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GRASS CEILING

D4.1

Template & Training Webinar for Gender Benchmarking Farm & Rural Policy

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Deliverable D4.1

Title: Template & Training Webinar for Gender Benchmarking Farm & Rural Policy

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Template for benchmarking relevant EU and national policy documents

Key background information

1. What is Benchmarking?

Benchmarking is when the performance of a company, or in our case a policy document, is measured against key targets. The aim of benchmarking is to identify opportunities for improvement. Initial benchmarking provides a baseline of information against which future progress can be measured. Good practice requires continuous benchmarking at appropriate times in the policy cycle. Gender benchmarking does not only consider measures specific to women. It must also consider how a policy has considered the different gender implications of mainstream components of the policy.
Here is an example to consider. The World Benchmark Alliance has a Gender Benchmark[1]. They use this to assess and compare how companies are driving and promoting gender equality and women's empowerment across their entire value chain. They focus on Sustainable Development Goal 5, Gender Equality.

Key components of the EU Gender Equality Strategy will be used to measure how effectively EU and National policies relevant to GRASS CEILING promote gender equality. For example, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) wishes to increase the digital literacy of farmers and promote digital inclusion. We know that women are less digitally included than men[2]. A benchmarking question would ask: 'Does CAP consider the digital literacy of women farmers? The CAP does not currently consider the specific digital needs of women farmers or offer any measures to support their inclusion. Benchmarking should also consider language used in policies and whether that contains unconscious bias. For example, some equality policies talk about 'women and girls'. Does this imply that women are as vulnerable as girls or have diminished capacity? Policies do not talk about men and boys.

2. What is the Gender Equality Strategy[3]?

The Gender Equality Strategy sets out the EU's commitment to gender equality between 2020 and 2025 including policy objectives and key actions. It focuses on eliminating gender-based violence, sex discrimination and structural inequality between women and men. It notes that no Member State has achieved full gender equality, and progress is slow. Specifically, it states:
'This Gender Equality Strategy frames the European Commission's work on gender equality and sets out the policy objectives and key actions for the 2020-2025 period. It aims at achieving a gender equal Europe where gender-based violence, sex discrimination and structural inequality between women and men are a thing of the past. A Europe where women and men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, are equal. Where they are **free to pursue their chosen path in life**, where they have **equal opportunities to thrive**, and where they can **equally participate in and lead our European society**'. (p.2, emphasis added).

[1] https://www.worldbenchmarkingalliance.org/
[2] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52020DC0152
[3] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52020DC0152

3. What are the objectives of the Gender Equality Strategy?

The Gender Equality Strategy aims to reduce structural gender-based inequalities by focusing on the following priorities:

- Challenging gender stereotypes
- Closing gender gaps in the labour market (including entrepreneurship)
- Empowering women in the workforce, for example by removing gender pay and pension gaps and addressing the gender care gap.
- Improving gender mainstreaming and intersectional perspectives in the development of EU policy.
- Promoting digital inclusion e.g., by removing gender bias in Artificial Intelligence (AI) algorithms
- Incorporating gendered experiences of climate change into policy development

4. Gender Mainstreaming and the Gender Equality Strategy

Gender mainstreaming is seen as the superior approach to promoting gender equality because it turns attention away from individuals and their rights and focuses instead on the processes, norms and organisational practices that generate inequalities. The European Institute for Gender Equality's (EIGE) website provides a comprehensive guide to the tools that are necessary to facilitate successful gender mainstreaming[4]. Here, gender mainstreaming is established as a strategy in which the gender dimension is incorporated into all stages of policy, from design through to implementation and follow-up evaluation measures. Gender mainstreaming also encompasses plans for regulation and the distribution of programme funding. The Gender Equality Strategy requires a dual approach of both targeted measures and gender mainstreaming.

A policy document that is gender mainstreamed acknowledges that both men and women are included in its scope of consideration. It addresses the specific and different challenges faced by men and women.

5. The Gender Equality Strategy (GES) and GRASS CEILING

Why are we benchmarking GRASS CEILING against the Gender Equality Strategy? We are benchmarking it against the GES because the Horizon Europe call specifically asked that successful consortia use this document to benchmark relevant EU and National policies. Not all of the GES is relevant to GRASS CEILING. Our project does not address gender-based violence or women's empowerment across the world. This is why GRASS CEILING commits to benchmarking against the key components of the GES and the European Pillar of Social Rights[5] that are relevant to our project. These are mainly structural inequality and sex discrimination.

6. What documents will GRASS CEILING analyse?

At the EU level, GRASS CEILING will analyse the key current agricultural and rural documents: the Common Agricultural Policy Framework; the Green Deal, the Farm to Fork Strategy, and the Long-Term Vision for Rural Areas. At the National level we will examine the national equivalent of these documents. An example of the documents that will be analysed in the Irish context is set out below.

[4] https://eige.europa.eu/

[5] https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1226&langId=en The European Pillar of Social Rights covers many areas. It is The European Union's commitment to make Europe a fairer place, inclusive and full of opportunities for everyone. The gender components are the same as those raised in the Gender Equality Strategy.

EU Level	National Level - Ireland
CAP Strategic Plan 2023-2027	Ireland's CAP Strategic Plan
Green Deal	National Biodiversity strategy Just transition (NESC)
Farm to Fork Strategy	Food Vision 2030
Long-Term Vision for Rural Areas	Our Rural Futures Rural Development Policy 2021-2025

7. What elements of the Gender Equality Strategy are we benchmarking against?

We are benchmarking policies against the Gender Equality Strategy, specifically in relation to its core priorities for promoting gender equality established in Section 3 of this document. The process to be followed is set out in the benchmarking templates for European Union and national polices included as Appendices in this document. This exercise is explained further in the benchmarking webinar that accompanies this activity. Together these resources form the toolkit for Deliverable 4.1. and will guide the completion of Deliverable 4.2 of this project.

8. Further resources

Further resources on benchmarking can be found in journal articles[6] and special reports[7]. These can also be consulted when completing this exercise. A training webinar on benchmarking best practice can be accessed using the following link: D4.1 - Benchmarking Best Practice Webinar.mp4

[6] Shortall, S. and Marangudakis, V., 2022. Is agriculture an occupation or a sector? Gender inequalities in a European context. *Sociologia Ruralis*, *62*(4), pp.746-762, Is agriculture an occupation or a sector? Gender inequalities in a European context - Shortall - 2022 - Sociologia Ruralis - Wiley Online Library

[7] Special Report 10/2021: Gender mainstreaming in the EU budget: time to turn words into action | European Court of Auditors (europa.eu)

Benchmarking of European Union policy documents

Section A: Identification of European Union policy for analysis

Section B: Analysis

Please answer the following questions (1-6). In doing so, please refer to the benchmarking template guidance document that accompanies this exercise. **As a general guide: Responses should be between 2 and 10 pages.**

1.

Question	**What is the overall purpose of this policy?**
Notes to consider	• What are the key aims/objectives of this policy?
Response	

2.

Question	**How does this policy represent its target sector/s of the population?**
Notes to consider	• Are gender considerations integrated in the policy? • Does this policy challenge gender stereotypes? • How are women and men referred to in this document? • Does it raise awareness about women's rights, challenge stereotypes, and/or promote equal opportunity?
Response	

3.

Question	**Does this policy consider differences between men and women in occupations/enterprises related to the policy?**
Notes to consider	• Does it consider how to encourage new entrants to the occupation/enterprise? • Is there a gender dimension? • Does it address gender pay gaps? • Does it consider pension gaps? • The Gender Equality Strategy specifically asks for gender care gaps to be addressed in rural areas. Does this document address this request?
Response	

4.

Question	**Does this policy have specific measures targeted at women?**
Notes to consider	• What are the aims of these measures? • What is the budget allocation as a percentage of the overall budget for this policy? Are expenditures tracked for gender equality? • How are they financed?

	• Do we have any sex-disaggregated data on uptake or success? • Are the measures mainstreaming women or treating them as a special category? • Are specific groups of women described (e.g., age, migration, religion) • Are any other social groups identified and mentioned together with women?
Response	

5.

Question	**Does this policy set out specific supports to advance women entrepreneurs and rural women?**
Notes to consider	• Some key measures have been identified that are important in advancing women entrepreneurs and may also apply to rural women. These include areas such as: Access to education and training; access to finance; access to innovation and other relevant policies. Are any of these taken into consideration, and if so, how and to what extent? • Does this policy support/promote women's leadership and participation in agricultural organisations and networks, and decision-making at all levels?
Response	

6.

Question	**Is this policy concerned with the long-term vision for rural areas?**
Notes to consider	• Does this policy consider participation in initiatives and if men and women participate differently? • Does it consider different employment/income/social security needs? • Does it consider different ageing issues? • Does it consider gender and the (child)care gap? • Are mitigating measures proposed for different care responsibilities (children, sick and elderly)?
Response	

7.

Question	**Does this policy promote digital inclusion or the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)**
Notes to consider	• Does this policy consider gender difference in digital inclusion or AI? • Does it make provisions to address gender inequality?
Response	

8.

Question	**Is this policy concerned with climate change?**
Notes to consider	• Does this policy acknowledge how women and men are impacted by climate change differently? Explain if and how. • Does the policy present why it is important to have everyone – men and women - fully involved, committed, and supported in the green transition?
Response	

9.

Question	**Please include any further relevant information or comments here**
Notes to consider	
Response	

Benchmarking of national policy documents

Section A: Identification of national policy for analysis

Section B: Analysis

Please answer the following questions (1-6). In doing so, please refer to the benchmarking template guidance document that accompanies this exercise. **As a general guide: Responses should be between 2 and 10 pages.**

1.

Question	**What is the overall purpose of this policy?**
Notes to consider	• What are the key aims/objectives of this policy?
Response	

2.

Question	**How does this policy represent its target sector/s of the population?**
Notes to consider	• Are gender considerations integrated in the policy? • Does this policy challenge gender stereotypes? • How are women and men referred to in this document? • Does it raise awareness about women's rights, challenge stereotypes, and/or promote equal opportunity?
Response	

3.

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Notes to consider	• Does it consider how to encourage new entrants to the occupation/enterprise? • Is there a gender dimension? • Does it address gender pay gaps? • Does it consider pension gaps? • The Gender Equality Strategy specifically asks for gender care gaps to be addressed in rural areas. Does this document address this request?
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Notes to consider	• What are the aims of these measures? • What is the budget allocation as a percentage of the overall budget for this policy? Are expenditures tracked for gender equality? • How are they financed? • Do we have any sex-disaggregated data on uptake or success?

	• Are the measures mainstreaming women or treating them as a special category? • Are specific groups of women described (e.g., age, migration, religion) • Are any other social groups identified and mentioned together with women?
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Response	

9.

Question	**Please include any further relevant information or comments here**
Notes to consider	
Response	