



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition • FSN Forum

TEMPLATE FOR SUBMISSIONS

Call for submissions No. 202 • 09.10.2024 – 27.11.2024

➤ <https://www.fao.org/fsnforum/call-submissions/community-engagement-rural-transformation-and-gender-equality>

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS:

Community engagement for inclusive rural transformation and gender equality

The objective of this call for submissions is to collect good practices, experiences, and lessons learnt on the use of community engagement for inclusive rural transformation and gender equality. The initiative, organized by the [Rural Transformation and Gender Equality Division \(ESP\)](#), seeks to gather insights from a diverse range of contributors, both within FAO and from external stakeholders. Its goal is to share knowledge, foster learning, and guide the scaling up of community engagement and community-led collective action to leave no one behind. The call builds on FAO's past efforts in this area, such as the [Community Engagement Days](#) series of webinars.¹



The call for submissions is open until 27 November 2024.

How to take part in this call for submissions:

To take part in this Call for submissions, please [register](#) to the FSN Forum, if you are not yet a member, or “sign in” to your account. Please review the **topic note** to understand the criteria we are considering for this call. If you wish to learn more about community engagement, you may refer to the [background document](#). Once you have completed this submission template, upload it in the box “Post your contribution” on the [call webpage](#), or, alternatively, send it to fsn-moderator@fao.org.

Please keep the length of submissions limited to **1,500 words** and feel also free to attach relevant supporting materials.

¹ The call for submissions is directly aligned with the thematic components of collective action within FAO's Programme Priority Areas (PPAs), specifically Better Life 1 (Gender Equality and Rural Women's Empowerment), Better Life 2 (Inclusive Rural Transformation) and Better Life 3 (Agriculture and Food Emergencies).

Template for submissions

Contact person	Name: Margherita Bavagnoli Organization/Unit: FAO/ESF Country: Italy Email address: margherita.bavagnoli@fao.org
Name/title of the good practice	
Where is the good practice taking place? (Multiple selection allowed)	<input type="checkbox"/> Europe and Central Asia <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Latin America and the Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/> North Africa and Near East <input type="checkbox"/> Sub-Saharan Africa <input type="checkbox"/> Asia and the Pacific <input type="checkbox"/> North America <input type="checkbox"/> Global
Affiliation	<input type="checkbox"/> Farmer and producer organizations <input type="checkbox"/> Trade Union <input type="checkbox"/> Informal community-based, farmer-based or self-help group <input type="checkbox"/> Research and academia <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Local/traditional authorities <input type="checkbox"/> Private Sector <input type="checkbox"/> Civil Society Organization <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Intergovernmental Organization (e.g. UN system, World Bank) <input type="checkbox"/> Resource Partner/Donor <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)
In which sector(s) and context (s) have you used this community engagement good practice? (Multiple selections allowed)	<input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Health and Sanitation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Food production in agrifood systems (please also tick the sub-categories)

	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Crop cultivation</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Fisheries and aquaculture production</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Livestock</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Forestry</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Agroforestry</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Horticulture</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Apiculture (beekeeping)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Agroecology and sustainable farming practices</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Soil and water management</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other: _____</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Post-production in agrifood systems (please also tick the sub-categories) <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Processing and value addition</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Marketing and retailing</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Transporting</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Food loss and waste</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Packaging</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Storage</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Distribution</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender Equality <input type="checkbox"/> Climate Action <input type="checkbox"/> Citizenship and Governance <input type="checkbox"/> Social Protection <input type="checkbox"/> Humanitarian and protracted crisis <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict resolution, peace and resilience <input type="checkbox"/> Digital innovation <input type="checkbox"/> Other sector (please specify) _____
Who are the financial partners supporting this good practice, if applicable?	UNSDG Fund
1. In a few sentences, summarize your community engagement good practice.	

The [Agrifood Systems Transformation Accelerator](#) (ASTA) program, led by FAO and UNIDO is working in Suriname in collaboration with ILO, and UNFPA, to transform Suriname into a leading producer and exporter of high-quality organic pineapples. ASTA Suriname, aims to equip indigenous and maroon communities of the country with the tools to sustainably produce pineapples as well as connecting communities to new markets, fostering economic development with a focus on gender equality, youth engagement, and environmental sustainability.

As part of ASTA Suriname, UNFPA focused on fostering gender equality intersecting decent employment opportunities in the communities of Para and Marowijne of the country through a culturally sensitive, intersectional, and participatory approach. By supporting their increased inclusion, via a capacity building investment in leadership, conflict resolution, business skill, gender and abuse, the program built resilience within the target group, emphasizing their agency and self-determination.

2. What **problem(s)** or **challenge(s)** does your good practice aim to address through community engagement?

- **Promoting Intersectional Gender Inclusion of Women and Youth in Leadership Roles within the Pineapple Value Chain.** ASTA Suriname is committed to advancing the intersectional inclusion of women and youth in leadership positions throughout the pineapple value chain. By actively supporting their participation, ASTA aims to create meaningful employment opportunities and foster a more equitable and diverse industry. This initiative not only empowers underrepresented groups but also enhances innovation and growth within the sector.
- **Increase access to financial support opportunities and engagement in Strategic Planning** ASTA actively facilitates access to finance and digital tools for indigenous farmers (through a loan collateral facility and a digital traceability app in local language) while ensuring that planning processes respect the cultural context of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (ITPs). By prioritizing sustainable financial support and culturally informed strategies, ASTA fosters meaningful collaborations that empower communities and promote their long-term well-being.
- **Enhancing the Visibility of Indigenous Peoples in the Value Chain Structure** ASTA works to ensuring that ITPs, particularly women, are recognized for their contributions beyond their traditional roles as farmers within the value chain. By advocating for their visibility in decision-making processes and leadership positions, we can acknowledge their vital contributions and foster a more inclusive and equitable structure that values the diverse skills and perspectives of communities.

3. Describe your **good practice** in more detail. Include the main **guiding principles**, the **desired changes or outcomes** you aim to achieve (*Theory of Change*), and the **key phases of implementation**.

Methodology based on TOC

Using a multisector approach different perspectives were used to reach ITPs communities foremost women and youth:

- Using an evidence based data strategy, such as a gender assessment about indigenous women and men their gendered role within the pineapple value chain inspired the gender capacity strengthening trajectory.
- Additionally a rights based approach, prioritizing agency and a participatory - inclusive principles based on Free and Prior Informed consent (FPIC),
- An intersectional gender and culturally sensitive approach that supported capacity building interventions reaching a broad community of not only pineapple farmers. Women, youth, traditional leaders, people with a disability were sustainably engaged in gender, business, abuse and leadership training.

The strength of UNFPA's approach for the implementation of ASTA Suriname lies in its capacity to create synergies across different joint programs by employing the "Leave No One Behind" principles integrated Indigenous and Tribal Peoples policy framework.

We integrated insights from the JP LNOB on strengthening the sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) policy environment for ITP adolescents with the ASTA JP, as evaluation revealed that adolescent mothers/youth were not adequately reached. Both JPs aim to economically empower youth and enhance their knowledge on gender, SRHR, and GBV. A key objective was to raise awareness on reducing adolescent pregnancy rates in ITP communities, guided by the MILENA study, which showed that continued education and labor market participation—particularly in the pineapple sector—can significantly boost young mothers' resilience. Strengthening sexual education capacity and knowledge management for ITP youth in Para and Moengo has helped create a more supportive policy environment.

Desired Change

The synergistic impact of agro-economic and gender equality training, coupled with business skills, conflict resolution and leadership capacity development, has empowered local village leaders to effectively integrate various agricultural and social protection initiatives. As a result, local community projects have garnered significant visibility in national news, references the news articles featuring the chief of Matta, an indigenous community of Suriname. Additionally, selected pineapple farmers are actively sharing updates about their progress on social media, further amplifying their achievements and promoting community engagement.

Knowledge Sharing through Collaborative Platforms

ASTA Suriname set up various digital platforms for stakeholders to exchange valuable information and insights related to the agricultural, business, and digital dimensions of the pineapple value chain. By facilitating this collaborative environment, we empower female farmers and stakeholders to enhance their knowledge, improve practices, and drive innovation within the sector.

4. Who are the **key actors and stakeholders** involved in the design and implementation of the good practice, and what are their respective roles? *Consider local partners, government, local authorities, community radios, civil society, research, the private sector, etc.*

Local partners: *traditional leaders, local government (District commissaris South West of Marowijne, Ministry of Agriculture and Husbandry of Suriname(LVV)) local agricultural cooperation's (Cooperatief Agrarisch Platform Marowijne), church organisation (Roman Catholic church), local women's organization Marron Vrouwen Netwerk,*

National GoS: *Ministry of Home Affairs - Bureau Gender affairs (BGA) and ministry of Regional Development and Sport (ROS), ITP Umbrella organizations and Decision making bodies Indigenous and Maroon organizations of Suriname (VIDS and KAMPOS)*

Key actors: *Local vendors, village leaders, and female led organizations*

5. How does your intervention ensure **inclusivity and equal and meaningful participation** within the **community**?

Describe how your intervention includes and engages different groups within the community. Consider aspects like gender, age, ethnicity, disability status, livelihoods, and other specific conditions (e.g., people living in prolonged crisis, migrants, refugees). Explain how your intervention engages diverse segments of the rural community. Highlight the specific actions or strategies you use to reach these groups. If applicable, mention if your intervention uses specific approaches such as gender-responsive, gender-transformative, intersectionality, or other methods to ensure inclusivity and gender equality.

Impact on SDG 5: Gender Equality

The ASTA project directly contributes to Sustainable Development Goal 5 by prioritizing training and mentoring sessions specifically designed to address the challenges associated with gendered roles. Through these initiatives, we aim to facilitate effective participation and ensure equal opportunities for women. By employing a Leave No One Behind (LNOB) approach, we increase the inclusion and resilience of key populations, particularly women and youth.

The capacity-building sessions have successfully engaged a diverse range of participants across different ages, genders, and disability statuses. Intergenerational participation was a notable highlight, with grandmothers, mothers, and grandchildren all taking part. The youngest participant was just 16 years old, while the oldest was in their seventies.

Furthermore, our gender-responsive insights have enabled us to integrate knowledge on gender-based violence (GBV) and adolescent sexual and reproductive health rights into the capacity-building sessions. This integration not only enhances knowledge but also strengthens decision-making skills related to adolescent sexuality and economic opportunities in the pineapple sector, empowering participants to make informed choices for their futures.

6. By using community engagement, what **results and impacts** have your good practice achieved?

Please provide specific examples and evidence demonstrating the effectiveness of your intervention, focusing on both qualitative and quantitative outcomes related to livelihoods and well-being improvements.

Youth Empowerment through the Young Mothers Workshop and SIDS Children and Youth Dialogue sessions

The Young Mothers Workshop and the SIDS Children and Youth Dialogue sessions under the JP Leave No One Behind, Building Resilience, and Improving Livelihoods of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (ITP's) in Suriname (JP LNOB) was dedicated to empowering ITP youth by increasing awareness of adolescent sexual and reproductive health rights. This initiative not only educates young mothers and adolescent about their rights but also equips them with the knowledge and tools necessary to make informed decisions regarding their health and well-being.

Women's Empowerment through Comprehensive Training

ASTA's initiatives on women's empowerment delivered by UNFPA, have significantly raised awareness of critical topics such as gender equality, business skills, leadership, conflict resolution, and addressing gender-based abuse in both private and public spheres. A key outcome of this training is the recognition among women that their farming and crafting activities must be approached with a business mindset. This shift in perspective is essential for fostering a sense of agency and self-worth.

Furthermore, participants gained valuable insights into the gendered challenges faced by both male and female entrepreneurs. By understanding these dynamics, women are better equipped to navigate the entrepreneurial landscape, leading to enhanced resilience and success in their ventures.

7. Among these results, has the good practice led to improvements in terms of **gender equality, women's empowerment, and/or social inclusion**?

*Describe the **behavioral changes** in terms of gender that the good practice promotes, emphasizing agency, leadership, and participation in local governance. Include efforts to challenge discriminatory norms and unequal power dynamics. Highlight also how the intervention has supported the well-being (including psychological resilience) of marginalized groups and enhanced their inclusion and participation in decision-making processes.*

Empowerment and Visibility through Leadership

The participation of the female village leader of Matta, who is not only a farmer but also an educator, in a FAO-led webinar of the Technical Network on Sustainable Food Value Chains Development and Finance (SFVC D&F) in November 2023, exemplifies the enhanced visibility of the village in national and international fora. Her involvement, coupled with her future leadership role

in the board of Directors of the newly established Horticulture Innovation HUB of Suriname – a unique public private foundation supporting the horticultural sector in the country, showcases the agency of female leaders in the community. This representation serves as a powerful role model for girls and women interested in pursuing leadership positions and actively participating in agriculture.

The village leader of Matta envisions engaging women and youth as key players in the local development of the community. Her commitment aims to improve resilience and foster inclusion, empowering these groups to contribute meaningfully to their community's growth and sustainability.

8. What **key challenges did you encounter while implementing **the community engagement activities**, and **how did you address them**?**

Include any resistance from communities, pushback, or issues related to unequal power dynamics, if applicable.

The Surinamese indigenous organization "VIDS" emphasized the inclusion of the broader community and that program objective align with the collective world view of the community, to prevent unintended effects such like uneven social mobilization within the community due the economic progress gained from the pineapple sector.

Following FPIC guidelines to ensure sustainable participatory and inclusive engagement is time consuming, by the different way that time is observed and how time planning is observed by other stakeholders. Addressing the concerns and intensive engagement process we used a methodology of FPIC on local level that was very effective in designing and implementing the Gender Capacity Building trajectory

Building and retaining trust with the decision making ITP bodies means that regular meetings and information session are eminent to update them about the challenges and progress.

UNFPA Financial administrative operational rules are not necessarily compatible with the cash economy of the ITP communities when organizing this training

Regarding gender related abuse topic in one indigenous community more effort was needed to mobilize participants to follow training in this specific topic. Presumably following a gender /GBV session was a sensitive issue within this community.

9. What are the key **lesson learned from your community engagement good practice?**

- Use of data for designing and implementing of the gender capacity strengthening training/mentoring is eminent
- Inclusion of key stakeholders and local population at all phases including brainstorming, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the capacity building activities
- Participatory and inclusive learning methodology that take into account the participants their own background/entry level/local language
- Cultural sensitive awareness on the subjects of the interventions and integration of norms and believes for behaviour change (if needed) is a long term process/commitment
- Mobilizing participants through formal local structure i.e. traditional leaders, agricultural cooperations and other structures like local women organizations Marron Vrouwen Network supported in reaching a diverse group of participants facilitating that groups that are frequently left behind people with disabilities (PWD) and youth were included.

10. Has this practice been **replicated** in the same context or in different contexts?
What are the required conditions to replicate and adapt the practice in another context/geographical area?

This praxis has not been replicated in other context.

Required conditions

1. DATA driven approach, from the planning to implementation, make sure that a gender assessment is done beforehand.
2. FPIC/ involve the target group from the planning stage until the MEL. Take into consideration transport cost, DSA, translation in local languages of strategic documents, it supports the engagement of ITP, furthermore it keys in on the rights based framework.
3. Partnerships with government and non-government stakeholders ensures the sustainability of the capacity building investments/project outcomes
4. Key in on the self – determination of the target group increasing the ownership of the project outcomes, which will support in strengthening their voice and resilience

11. How **sustainable** are the results achieved by this good practice?

Describe the key elements that need to be in place to make the initiative sustainable, including enabling environment (legal and policy frameworks and institutions), local ownership, accountability, etc.

- a. The policy environment in Suriname includes key documents such as the Constitution, the Gender Vision Policy 2021-2035, and international conventions like CEDAW and the Belem do Para Convention, all aligning with Agenda 2030. These documents affirm gender equality and equity. Additionally, recent laws like the "Wet Geweld en Seksuele Intimidatie Arbeid" (2022) protect against gender-based abuse in the workplace, providing a foundation for gender-focused training and action.
- b. *Institutions like BGA, ROS, LVV and the traditional village leadership structures are integrated as partners, key stakeholders in the implementation and evaluation of the gender related capacity building activities. Like I argued before this increases the ownership and accountability of the national government, community and the local leaders.*

- c. Consulting infrastructures such as the steering committee with key actors and stakeholders as well as communication structures quarterly ASTA newsletter and presentation provides updates and feedback cycles to adapt and improve the project outcomes. Bolstering lesson learned and enabling adaptations.

12. Based on the conversations FAO held during the Community Engagement days, a definition of community engagement for empowerment was proposed:

“Community engagement for empowerment and community-led collective action can be defined as an inclusive and participatory process that enables community members to become active agents of change in decisions affecting their lives, health, and environment. This process develops their capacity to achieve sustainable outcomes for improved rural livelihoods. Embracing a rights-based approach, it prioritizes the agency and participation of all community members, regardless of gender identity, sexual orientation, age, ethnicity, caste, socioeconomic status, political affiliation, migration status, or ability/disability. Indeed, inclusive approaches recognize the complexities of overlapping marginalization and discrimination that can exclude different community members from decision-making processes and implement strategies to foster their participation, agency and empowerment.”

We invite you to contribute to this definition. What would you add or change? Please share your thoughts, suggestions, and any additional elements you believe are crucial for a comprehensive understanding of community engagement approaches aimed at community-led collective action for inclusive rural transformation, people’s empowerment and gender equality.

Adopting a Decolonial Standpoint for Addressing Inequality and Exclusion

Using a decolonial standpoint, I propose applying a colonial historical lens to uncover the root causes of inequality and exclusion that continue to impact the lives and livelihoods of Indigenous and tribal peoples. This perspective not only identifies enduring colonial structures but also emphasizes the importance of recognizing and building upon the knowledge, skills, and resilience that these communities have historically cultivated.

Additionally, the decolonial approach serves as a critical lens to examine and challenge potential biases and strategies within UN agencies and all partnering institutions and employ a holistic approach integration among others the spiritual, environment, social , economic, political and cultural aspects enabling a more reflective and inclusive framework for advancing equitable policies and programs.

13. Based on your experience, what **gaps or areas for improvement** still need to be addressed **in the field of community engagement?**

- LNOB (Leaving No One Behind) and FBH (Furthest Behind) principles
- Nurturing and retaining long term engagement of the community
- Inclusion of the impact of climate change, climate crisis intersecting community engagement

<p>14. What do you think is FAO's role in the field of community engagement? How can FAO support and enhance interventions like yours, if applicable? <i>Consider aspects such as policy advocacy, capacity development, funding, technical assistance, knowledge production and sharing, and fostering partnerships.</i></p>	
<p>Link(s) to specific references about your good practice (e.g. reports, communication products, videos, articles)</p> <p>See:</p> <p>GENDER ASSESSMENT for the pineapple value chain in Suriname Accelerator for Agriculture and Agroindustry Development and Innovation (3ADI+) by Annette Tjon Sie Fat M.A. & Drs. Marie-Josée Artist</p> <p>https://docs.google.com/document/d/1o5LiEkggNJoJytyHU8Ps1EKqkw5hcz55/edit</p> <p>Cultivating Resilience: Empowering Female Pineapple Farmers and stakeholders in Suriname https://www.fao.org/food-systems/news/news-detail/Cultivating-Resilience-Empowering-Female-Pineapple-Farmers-and-stakeholders-in-Suriname/en</p> <p>AFVC D&F webinar: Gender-sensitive value chains in action https://www.fao.org/sustainable-food-value-chains/news-events/details-news/en/c/1668038/</p> <p>Report 'Gender Capacity Building Trajectory UNFPA/ ASTA'; 3rd deliverable Gender Capacity Building Consultant Jacintha Jong-A-Lock – Dundas https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/10-v7J-zKhBL4AuRy4JPWgabxgdPUB-Ui</p> <p>Minister Ramdin belicht Ananasproject tijdens SDG-paneldiscussie op SIDS conferentie http://cds.gov.sr/de-boodschap/minister-ramdin-belicht-ananasproject-tijdens-sdg-paneldiscussie-op-sids-conferentie/</p>	<p><i>Please include attachment(s) or add here link(s) to documents/videos/podcasts/other with specific references.</i></p> <p>General Young Mother Workshop Report https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1uXEXK-K-YbGNAg-mU_dpvYZ2xnsEjz2Ov</p>

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