

CGIAR Generating Evidence and New Directions for Equitable Results (GENDER) Platform

Methods Module WEAI-Nutrition Learning Grants

RESEARCH GRANTS TO INTEGRATE WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND
NUTRITION METHODS AND TOOLS IN CGIAR RESEARCH

Call for Applications

** In developing this grant funding call and selection process we relied heavily on resources and protocols designed and used by the Innovative Methods and Metrics for Agriculture and Nutrition Actions (IMMANA) programme, which is led by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM), in partnership with Tufts University and the University of Sheffield, and funded by UK Aid from the UK government and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The CGIAR GENDER Platform is also grateful for the support of CGIAR Trust Fund Contributors (<https://www.cgiar.org/funders/>) and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for this specific grant.*



1. Background

The CGIAR Generating Evidence and New Directions for Equitable Results (GENDER) Platform aims to catalyze research on gender in agriculture to achieve more equitable, sustainable, productive, and climate-resilient food systems. The GENDER Platform, hosted by the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), encompasses all CGIAR Research Centers and engages a multitude of partners. GENDER Platform activities will be carried out within 3 modules—Evidence, Methods, and Alliances—working together to develop and promote high-quality evidence, knowledge, methods, tools and alliances around gender that foster transformational change for inclusive and equitable food systems within planetary boundaries.

The Methods Module of the GENDER Platform aims to co-create, consolidate, and share cutting-edge methods and tools to strengthen and facilitate high-quality gender research across key and emerging CGIAR research areas. The module is organized under two work packages (WPs): WP1 will identify priority areas for gender methods research, develop standards for quality gender research, and curate a portfolio of state-of-the-art methods and tools to support communities of practice around these research areas. WP2 will develop and implement research projects on innovative methods to further build this state-of-the-art portfolio.

The Methods Module will also be responsible for implementing the following components of the Integration body of work under the GENDER Platform transition grant funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation:

- Women's Empowerment Indicators: Scaling methodologically sound and rigorously validated [Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index \(WEAI\)](#) indicators across One CGIAR and the wider research ecosystem to integrate gender more effectively into One CGIAR and partners' investment portfolios.
- Measuring and enhancing the agency and decision-making power of women and girls in agriculture for improved nutrition and health.

The WEAI-Nutrition Learning Grants are designed to address **both** bodies of work. It provides funding and technical support to enable researchers to measure agency and decision-making power of women and girls in gender-agriculture-nutrition research by using rigorous WEAI and nutrition methods and tools.

2. Objectives and Scope

The development and growing use of the WEAI is an important milestone in measuring women's empowerment. Measuring women's empowerment in and through agriculture enables its users to uncover linkages between different aspects of women's empowerment and various outcomes that contribute to more equitable food systems. This is particularly relevant in the context of nutrition, a theme that cuts across much of the work of the CGIAR and its partners. Through these learning grants, the GENDER Platform seeks to unite multi-center strands of agriculture for nutrition research and facilitate synthesis and meta-analyses around key gender knowledge gaps by supporting collaborative research that uses rigorous methods and tools for measuring women's empowerment and nutrition impacts.



The Methods Module WEAI-Nutrition Learning Grants are aimed at strengthening capacity to use rigorous methods and tools to comparably measure women's empowerment and nutrition impacts across One CGIAR.

Examples of WEAI and nutrition methods/tools

Suite of WEAI tools

- WEAI and A-WEAI
- pro-WEAI qualitative protocols
- pro-WEAI core survey questionnaire
- pro-WEAI Health and Nutrition add on module
- pro-WEAI for Market Inclusion add on module

Nutrition

- Dietary assessment (e.g. women's dietary diversity indicators, child dietary diversity, or other dietary methods to assess dietary quality)
- Infant and young child feeding indicators
- Anthropometric measurement to assess underweight or overweight/obesity
- Measurement of maternal and/or child anemia (Hb and other biomarkers)

Our goal is to help researchers in One CGIAR and beyond to integrate gender, women's empowerment and attention to nutrition, particularly on diets, more effectively into the design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of One CGIAR and partners' investment portfolios, and build a thriving community of practice among the users of these WEAI and nutrition methods and tools.

The Methods Module will provide top-up funding for **existing or soon-to-be started projects** that incorporate at least one of the following research components:

- A **diagnostic** study that will collect and analyze data on women's empowerment and individual-level nutrition outcomes (such as children's and/or women's nutritional status) in order to improve the design of the planned project or inform possible mid-course corrections
- An **experimental or quasi-experimental** study designed to assess impacts of CGIAR interventions on women's empowerment and individual-level nutrition outcomes (such as children's and/or women's nutritional status)
- A **validation** study designed to test methods and tools that enable the measurement of women's empowerment in decisions related to nutrition for reliability and validity across contexts using a combination of mixed quantitative and qualitative methods

We invite proposals from collaborative and interdisciplinary research teams that seek to address at least one of the following key knowledge gaps (Malapit et al., 2021):

- Explicit attention to **assessing impacts on both women's empowerment and nutrition** in evaluations of agricultural programs
- Explore how **engaging men and boys** in development projects can shift the allocation of food, financial resources, and time burdens in more gender-equitable ways
- Explicit attention to **unintended consequences of development interventions on women's own nutrition, health, and empowerment**, including increased work burdens and related physical activity/energy



- expenditure (and changes in energy and nutrient needs); and the possibility of backlash from men
- Assessing empowerment and nutrition impacts of development interventions on **multiple household members, including adolescent girls and boys**

Up to four (4) proposals will be selected to receive a maximum of **USD 100,000** in top-up funding. The maximum duration for each awarded grant is 15 months with an estimated start date of 1 July 2021 and estimated completion date of 30 September 2022.

In addition to top-up grants, grantees will also receive technical support and guidance through workshops and one-on-one consultation sessions with subject matter experts on the following issues:

- Developing a project-specific theory of change linking agriculture to nutrition using the gendered pathways framework (Ruel and Alderman, 2013)
- Defining and prioritizing research questions that address the key knowledge gaps described above
- Identifying appropriate study design, indicators, methods and tools to address the proposed research questions, including nutrition indicators to use in gender- and nutrition-sensitive agricultural programs (e.g. Leroy et al., 2020)
- Training on the use and implementation of mixed-methods WEAI and nutrition tools
- Guidance on standardized methodologies for data analysis that would allow for broader comparisons

Funds will be allocated in 2021 and 2022 through GENDER Platform Program Participant Agreements (PPAs) with the respective Centers. Grant funds should be expended by 30 September 2022. Detailed timelines are set out under Section 3.3.

The Principal Investigator of each project (or alternate) will be expected to attend the annual GENDER Platform conference in 2021 (virtual) and 2022 (in person). An inception workshop and follow-up workshop for grantees will be organized alongside the GENDER conference dates in 2021 and 2022.

At the end of the grant, each project is expected to deliver the following outputs, for inclusion in the GENDER Platform resource hub:

- Final research instruments/tools produced (survey questionnaire/s, interview guides, manuals, protocols, etc.)
- Presentation at the Annual GENDER Platform Conference
- Webinar
- Blog
- Working Paper, under the GENDER Platform Working Paper Series (10,000-12,000 words)
- Brief (2-4 pages)

3. Application Process

3.1. Eligibility

Applications must be led by a CGIAR Center, and satisfy the following eligibility criteria:



- Presence of an **existing or soon-to-be started project** willing to incorporate a **diagnostic, experimental/quasi-experimental or validation** study on women's empowerment and nutrition (as described in Section 2).
- Demonstrate potential to influence and build capacity to integrate WEAI-based instruments and nutrition methods and tools in One CGIAR Initiatives and other CGIAR-led research activities after the grant is completed.
- Demonstrate strong and equitable partnerships, across the CGIAR and especially with national agricultural research systems (NARS) and other low- and middle-income country partners. Proposals must clearly show meaningful, collaborative relationships through management and scientific contributions, and capacity and learning exchange between senior and early-career researchers. The added value arising from bringing together complementary expertise and partnerships must be clearly described. All named researchers must have clearly defined roles and responsibilities.
- Demonstrate relevance to at least one of the key knowledge gaps in the nutrition field specified in Section 2.

CGIAR Centers (except IFPRI) are eligible to lead applications. All Centers (including IFPRI) are eligible to partner in multiple applications. Only one successful proposal per lead Center will be selected for funding.

There is no co-financing requirement for applications.

3.2. Eligible costs

All research costs that are attributable to the project are eligible for funding, including, for example:

- Salary costs for research staff, including data analysis
- Data collection, including piloting and enumerator training
- Standard class travel related to implementation of the proposed research and attendance at the 2022 (in-person) GENDER Platform conference (mandatory for one representative per grantee)
- Workshops
- Consultants
- Equipment and other direct supplies
- Indirect costs – Centers should use CGIAR negotiated rates

All applications will be assessed for value for money.

3.3. Proposal Submission Process and Timelines

Projects will be selected through a single-stage process, with applicants submitting full proposals plus supplemental information.

Proposals must use the template provided [here](#), which includes the following:

- A summary of the research to be carried out, its location, scope, and objectives.



- A description of the proposed diagnostic, experimental/quasi-experimental, or validation study, including specific research questions to be addressed and methods to be used.
- A description of the scientific significance of the research topic and rationale for using WEAI and nutrition methods and tools.
- A description of collaboration and partnership mechanisms.
- Plans around research uptake, capacity strengthening, and pathways to impact, including the ways in which the project will strengthen research capacity and influence the integration of gender, women's empowerment and nutrition in One CGIAR Initiatives and other CGIAR-led research activities.
- A description of the grant management structure.
- A description of key risks to the project and plans to address them including any COVID-related risks that may influence the feasibility of the project.
- A list of relevant publications and projects.
- Indicative timeline and a budget summary with estimates of each institution's costs (see Section 3.2 on eligible costs).

Successful proposals will be selected by an interdisciplinary and independent GENDER Methods Experts Panel.

Proposals must be submitted using the [template](#) provided alongside this call document.

Proposals should be submitted via email to GenderPlatform@cgiar.org with a copy to [Grecia Tibayrenc \(G.tibayrenc@cgiar.org\)](mailto:Grecia.Tibayrenc@cgiar.org) by **11:59 PM Eastern Time on Tuesday, 6 April 2021** (see below timetable). Late submissions will not be accepted.

The submission and review of proposals will follow the following timetable (subject to minor changes):

Milestones	Dates
Call announced	9 February 2021
Informational webinar	February 2021 (date TBD)
WEAI and nutrition training workshop (<i>open to all</i>)	March 2021 (date TBD)
Submission of proposals	6 April 2021
Notification of awards	24 May 2021
In-depth WEAI and nutrition training workshop (<i>open to awardees</i>) – TBD based on needs	June 2021 (date TBD)
Grants start	1 July 2021

4. Selection Process

All eligibility criteria must be met, before the proposal can be assessed further:

Eligibility criteria	Yes/No
1) Does the proposed research have an existing project where WEAI and nutrition methods and tools can be feasibly applied?	
2) Does the proposed research have potential to influence and build capacity to integrate WEAI and nutrition methods and tools in One CGIAR Initiatives and other CGIAR-led research activities after the	



grant is completed?	
3) Does the proposed research demonstrate meaningful, collaborative partnerships with any of the following: - Multiple CGIAR centers? - NARS? - Other partners in low- and middle-income countries?	
4) Are researcher roles, responsibilities, and contributions clear and complementary? - Does the team include both senior and early-career researchers?	
5) Does the proposed research address <u>at least one</u> of the key knowledge gaps in the nutrition field specified in Section 2?	

Proposals that meet all the eligibility criteria will be subject to a single blind peer-review process according to five equally-important criteria, each scored from a scale of 1 (not competitive) to 5 (outstanding):

Criteria

1. Integration of WEAI and Nutrition	1	2	3	4	5
<p><u>Diagnostic study:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there a clear justification of demand or identified need for collecting and analyzing women’s empowerment and nutrition quantitative and qualitative data to inform project design? To what extent does the proposed research address key knowledge gaps on the linkages among gender, agriculture, women’s empowerment, and nutrition? Does the proposed research use mixed methods? To what extent does the proposed research draw on multiple disciplines? <p><u>Experimental/quasi-experimental impact study:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there a clear justification of demand or identified need for assessing impacts of interventions on women’s empowerment and nutrition outcomes in the context of the project? To what extent does the proposed research address key knowledge gaps on the linkages among gender, agriculture, women’s empowerment, and nutrition? Does the proposed research use mixed methods? To what extent does the proposed research draw on multiple disciplines? <p><u>Validation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent does the proposed research present a new and creative approach to collecting, measuring, or analyzing women’s empowerment and nutrition data? Is there a clear justification of demand or identified need for the tools or methods being tested and applied? To what extent does the proposed research address key knowledge gaps on the linkages among gender, agriculture, women’s empowerment, and nutrition? Does the proposed research use mixed methods? 					



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent does the proposed research draw on multiple disciplines? 	
2. Scientific excellence	1 2 3 4 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent does the proposed research add value to existing research in the specified theme? Are the proposed research methods clearly described and appropriate for the questions to be answered? To what extent does the proposed research consider intersectionality? 	
3. Collaboration	1 2 3 4 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the proposed research reflect equitable partnerships and collaboration, including but not limited to: project governance, decision-making, work allocation, responsibilities, and resources? To what extent does the proposed research reflect interdisciplinary or multi-sectoral expertise? Does the proposed research plan to build research capacity through bringing together senior and early-career investigators? 	
4. Research uptake, capacity strengthening & pathways to impact	1 2 3 4 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there evidence of stakeholder demand and expressed interest to use the potential results and outcomes? Does the proposed research have concrete plans to disseminate lessons learned, and promote adoption and transferability of the method or tool? Does the proposed research have plans to strengthen research capacity in LMICs? 	
5. Study feasibility and value for money	1 2 3 4 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can all deliverables be completed within 15 months with the requested resources? Do the resources requested justify the anticipated deliverables and products to be contributed to the GENDER resource hub? 	

The GENDER Methods Experts Panel will assess proposals and the peer-review reports and select applications for funding. To the extent possible, the Panel will aim for portfolio balance across coverage of topics, regions/contexts, and quantitative/qualitative approaches. Only one successful proposal per lead Center will be awarded. Reviewer comments will be shared with the application decision.

5. Dissemination, Data Sharing, and Intellectual Property

Information on awarded grants will be made publicly available on the GENDER Platform website, and methods and tools developed by the project will be shared in the GENDER Platform resource hub.



Publications produced as a result of the project should be published under a suitable open access license, preferably CC version 4.0 license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which encourages unrestricted re-use and adaptation of content. Outputs should also be in line with the “CGIAR Branding Guidelines”, available at <https://library.cgiar.org/handle/10947/4373>, and any other relevant policy and/or guidelines adopted by the Platform and CGIAR and communicated in writing to the grantees. All products produced under these grants should acknowledge CGIAR Fund Donors, using the statement “This work was carried out as part of the CGIAR GENDER Platform and supported by CGIAR Trust Fund Contributors (<https://www.cgiar.org/funders/>)”.

All proposals must undergo Institutional Review Board clearance for ethics in data collection, including protection of personally identifiable data.

Data collected as a part of the project must be fully anonymized and publicly shared within 1 year of collection, or upon publication of a study in a peer-reviewed outlet.

Grantees will be expected to collaborate with the GENDER Platform and its partners on research uptake and dissemination activities, including but not limited to, presentations at seminars and conferences, webinars, trainings, workshops, blogs, briefs, and interviews.

6. References

Leroy, Jef L.; Ruel, Marie T.; and Olney, Deanna K. 2020. Measuring the impact of agriculture programs on diets and nutrition. Washington, DC: International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). <https://doi.org/10.2499/p15738coll2.133954>

Malapit H., Heckert J., Scott J., Padmaja R., & Quisumbing A. (2021, forthcoming). Chapter 5: Nutrition-sensitive agriculture for gender equality. In Pyburn, R. & A. van Eerdewijk (Ed.). *Advancing gender equality through agricultural and environmental research: past, present and future*. IFPRI, Washington, DC.

Ruel M.T., & Alderman H. (2013). Nutrition-sensitive interventions and programmes: how can they help to accelerate progress in improving maternal and child nutrition? *The Lancet*, 382(9891): 536–551.

