming.
- There is strong *vertical* and *horizontal* segregation in the labour market, which results in a significant gender pay gap: women's average wages are approximately 65.9 percent of men's average wages (ARMSTAT, 2015b).
- The high rate of male long-term labour migration increases the prevalence of women headed households, and 27.2 percent of rural households are headed by women (ARMSTAT, 2015a). Female-headed households are slightly more likely to be in extreme poverty than male-headed households. While this is partly because of the more limited range of income opportunities for women in rural areas and the gender pay gap, it is mainly because female-headed households tend to be single-headed households, which limits the number of working-age persons who can contribute to income generation in the family.
- Rural women working informally on family farms do not receive any compensation as defined by the Labour Code, such as sick leave and child care allowances, because they are considered to be either self-employed or economically inactive. In rural communities, two-thirds of employed women are not remunerated with cash earnings when they are self-employed (Yerevan State University, 2015).
- In family farming, a rigid distribution of tasks persists: men tend to be more involved in capital-intensive tasks, involving a greater amount of machinery and technology, and in tasks that are better paid. This distribution of activities results in women's limited access to, and control over, agricultural assets and decision-making.

3. Women have unsatisfactory access to technical knowledge on agriculture, and face barriers to accessing information, extension services and training

- Women's low levels of agricultural education mean that they are far less likely to hold decision-making and management positions in agricultural spheres. Therefore, women's voices in and knowledge about agriculture are missing in policy development. This also constrains innovation in the value chain, which is subsequently reflected across multiple dimensions in food security and nutrition.
- Although women are more likely to enter postgraduate and higher professional education, they are less likely to obtain an academic degree (ARMSTAT, 2015c). For example, the World Economic Forum (2015) found that women account for only 28 percent of PHD graduates. There is also horizontal segregation at university level. Males outnumber females in state and non-state higher educational institutions in the agro-food sector by 70 to 30 percent, and only 38 percent of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) graduates are women (WEF, 2015).
- Women's participation in training, and knowledge and information sharing, in agriculture and rural development is low. The reasons for their low participation in extension services' training include:
 - Male-dominated channels of communication that control the flow of information and fail to reach and mobilize women farmers;
 - The identification of men as "heads of households and holdings": as a result, women tend to be seen as "wives of farmers" instead of farmers in their own right;
 - Stereotypical linkages between machinery, technology and men;
 - Land registered in the name of men as "heads of households";
 - Women's reduced self-confidence in areas outside those that are socially attributed to them based on gender roles and stereotypes;
 - The location of training and meetings: women have limited access to means of transportation, some locations discourage women's attendance and some women may be expected to ask for permission from their husbands to attend.

4. Infrastructure has a direct impact on time use

- Women are the major users of water in households, because they undertake the domestic activities that are linked with female gender roles. Therefore, they are severely affected by water restrictions (ADB, 2015). When there is no centralized water supply, women are also responsible for fetching water (ADB, 2015), which adds an extra burden to their workload.
- Infrastructural development and the modernization of households is lower in rural areas. Rural households have less access to labour-saving technologies such as washing machines, dishwashers and other domestic appliances, as well as lower access to transportation and restricted mobility.
- This has a direct impact on rural women's workload, since domestic activities are stereotypically linked with female gender roles. Research shows that rural women spend 6 hours 6 minutes per day, from Monday to Sunday, on their domestic workload, while urban women spend 4 hours and 53 minutes and rural men spend 2 hours and 37 minutes (ARMSTAT, 2015c).

5. Most of the land is registered and managed by men and women's *de facto* enjoyment of their ownership rights over land is hindered

- Women's limited access to land ownership is explained by:
 - *Registry practices*: Even though land was provided to citizens regardless of their sex, the actual distribution and registration of land was carried out by those identified as "heads of the households".

- *Patrilocal marriages:* Patrilocal marriages, which are more common in rural areas, are those in which brides go to live with their husbands' families. Within this traditional form of marriage, women usually do not claim their ownership rights over land either within their own families or within their new step-families, because of the fear that this might be seen as confrontational.
- *Inheritance practices:* There is a preference for giving land to male descendants, especially in the context of patrilocal marriages where sons usually remain in the household and are expected to manage the family holding.
- *A lack of knowledge about women's rights over land among rural populations, land professionals and civil servants.*
- Women's limited *de facto* enjoyment of their ownership rights over land has direct implications for their access to: decision-making on the use of the land; irrigation and extension services; and collateral for credit and entrepreneurship.
- No sex-disaggregated data on land registration are currently available. However, only 26.5 percent of rural households are headed by women (ARMSTAT, 2015c).

6. Women have limited access to credit and entrepreneurship, markets, mobility and agricultural inputs

- Women's limited access to, and control over, equipment and transportation constrains their income earning opportunities and their access to markets.
- The city and large markets are stereotypically regarded as "male territory".
- Other obstacles that women have to overcome before they go into business include: feelings of uncertainty and risk aversion; limited self-confidence in areas that are not socially or stereotypically attributed to women; a lack of business contacts; and entrenched and perpetuated stereotypes about women's roles and their participation in the economy, and in business in particular.
- Material barriers to engaging in entrepreneurship include: difficulties in obtaining loans; limited access to monetary funds and property for collateral; burdensome interest rates; an unfavourable business environment; mobility constraints; limited access to large markets; and the challenges of making informal payments to male officials to facilitate business, including a lack of economic resources and the gendered dimensions of social interaction and networking (USAID, 2010).
- Limited access to productive resources is a serious constraint for rural women who wish to engage in agricultural entrepreneurship or farm management. For instance, rural women have little or no direct access to farm equipment such as tractors and combine harvesters. Machinery is stereotypically linked with male gender roles (ACDI/VOCA, 2011). Moreover, in rural areas, more than 95 percent of car owners, and 100 percent of agricultural machinery operators in the marzes, are men (ACDI/VOCA, 2011).
- Dealing with providers and accessing large markets outside the villages are also activities that are associated with male gender roles.

7. Food security and nutrition have a gender dimension

- Research shows that children in poorer households headed by women can have better nutritional outcomes than children living in male-headed households, and that when women are empowered, the nutrition of the whole family improves (Kennedy & Peters, 1992).
- Gender-based inequalities in labour allocation and resource access, ownership and control in the household economy have a direct impact on the health of the whole household. Moreover, the health and nutrition of the whole family improves when there is shared and responsible parenthood by both mothers and fathers.

8. Women from rural areas have a lower social status than men and face persistent gender stereotypes

- Women are usually associated with child care and housework, whether they are employed outside the home or not, and men are usually seen as responsible for the economic well-being and survival of their families in their role as the main bread winner and "head of household" (Armenian Association of Women with University Education, 2005, 2014). This is directly linked

with stereotypical gender roles and has a direct impact on uneven access to resources and economic opportunities, and on women's overwhelming workload in relation to unpaid domestic activities. This may result in time poverty, the limitation of women's capabilities in engaging in gainful activities, the reduction of women's self-confidence in areas that are not stereotypically attributed to them, and the economic dependence of women.

- With a sex ratio at birth of 1.13 males for every female, and 27.5 induced abortions per 100 live births and stillbirths at birth³⁶, sex-selective abortion is still prevalent in Armenia. This is further evidence for the preference of boys over girls (UNFPA, 2012, 2013; Das Gupta, 2015) and the lower status of women in society.
- Patrilocal marriages are another possible reason for the preference of sons over daughters.
- An additional indicator of the status of women in society is control over their own earnings. Women in urban areas are three times more likely to make decisions about their earnings than women from rural areas (34 and 11 percent of women respectively, ARMSTAT, Ministry of Health and ICF International, 2012).
- In relation to women's voice, the results of the 2012 elections in local self-governance bodies demonstrate the low level of women's access to political power: there were only 43 women (or 3.5 percent) out of 1 237 candidates running for the position of "Head" in 638 rural communities; and less than two percent of the women candidates were elected to this position. Furthermore, women account for only 8.6 percent of members of elected local Councils (Armenian Association of Women with University Education, 2014, p. 17).
- Another important indicator in assessing the social status of rural women is the attitude of women and men towards spousal abuse. Women from the lowest wealth quintile, with the lowest educational levels and from rural areas are the most likely to accept this subordination in the form of domestic violence: 11.8 percent of women and 28 percent of men from rural areas consider this aggression justifiable in some cases.
- The identification and even registration of men as "heads of households" and representatives of the families (for example, in land registration), also contributes to the maintenance of the uneven and hierarchical status of women and men in rural areas.

6.2 Recommendations

These recommendations are addressed to all policy-makers, programme and project formulators, extension service providers and project implementers. They build upon the main gender inequalities identified in agriculture and rural development, and include the following:

6.2.1 What FAO can do:

1. On the gap between legislation and implementation:

- Support the production of knowledge generation, with specific research in fisheries, forestry, local farmers' cooperation and women's real contribution to GDP, to ensure more targeted and effective policies.
- Ensure women's participation in all decision-making processes as farmers and individuals in their own right. Include stakeholders representing the interests of women farmers and women living in rural areas in the formulation of policies, national action plans and national strategies.
- Provide capacity development support to the government and staff on gender sensitization and mainstreaming, both at national and regional levels in the context of the current decentralization process, including gender training for extension services and staff of Agricultural Technical Transfer Centres.
- Engage with ARMSTAT and the MoA to advance the production of rural-urban gender statistics.

³⁶ After years of population decline, the Armenian government proposed a ban on the practice of sex-selective abortion. Submitted to Parliament in 2015, the bill, drafted by the Ministry of Health, explicitly bans all sex-selective abortion and, in a bid to close any loopholes, specifically prevents abortion without a doctor's consent between the 12th and 22nd weeks of pregnancy. It is during this gestational period that a child's sex manifests itself. Changes will also be made to the Republic of Armenia's "Law on Human Reproductive Health and Reproductive Rights" and the Republic of Armenia's "Code of Administrative Offences" (see for example, ARMENPRESS, 2016).

2. **On women's unsatisfactory access to technical knowledge on agriculture, including the barriers to accessing information, extension services and training:**
 - Scrutinise the existing communication channels used by the MoA, extension services and FAO to communicate with farmers. Monitor and ensure that information about extension services and FAO project activities reach women. Take proactive measures to address barriers and use innovative methods to enable women's access to information, including use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).
 - Identify local women leaders who can mobilize and inform female members of the community when implementing projects.
 - Support the capacity development of extension services to provide better support to rural women, especially in the context of innovation, e-agriculture and single-window services.
 - Dedicate particular attention to the geographical and spatial location of training and meetings including:
 - Avoiding meeting places where the presence of women may be questioned;
 - Ensuring that women have access to transportation, using a location that is accessible for both women and men and providing transportation where necessary;
 - Providing kindergartens where needed and agreeing the location of training and meetings with women and men farmers.
3. **On women's overrepresentation in informal employment, unpaid work in family farming, and in domestic activities:**
 - Support the MoA and other relevant partners to address the levels of informal employment, particularly in family farming, and to increase access to social protection schemes for rural women and men.
 - Support income diversification and the creation of off-farm employment for women and men.
 - Explore ways of reducing vertical and horizontal labour segregation.
 - Develop and implement concrete measures to target women in rural areas, particularly girls and young women, to enhance their access to, and participation in, vocational education, with a focus on agricultural and technical studies.
4. **On infrastructure and time use:**
 - Target the improvement of infrastructure at community and household levels in rural areas as key to rural development and women's empowerment.
 - Support the generation of evidence and knowledge on ways of reducing gender inequalities in unpaid activities, and access to resources.
5. **On the hindrance of women's *de facto* enjoyment of their ownership rights over land:**
 - Support the implementation of FAO's *Voluntary Guidelines on Land Tenure* (FAO, 2012b), along with FAO's Technical Guide *Governing Land for Women and Men* (FAO, 2013b).
 - Take the necessary measures during project implementation to ensure that women's access to land and land rights are improved and most importantly, not hindered.
 - Provide accessible information on land rights to women in rural areas through FAO projects and activities.
 - Provide support and guidance to the MoA, and related bodies, to reduce burdens on access to land, including the promotion of the collection of sex-disaggregated data on access to land in compliance with article 14 of CEDAW.
6. **On women's limited access to credit, entrepreneurship, markets, mobility and agricultural inputs:**

- Provide support to women's associations to enhance the market-orientation of their economic activities. Wherever possible, consider specific initiatives and activities that can facilitate women's access to markets and decision-making. This could include: training for women in rural communities to improve their skills to apply for credit; and awareness raising for policy-makers to introduce measures that take into account rural women's needs.
- Use these training opportunities and activities to further develop women's skills, thereby enhancing their self-confidence and capabilities in marketing and business management.
- Conduct capacity building activities for extensionists to ensure that they are better equipped to address the challenges that women face in accessing markets, and can offer more support to women engaging in market activities.
- Wherever possible, consider specific initiatives and activities, both upstream and downstream, to facilitate women's access to markets and decision-making and to encourage rural women's access to transportation, such as supporting women to obtain driving licences, among others.

7. On food security and nutrition:

- Support the reduction of gender-based inequalities as a means of improving food security and the nutrition of the whole household. The reduction of gender inequalities will enable: (i) women to have more control over household resources, which has a direct impact on the improvement of the nutrition of the whole household (Kennedy & Peters, 1992); and (ii) shared responsible parenthood, which increases the chances of both spouses engaging in economic activities and improving the well-being of the whole household.

8. On the low status of women in rural areas and persisting gender stereotypes:

- Engage women in capacity development activities that enhance their social and personal skills (for example, public speaking or dealing with providers) throughout all FAO, UN and MoA interventions.
- Ensure that extension services and local information centres take a proactive approach to encourage women to benefit from their services and to inform them about their rights.
- Design and implement advocacy campaigns in rural areas and in the national media, to: (i) establish a more accurate and positive depiction of the role and profile of rural women; (ii) reduce social resistance to gender equality; and (iii) establish consensus on the benefits of implementing gender-sensitive projects.
- Ensure that men are also targeted and involved in gender equality activities.

6.2.2 What the MoA and other governmental bodies can do:

1. On the gap between legislation and implementation:

- Ensure that all agricultural policies, programmes and projects are developed using gender analysis and comply with national obligations under CEDAW article 14, European Union standards and the Sustainable Development Goals on mainstreaming gender equality in agriculture. Use the CEDAW Guidance note 34 on compliance with article 14 on rural women for all policy, programmatic and project work (CEDAW, 2016).
- Establish better linkages between the Gender Action Plan and the Action Plans and Policies on agriculture and rural development.
- Introduce Gender Responsive Budgeting to ensure the implementation of gender mainstreaming and gender components in strategies and programmes.
- Support and enforce the mandatory collection and use of sex-disaggregated data in line with international standards, the SDGs and CEDAW, including the development and implementation of gender indicators in all policies, programmes and policies for monitoring and evaluation. Improve gender statistics for agricultural areas, particularly at regional (marz) and rural levels.

- Include stakeholders representing the interests of women farmers and women living in rural areas in the formulation of policies, national action plans and national strategies.
- 2. On women's unsatisfactory access to technical knowledge about agriculture, including the barriers to accessing information, extension services and training:**
- Take proactive action at national, regional and local levels to enhance female students' interests in agricultural studies, making efforts to break the stereotypical divide of "women's and men's areas of expertise".
 - Increase the offer of vocational education in rural areas and ensure that both women and men are equally encouraged and able to benefit.
 - Increase the number of professional women employed in extension services to support women farmers' engagement in learning and agricultural innovation.
 - Scrutinise the existing communication channels used by the MoA, extension services and FAO to communicate with farmers. Monitor and ensure that information about extension services and FAO project activities reach women. Take proactive measures to address barriers and use innovative methods to enable women's access to information, including use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).
 - Identify local women leaders who can mobilize and inform female members of the community when implementing policies and services.
 - Equip the agricultural extension system, structures and staff with the required resources (for example, time, equipment and transportation) to ensure effective outreach to women.
 - Dedicate particular attention to the geographical and spatial location of training and meetings of extension services and local institutions, including:
 - Avoiding meeting places where the presence of women may be questioned;
 - Ensuring that women have access to transportation, using a location that is accessible for both women and men and providing transportation where necessary;
 - Providing kindergartens where needed and agreeing the location of training and meetings with women and men farmers.
- 3. On women's overrepresentation in informal employment, unpaid work in family farming and in domestic activities:**
- Address levels of informal employment, particularly in family farming, to increase access to social protection schemes for rural women and men.
 - Support income diversification and the creation of off-farm employment for women and men.
 - Increase the number of kindergarten services in rural areas. This would simultaneously support women's empowerment and strengthen agricultural productivity and rural development.
 - Develop and implement concrete measures to target women in rural areas, particularly girls and young women, to enhance their access to, and participation in, vocational education, with a focus on agricultural and technical studies.
- 4. On infrastructure and time use:**
- Design and implement gender advocacy campaigns in rural areas and in the media, to eliminate existing gender stereotypes and social resistance to gender equality and promote responsible fatherhood. The reduction of gender stereotyping will help to dilute the stereotypical and implicit association between "women's activities" and domestic activities.
 - Facilitate the improvement of community and household infrastructure in rural areas to enhance rural development and women's empowerment.
 - Include measures in policies, programmes and projects for improving women's access to agricultural assets, including land, markets, pesticides, seeds, machinery and equipment through local information centres. The creation of dedicated spaces within local information centres to provide specific support to women farmers should be considered.

5. On the hindrance of women's *de facto* enjoyment of their ownership rights over land:

- Conduct reforms of the law and regulations to ensure that all of those who own land have their rights registered.
- Enforce co-registration of ownership by all owners.
- Distribute land on an individual basis and avoid distribution by household or family.
- Implement FAO's *Voluntary Guidelines on Land Tenure* (FAO, 2012b) along with FAO's Technical Guide *Governing Land for Women and Men* (FAO, 2013b).
- Consider patrilocal marriage practices, and take the necessary legal and administrative measures to ensure that women do not lose ownership of land in the event of marriage.
- Provide accessible information on land rights to women in rural areas through local information centres.
- Maintain a sex-disaggregated record of land ownership.

6. On women's limited access to credit, entrepreneurship, markets, mobility and agricultural inputs:

- Encourage and facilitate women's membership of cooperatives and farmer groups, and the establishment of women's agricultural cooperatives where appropriate.
- Provide support to women's associations to enhance the market-orientation of their economic activities. Wherever possible, consider specific initiatives and activities to facilitate women's access to markets and decision-making. This could include: training for women in rural communities to improve their skills in applying for credit; and awareness raising for policy-makers to introduce measures that take into account rural women's needs.
- Use these training opportunities and activities to further develop women's personal and social skills, thereby enhancing their self-confidence and capabilities in market bargaining and related skills.
- Conduct capacity building activities for extensionists so that they are better equipped to address the challenges that women face in accessing markets, and can offer more support to women in engaging in market activities.
- Whenever possible, consider specific initiatives and activities, both upstream and downstream, to facilitate women's access to markets and decision-making, and to encourage rural women's access to transportation, such as supporting women to obtain driving licences, among others.

7. On food security and nutrition:

- Support the reduction of gender-based inequalities as a means of improving food security and the nutrition of the whole household. The reduction of gender inequalities will ensure: (i) that women have more control over household resources, which has a direct impact on the improvement of the nutrition of the whole household (Kennedy & Peters, 1992); and (ii) shared responsible parenthood, which increases the chances of both spouses engaging in economic activities and improving the well-being of the whole household.

8. On the status of women in rural areas and persisting gender stereotypes:

- Engage women in capacity development activities that enhance their social and personal skills (for example, public speaking or dealing with providers) throughout all FAO, UN and MoA interventions.
- Ensure that extension services and local information centres take a proactive approach to encourage women to benefit from their services and to inform them about their rights.
- Design and implement advocacy campaigns in rural areas³⁷ and in the national media to: (i) establish a more accurate and positive depiction of the role and profile of rural women; (ii) reduce social resistance to gender equality; and (iii) establish consensus on the benefits of implementing gender-sensitive projects.
- Ensure that men are also targeted and involved in gender equality activities, including initiatives such as the HeforShe campaign.

³⁷ Increasing the coverage of the HeforShe campaign is advised.

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Annex 2. List of interviewees and their organizations

	Name	Organization, position
1	Hayk Galstyan	MoTA, Head of TA and Development Department
2	Sose Amirkhanyan	FAO, GFP
3	Heriknaz Lamberyan	MoA, GFP
4	Jemma Hasratyan	Association of Women with University Education, Head
5	Mkrtich Ayvazyan	SDA, NGO, Head
6	Vardan Torchyan	Component leader
7	Karen Torosyan	PIU of MoA, RESCAD project, Component Leader
8	Artur Ayzov	UNICEF, GFP
9	Grigor Gjurjyan	ADB, Gender survey specialist
10	Gohar Musayelyan	ADB, GFP
11	Armenuhi Tanashyan	MoLSI, GFP
12	Anna Karapetyan	CARD, NGO, GFP
13	Marietta Manucharyan	"Women of Utiq" NGO, Berd town, Tavush marz, Head
14	Lilit Asatryan	Armenian Young Women's Association (AWAY), Head
15	Rima Ter-Minasyan	Republican Women Council NGO, Deputy Chairperson
16	Aida Topuzyan	Republican Women Council NGO, Chairperson
17	Anahit Ghazanchyan	Heifer Armenia, Head
18	Elena Manvelyan	Armenian Women for Health and Healthy Environment NGO, Project manager
19	Lusine Nalbandyan	Agroecologist
20	Aida Iskoyan	"Environmental Public Advocacy Center" NGO, Head
21	Gagik Makaryan	Republican Union of Employers of Armenia, Chairman
22	Vahan Simonyan	Executive Director
23	Qnarik Malkhasyan	Support to SME Women Entrepreneurship NGO, Head
24	Susanna Meglumyan	The International Center for Agribusiness Research and Education (ICARE) Foundation, Deputy Head
25	Vahan Arakelyan	"Spitak-farmer" farmers' association, Chairman
26	Ruben Petrosyan	"Hayantar" SNCO of the Ministry of Agriculture, Deputy Head
27	Nvard Janmuradyan	Shen NGO, Agriculture projects manager
28	Nazeli Vardanyan	Federation of Farmer Associations, Executive Director
29	Ruzanna Torozyan	"Syunik Women's Resource Centres Network" NGO, Head
30	Participants of focus groups conducted in the Syunik and Tavush regions	

This product is a working document that aims to inform FAO staff and national counterparts on the main gender issues in agriculture and rural development in Armenia: it is meant to be regularly updated.

For any comment, suggestion or update, please contact:

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