



TAGEM
R&D AND INNOVATION

Gender Equality Action Plan

(GEP)

2022-2026



Introduction

In the Eleventh Development Plan of the Republic of Türkiye covering the years 2019-2023, the agricultural sector has been identified as one of the priority development areas. In addition, policies and measures to increase women's participation in the workforce and to ensure gender equality are regulated under different headings such as "Priority Development Areas", "Rural Development", "Employment and Working Life" and "Strengthening the Family" in the same plan.

In this context, the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry has been prepared based on the strategic objectives determined by the Eleventh Development Plan and the "Strategy Document and Action Plan for Strengthening Women (2018-2023)" developed by the Ministry of Family and Social Services.

To achieve a thorough understanding of gender equality in public policies, establishing an institutional structure for gender disaggregated data collection and monitoring is a requirement. Consequently, a strong institutional commitment to gender mainstreaming with a coordinated approach is essential to support and promote gender equality.

In this regard, in the 2022-2024 Budget Preparation Guide published by the Presidency of Strategy and Budget under the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye, to ensure gender equality; the importance of gender-responsive budgeting accommodating the different needs and priorities of women and men when providing public services is emphasized. Likewise, the Budget Preparation Guide for the years 2023–2025 stresses the importance of the gender-sensitive budgeting strategy for public bodies.

Gender Equality Plans are important policy and planning instruments that offer strong institutional commitments to overcoming gender challenges. Additionally, gender-disaggregated data analysis is a key component of research that can support the process of developing policies for the R&D studies conducted by our institution.

Our institution is committed to complying with the principles of equality of opportunity for women and men in all its activities and to creating an environment free from all kinds of



prejudices.

A well-constructed gender strategy provides the fundamental framework by which organizations can navigate and incorporate gender mainstreaming into research and innovation content at institutional level. The first "Gender Equality Action Plan" (GEP) of our institution, which covers the years 2022–2026, is a working document with the goal of establishing the guidelines and principles for all initiatives that aim to promote gender equality in research and innovation.

The aim of this action plan is to set out a framework for establishing specific objectives to advance gender equality and to create an institutional policy to support our commitment to equal opportunity.



This GEP is organized into six sections:

| | |
|---|----|
| Section I. Institutionalization and Capacity Building for Gender Equality | 5 |
| Section II. Recruitment & Career Progression..... | 7 |
| Section III. Work-Life Balance | 7 |
| Section IV. Decision-Making and Leadership | 9 |
| Section V. Integration of Gender Dimension into Research Content | 10 |
| Section VI. Violence against Women, Combatting Sexual Harassment and Discrimination.. | 11 |



Section I. Institutionalization and Capacity Building for Gender Equality

Constitution of the Republic of Türkiye 1982 (Art.10) clearly states that everyone is equal before the law without distinction as to language, race, colour, sex, political opinion, philosophical belief, religion and sect, or any such grounds. Men and women have equal rights and the State has the obligation to ensure such equality exists in practice. Measures to be adopted with this purpose can't be deemed as against to the principle of equality. State organs and administrative authorities are obliged to act in compliance with the principle of equality before the law in all their proceedings.

In this context, the goal of the GEP plan is to encourage an organizational structure transformation to advance gender equality while safeguarding the plan's execution and supporting the process.

To ensure the GEP's success, the following institutional arrangements and assignments will be made:

- A Gender Equality Board (GEB) will be established to oversee the implementation, coordination, and oversight of this plan.
- A Working Group (GEP WG) will be established to ensure the implementation of the GEP strategy, to ensure regular data collection and to support monitoring.

Gender Equality Board (GEB)

Gender Equality Board (GEB) is a permanent group tasked with governance of the GEP. The Board is also responsible for monitoring the implementation and coordination of GEP and identifying areas of development related to gender equality.

The Board is composed of members of the upper-level executives along with the representatives of the GEP working group and is chaired by the Director General of Agricultural Research and Policies. The members of the GEB will be assigned by the Chair.

The Gender Equality Board will convene at least twice annually and be in charge of the following functions:

- Providing strategic leadership and management for the implementation of the GEP



Strategy,

- Endorsement of the annual program of the action plan,
- Supporting the implementation of a regular gender equality reporting regime,
- Identifying the critical courses of action based on the regular reports from the GEP WG Members,
- Assessing the overall success in terms of inclusivity and gender equality as well as promoting the accomplishments in this regard.

Gender Equality Action Plan Working Group (GEP WG)

Gender Equality Plan Working Group (GEP WG) will be established to serve as a task force and lays a key role in implementation of the GEP and reaching the milestones identified in this plan.

GEP WG will consist of the representatives of the relevant offices and will be assigned by the GEB. GEP WG will convene on a quarterly basis and be in charge of the following functions:

- Assisting in the creation of the overall plan that will be submitted to the GEB,
- Monitoring and studying the gender disaggregated data and reporting thereof,
- Assessing and reporting the implementation of GEP targets,
- Preparing the annual plan of the GEP and submitting it to GEB for approval,
- Reporting to and advising the GEB on the sustainability and regarding the status of processes undertaken under this GEP,
- Providing input into mapping priorities to ensuring gender equality,
- Participating in or leading gender equality learning opportunities, including workshops and awareness raising activities,
- Advising on the development of upcoming GEP actions,
- Supporting all actions identified by the GEB,



- Reporting twice a year on the actions undertaken in accordance with the plan.

Section II. Recruitment & Career Progression

The Constitution of the Republic of Türkiye, the Civil Servants Law No#657 (CSA) and the Labor Law No#4857 prohibit discrimination between employees. The relevant legislation contains provisions prohibiting discrimination based on language, race, color, gender, disability, political opinion, philosophical belief, religion or sect among employees through recruitment or in workplaces.

In accordance with the Article 5 of the labour law, no gender-based discrimination can be made in the business relationship and a lower wage cannot be determined for the same job because of the gender of employees.

However, initiatives will be taken to encourage a positive organizational culture, and mechanisms to ensure gender balance in decision-making.

The following activities will be carried out to strengthen recruitment and career development processes:

- Commit to appoint panels that are gender balanced or, if that is not practicable, to include a minimum percentage of women.
- Aim to enhance the proportion of women among those who apply for and receive research grants, awards, and financing.
- Effectively address unconscious bias potentially affecting recruitment processes through training and awareness raising activities especially targeting management positions.
- Encourage the integration of gender dimension into research activities.

Section III. Work-Life Balance

A healthy work-life balance is important for individual well-being, enhanced productivity and creativity. As a public body, our institution strictly follows workplace regulations determined



by the Civil Servants' Act (CSA) No#657 and Labour Law (No#4857).

CSA No# 657 outlines a number of regulations to ensure a healthy balance between the professional life and personal life of female employees. For instance, pursuant to paragraph (A) of Article 104 of the CSA No# 657, maternity leave is granted to a female officer for a total of sixteen weeks, eight weeks prior to birth and eight weeks following the birth. In addition, as regulated in Article 104 (F) of the CSA No# 657 women are able to work part-time from the end of the postpartum maternity leave period.

In accordance with Article 13 of the "Regulation on Conditions for Recruitment of Pregnant or Lactating Women and Breastfeeding Rooms and Children Care Dormitories" published in the Official Gazette dated 16 August 2013 and issued on the basis of Article 30 of the Occupational Health and Safety Law No# 6331 following measures are taken to ensure the participation of women in business life:

Regardless of their age and marital status, the employer is obliged to establish a breastfeeding room if there are 100-150 female employees in the workplace and to establish a nursery for children aged 0-6 years where there are more than 150 female employees. Through these measures, supporting the work-life balance of female employees is encouraged.

In order to improve the work-life balance, the following actions will be carried out:

- Equality of opportunity and treatment among men and women will be fostered.
- Regular dissemination of the Institution's gender policy through internal communication tools will be ensured.
- Gender balance within the scope of equal access to education and training will be encouraged.
- Trainings to raise awareness of women's rights in working life will be organized.
- Surveys will be conducted to monitor work-life balance and job satisfaction among employees.



Section IV. Decision-Making and Leadership

Carrying out studies for the realization of the key activities such as organizing and raising awareness of farmers, effective management of agricultural supports and grants and regulation of agricultural markets to monitor and supervise the implementation of agricultural policies are among the duties of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

In Türkiye, women make up 41.3% of the agricultural labour force and 22.7% of the total labour. In this context, making up nearly half of the total agricultural labour in the country, equal and effective representation of women in decision-making and leadership positions in the agriculture sector is of utmost importance.

As a result of internal evaluations, it has been observed that there is a need to strengthen the representation of women in leadership and decision-making positions. In this sense, identifying the factors affecting the equality of opportunity between men and women, determining the priorities, and promoting gender equality through awareness studies are recognized as important areas for improvement.

The following actions will be carried out to increase institutional awareness in terms of gender equality within the scope of decision-making and leadership:

- At the decision-making level, the final report of the study on the subject will be published by compiling gender-disaggregated data to reveal the current status and awareness on gender equality.
- National and international legislations, as well as best practices, shall be identified and reported in order to promote equal participation of men and women in decision-making positions.
- Policies will be developed to promote gender balance in all decision-making positions and a policy document will be published with an aim to reach at least 40% of women representation.
- In order to support women in project leadership by taking gender balance into account, incentives will be given during the project preparation and evaluation procedures to provide projects with a female leader a competitive advantage.



Section V. Integration of Gender Dimension into Research Content

The General Directorate of Agricultural Research and Policies (TAGEM), acting on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, is responsible for coordinating the task of carrying out studies, preparing projects, having them prepared, and implementing them in order to determine agricultural research and development strategies and priorities.

While there are always new advancements in agriculture around the world, TAGEM, the largest agricultural R&D organization in Türkiye, keeps track of these developments and conducts research to develop innovative technologies required by our nation and industry as well as determining alternative policies to be implemented by the Ministry. In addition to integrating the gender dimension into R&D studies, to ensure equality of opportunity specified in the 2022-2024 Budget Preparation Guide published by the Presidency of Strategy and Budget under the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye, gender-responsive budgeting will be practiced to address the specific needs and priorities of women and men.

The following actions will be carried out by adopting an inclusive vision to integrate gender dimension in research and to carry out research analyses on this basis and to create a budget structure with gender-responsive planning perspective:

- Trainings will be organized to integrate gender equality dimension into research and to increase awareness in this regard. For this purpose, training targeting researchers will be organized at least once a year and participation will be compulsory.
- Studies will be carried out on gender responsive planning budgeting and trainings will be received from subject matter experts.
- Gender disaggregated analysis and linked methodologies will be incorporated into the research and gender sensitive reporting and planning will be provided in the research findings.
- Regulatory measures will be taken to ensure the gender balance among project teams.



Section VI. Violence against Women, Combatting Sexual Harassment and Discrimination

In the Turkish legal system, violence, sexual harassment, and discrimination against women are crimes that carry harsh penalties. In addition, issues such as the protection and development of human rights based on human dignity, the guarantee of the right of people to equal treatment, and the prevention of discrimination in the enjoyment of legally recognized rights and freedoms are guaranteed by the constitution and other laws. In addition, although sexual harassment and discrimination are considered crimes according to the CSA No#657 and the Labour Law No#4857, there is a need for studies to raise awareness among employees about what sexual harassment and discrimination is.

In this context, it has been observed that employees do not have sufficient awareness and knowledge about procedures and codes of conduct in cases of attack, discrimination, violence and harassment in general.

Within the scope of combating violence, sexual harassment and discrimination against women at work place, the following actions will be carried out:

- Trainings will be organized targeting all employees and managers in the areas of combating sexual harassment and discrimination and raising awareness.
- To combat sexual harassment and discrimination, awareness raising activities on legal rights and complaint mechanisms will be carried out.
- Through organizing relevant awareness studies to identify the barriers connected to gender discrimination, policies will be developed in this area.

This Action Plan has been prepared in line with the "Horizon Europe guidance on gender equality plans¹" and within the authorization of the Ministry dated 14.11.2022 and numbered E-79765350-020-7716852.

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¹ European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, *Horizon Europe guidance on gender equality plans*, Publications Office of the European Union, 2021, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/876509>