




INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE
WOMAN FARMER
2026



Project Journal: Gender Integration Report





© 2025 Friends of Women World Banking (FWWB). All Rights reserved.

It is not legal to reproduce, duplicate, or transmit any part of this document in either electronic means or printed format, without prior written permission from Friends of Women's World Banking (FWWB), except for brief quotations used for academic, research, or non-commercial purposes with appropriate acknowledgement.

All the pictures are FWWB's property, and they may not be reproduced without permission.

Table of Content



1. Introduction	7
Context: Why Gender Integration Matters	7
The Project and the Objectives	7
Gender Lens Integration in the Project Journey	8
Gender Action Plan (GAP)	9
2. Methodology	11
3. Capacity Building Approach for Gender Integration	13
4. Capacity Building Initiatives	15
Intervention 1: Collective Action and Networking	15
Intervention 2: Governance and Institution Building	22
Intervention 3: Climate Resilient and Sustainable Agriculture (CSA)	35
Intervention 4: Marketing and Value-chain Development	46
Intervention 5: Exposure visit	51
Intervention 6: Convergence	55
Intervention 7: Cadre of Women Community Leaders - Nari Shakti Precursors (NSPs)	61
Intervention 8: Baseline Survey	65
Intervention 9: Consultations	69
5. Key Insights - Emerging Trends and Gender Mainstreaming	75
6. Key Considerations for Gender Integration in Project	83



Acknowledgement

This report and the underlying Action Learning Research project are the result of the strategic institutional initiative by Friends of Women's World Banking (FWWB) India, which has prioritised participatory action developed to enrich the discourse on the intersections of gender, climate resilient agriculture and food security and a strategic call for action for gender responsive and transformative action.

Furthermore, this report is a synthesis of a collaborative journey and the insights within were co-created with 6000 farmers, 30 FPOs across Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Odisha, 40 internal team members, and other ecosystem stakeholders by engaging them in the 'Pause-Reflect-Improve' cycle, ensuring the findings remain grounded in their lived realities. As the authors, Rashmi Sahu and Bharti, our role has been to listen, document, and amplify their voices, and contributions. This work has benefited from the technical inputs and guidance provided by Bharti. Our gratitude to Shilpa Vasavada for sharpening our focus towards gender integration in the project.

We hope this document serves as a valuable tool for stakeholders committed to building a more gender-transformative and resilient agricultural ecosystem.



Chapter 1



Introduction

Context: Why Gender Integration Matters

Women contribute significantly to agriculture as farmers, labourers, small entrepreneurs and value-chain actors. However, due to entrenched socio-cultural norms, women have limited access to land, markets, technology, finance, and decision-making spaces, particularly within formal institutions such as FPOs, cooperatives, and other community organisations. Their contributions often remain underpaid and undervalued, leading to low visibility, weak bargaining power, and limited agency.

In such a scenario, there's a need to build a gender-integrated, sustainable agri-value chain. Integrating gender is critical because gender relations shape how agricultural **tasks, decisions, resources, and benefits** are distributed within households and communities. At the same time, increasing climate variability and natural resource degradation demand resilient, inclusive, and knowledge-intensive agricultural systems. Sustainability in agri-value chains, therefore, cannot be achieved without embedding gender equity alongside climate resilience and institutional strengthening.

The Project and the Objectives

The Project '**Gender Role in Agriculture, Climate Change and Food Security**', under the Capacity-building and Climate Action programme of Friends of Women's World Banking, is operating in four states of India - Andhra Pradesh (AP), Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Odisha. The project covers 30 Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) and 22000+ farmers spread across nine districts, with direct implementation involving 6000 farmers, most of them women.

In the project, we seek to address specifically:



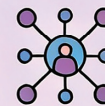
Embed gender equality and social inclusion approach throughout design, implementation, monitoring and reflection processes.



Improve women's **equitable access** to capacity-building through knowledge, skills, finance, technologies, networks, markets, institutional benefits and forge their leadership roles in FPO governance structures and value-chain activities.



Integrate gender considerations in training, demonstrations, technology distribution, and FPO strengthening processes to ensure equal and meaningful participation of women and men across all project activities.



Facilitate convergence to support gender-equitable outcomes.



Strengthen gender-responsive decision-making and agency at household, community and institutional levels.

Introduction

This would create an **enabling ecosystem** to prevent resistance, backlash, or unintended negative consequences as gender norms shift.

Gender Lens Integration in the Project Journey

This project adopts a **gender action learning approach**, positioning women and men as active change agents rather than passive beneficiaries. Through participatory visioning, reflection, and action planning, the approach enables the identification of context-specific gender-based constraints and supports collective efforts to dismantle them. By linking gender learning with climate-resilient and sustainable agriculture practices, the project aligns social inclusion with economic viability and environmental stewardship. As part of this, strengthening women's capacities and leadership within agri-collectives is essential to build **resilient and inclusive agri-enterprises**.

By recognising women as knowledge holders and change-makers, the project seeks to transform participation into influence, income, representation and leadership. Through targeted capacity-building initiatives, institutional support, and ecosystem engagement, the intervention aims to foster resilient agri-value chains that ensure equity and inclusion across processes and outcomes, while enhancing adaptive capacity in the face of climate and market uncertainties.

The Action Learning process adopts a **pause-reflect-improve** rhythm, creating deliberate cognitive process around gender responsiveness with three iterative loops:



Thus, project actors¹ shift from **implementers/beneficiaries to champions** of gender equity, enabling systems change. This reflection process is not merely for reporting; it will be a process of **changing practice organically** through deep listening and co-creation. Here, gender is conceptualised as a relational and structural determinant that shapes access to resources, decision-making, and institutional participation. It acknowledges women not just as participants, but as **leaders, innovators, and co-architects** of equitable and climate-resilient agricultural systems. **Empowerment won't be seen as an outcome alone, but rather as a continuous practice.** This approach ensures that the project moves beyond numbers to capture stories of change, grounded in women's voices, reality, and aspirations, creating a **model of agribusiness that is resilient, equitable and inclusive.**

Gender Action Plan (GAP)

GAP undertaken under the project aims to ensure **gender mainstreaming** as a core principle across all states and throughout the project lifecycle. GAP wouldn't be a distinct/add-on component; instead, it would mirror and reinforce project outputs, embedding gender-integration strategies into project **design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and learning.** It ensures that both women and men participate meaningfully, benefit equitably, and exercise agency in the context of climate-resilient agriculture and agri-collectives.

The focus areas for actions to be considered as part of GAP include:



Access and control- Mapping **gender roles** to identify tasks and activities performed and controlled by women and men in the community. Who does what, where, how, and when in project areas? Are there time, mobility, social, cultural, and economic constraints that may interfere with women's participation in project activities?



Decision-making Power- Engagement with women on cultural, social, legal, and other constraints limiting women's participation in decision-making at the household and community levels, or the use of resources and distribution of project benefits. Further, strengthening women's voice and autonomy in household and institutional spaces, including FPO Board, committees, etc., by facilitating collective strategies through FPOs/FIGs/SHGs to negotiate change.



Needs and Priorities- Designing activities based on women's interests and aspirations, and ensuring integration of **voices** from diverse women - older/younger women, single/widowed, Dalit/tribal, migrant families, differently-abled.



Capacity building - Gender-inclusive checkpoints using training content, visuals, language and **pedagogy** reflective of both men and women. Ensuring women-friendly scheduling, seasonal workload, suitability, and location arrangements, Increasing the number of women front-bench speakers, voice, and interactive exchanges; and encouraging trainers to be gender-sensitive and able to engage passive participants.



Grievance and Feedback Systems-Establishing mechanisms that prioritise women's feedback, dissent, and ideas; and looping reflection findings back into design and reform

¹ Project team, farmers, FPO's, etc

Chapter 2



Methodology

This action research is developed using a **Participatory Action Research (PAR) framework** and **feminist action research principles**, which foreground power relations, reflexivity, and collective agency in agri-food systems. Methodically, the study employed qualitative methods, structured around capturing fluid, adaptive **“Pause-Reflect-Improve”** learning cycle. The methodology emphasises agency, transparency, and continuous learning.

The PAR framework has been operationalised through engagement with change - more than 40 Master Trainers (MTs) and Nari Shakti Precursors (NSPs) as well as 6000 + FPO leadership and marginalized women farmers indirectly. The iterative process of reflection, action, analysis,



(Group interaction)

planning, learning, and realignment is locally led through a combination of unstructured and semi-structured dialogue, group reflection exercises, and collaborative problem-solving methodologies that emphasise voice and relational learning.

This enabled participants to articulate a shared vision, track change and temporal shifts in agency/leadership/institutional practices, and identify obstacles, including social norms and gender-based constraints, that hinder equitable participation, access to resources, and decision-making power. Insights generated through field engagement directly inform project adaptations, strengthening pathways toward equitable and climate-resilient agricultural development.

Analysis: Thematic Pattern Recognition

The report used thematic pattern recognition to analyse behavioural trends (e.g., participation vs. influence, adoption drivers, etc.). The field team’s on-the-ground appraisal of each project activity, from mobilisation to CSA adoption, served as the basis for the analysis. Findings were deeply contextualised within local socio-cultural norms, comparing how caste, mobility, education, geography, commodity type, and gender roles influenced outcomes differently across the four states and FPOs with differing gender composition. This allowed the identification of “Emerging Patterns” to inform the transition from Gender-blind/discriminatory/sensitive to Gender-responsive/transformational strategies, enabling the project to pivot its strategy and ensure interventions were **contextually and behaviourally relevant**. This constant **feedback** mechanism transformed the project into an action-learning research project.

Chapter 3



Capacity-Building Approach for Gender Integration

The project adopts a **phased, practice-oriented, and gender-integrated capacity-building approach** grounded in action research and contextual learning. It focuses on strengthening women's roles across the agriculture value chain, climate change adaptation, and food security through sustained engagement with FPOs, farmer collectives, households, and women farmers.

In the initial phases, capacity-building efforts concentrated on understanding gender roles, power relations, and climate vulnerabilities through scoping studies, state consultations, and needs assessments, ensuring interventions are rooted in local realities. Subsequent phases prioritise **building technical, institutional, and leadership capacities**, placing women farmers at the centre of all interventions. Capacity-building activities operate **at multiple levels**, individual women farmers, collectives, and FPO institutions, and combine technical training on climate-resilient and sustainable agriculture with institutional strengthening in governance, financial management, enterprise development, and value-chain integration.

The approach emphasises women-centric and mixed learning spaces, peer learning, cascading leadership opportunities, exposure visits, and hands-on demonstrations to promote learning-by-doing, visible outcomes, reduced drudgery, and confidence-building. Training is aligned with women's availability and supported by continuous handholding and follow-up to reduce risk and fear of failure. Gender sensitisation, decision-making skills, and enterprise orientation are integrated throughout, ensuring that women not only participate but also progressively assume leadership and economic roles.

Continuous documentation, reflection, and evidence generation guide adaptation, scale-up, and policy engagement, positioning women farmers and FPOs as agents of climate resilience and change.



(Interaction with Coir value chain stakeholders)

Chapter 4




Capacity Building Initiatives





Capacity Building Initiatives


The focus is on strengthening collective action and improving women farmers' **active participation, recognition and contribution** within FPOs. The effort aims to expand membership, primarily among women, enhance access to information, enable equitable participation in agricultural markets, and build strong community networks that support climate-resilient agriculture, income diversification, and women's decision-making power.

Gender Action Plan (GAP)

Activity	Rationale/Gender Interface	Measures & Actions
 <p>Mobilization</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers have a limited understanding of FPOs' membership, modus operandi, raison d'être, etc. • Women farmers lack knowledge about FPOs due to limited participation in community networks. Male family members affiliated with FPOs rarely share information about such matters. • Policies/projects often either ignore the existing community institutions or try to build afresh, losing out on resources, knowledge channels, and disturbing the social order. • Due to limited funds for community mobilisation events, the FPOs are able to conduct only awareness sessions about their work with limited exploration of the preliminary business opportunities. This implies that many FPOs lack sufficient share capital to undertake substantial business activities (capital-intensive focused), resulting in lower turnover and profits. • Even in those FPOs which have a considerable number of shareholders, the actual proportion of farmers doing business with farmers is low, ranging between 10-35% approx. Many farmers continue to do business with FPO for not more than one cycle, mostly involving a single transaction. Many participate by selling their produce to FPOs, but are limited in their ability to buy inputs and avail other services from FPOs. • Lower share capital means FPOs may struggle to make immediate payments to the farmers. This may force farmers, especially women farmers, to sell to local intermediaries at much lower rates due to their pressing need for immediate cash. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It will be open to both women and men, but predominantly for the former. At least 50% of the new shareholders identified will be women. • Women can be reached through already established community institutions such as farmer group networks. Those without any group membership will be made into a group and later registered as FIG/PG/SHG • Women's concerns discussed in the BoD meeting to be recorded in the Minutes register as evidence. • Women added in WhatsApp groups to receive regular updates on any information in their vernacular language, killing program or even share their concerns that require immediate action. • Lower the share capital for women with limited financial agency and capacity to become shareholders. • Farmers will be selected based on the current and potential of commodities to become FPOs' business models. • Increase in bank-linked payments reaching farmers directly, especially women.

Activity	Rationale/Gender Interface	Measures & Actions
 <p>Identification of issues and understanding the context</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women’s specific concerns vary sometimes as they are concentrated in different modes in the intra/inter value-chain of agriculture. • Their limited participation in community networks has two implications - one, that their concerns are often overlooked or remain unheard. Second, any good opportunities, information, or skills usually fail to reach them, or are irrelevant. • This not only means that their coping and adaptation capacity gets limited, but also it impacts and limits their scope for aspiring towards and building their skills for better remunerative opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns identified will be shared with the FPO’s management/leadership team, as well as local agriculture agencies such as KVKs • Appropriate capacity-building exercises will be carried out based on the needs identified. • FPOs will be implored to incorporate the needs identified in their business models. • Women will be identified for sharing indigenous and innovative practices • Documentation of such practices for recognition and knowledge sharing
 <p>Meetings organised on the Importance of collective action</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women are often confined to menial and laborious work, often not in the decision-making/managerial roles in the agricultural value chain. • Often, women don’t get access and control over farm-related earnings from FPOs. Since transactions are conducted with male relatives, women are often not part of the money exchange process. This leads to decreased agency, limited capacity to invest in CSA adaptation measures or entrepreneurial activities, and limited control over long-term planning. • In the FPO meetings, such as AGMs, there is limited participation of women, which means that their voices are often unheard and their concerns overlooked. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable women members to have greater access to FPO-related services and support (aggregation benefits) • Through the opportunities and benefits the networks provide, women may take up managerial aspects, not just passive labourers, as they get the right content, and they will then be able to make informed decisions. • Identify women with leadership potential • Make information, skills, and resources more accessible to women through community networks • Revive agri-groups (FIG/PG/SHG) at the village level, wherever they are not functional

Capacity Building Initiatives

Activity	Rationale/Gender Interface	Measures & Actions
 <p>Participation in Forums</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers and FPOs rarely get fair price realisation for their products when they sell their products to local traders; this is particularly true for women farmers. • Farmers selling raw product, or only doing primary processing, as they have limited information about the diverse forms of products that can be developed from a commodity. Even the processed goods lack the finesse and palette requirements of the consumers. Besides packaging, presentation, labelling, and related aesthetics, being able to compete is often out of reach. • Farmers have limited information on the requirements of large-scale buyers and rarely get to meet and interact with large-scale buyers. • In tribal areas which have niche products, consumers and traders have limited understanding about the availability, characteristics, purposes and health benefits of products, because of which many products, especially those that are grown or foraged by women, are lost to oblivion and slowly fade. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Products found in FPO's areas which have either business potential or niche quality will be supported for product development to showcase in different forums. • FPO's product(s) profile, and product testing will be done, such as obtaining FSSAI license, Agmark, etc. • Packaging and labelling support will be provided, especially environmentally friendly packaging. Seek opportunities for men and women farmers, as well as FPOs, to participate in networking events to identify potential buyers and showcase their products.

Implementation So Far

Activity 1.1

Module and ToT on Mobilization

The work began with the development of a comprehensive mobilization module and Training of Trainers (ToT) for MTs and NSPs. The module covered three key dimensions: understanding community issues and context, the importance of collective action, and facilitating women's engagement in community-based groups and FPO structures. This served as the foundation for a structured mobilization process across project locations. The mobilisation efforts aimed to reach 200 farmers per FPO, with particular attention to identifying at least 50 new farmers with no prior association, and to focus predominantly on women to expand both membership and active economic participation.

Activity 1.2

Mobilization Phase I - Identification of Issues and Understanding the Context

Following the ToT, Mobilization Phase I was implemented to identify gender-specific challenges faced by farmers, especially women, through participatory rural appraisal (PRA) exercises, community meetings, and focused discussions. These engagements created safe platforms for women to articulate barriers such as limited access to inputs, markets, financial services, and information on government schemes. Women highlighted restricted roles in decision-making, limited access to ownership of farm incomes, and difficulties in benefiting from FPO services. These sessions resulted in women expressing stronger interest in participating in collective ventures and opened pathways for their direct involvement in FPO-led income activities.

Activity 1.3

Mobilization Phase II - Importance of Collective Action

Mobilization Phase II, focused on demonstrating the benefits of collective action and how membership in FPOs could support solutions to identified challenges. Trainers facilitated discussions highlighting how collective input procurement, joint marketing, and value addition could enhance profitability and reduce dependency on intermediaries. Women farmers are actively sharing their challenges related to limited access to agricultural inputs, markets, credit services, and government schemes, as well as low involvement in decision-making processes. This phase also generated momentum for new initiatives. For example, in Amreli district of Gujarat, when health and nutritional advantages of millets were discussed collectively, women farmers, who were initially hesitant in individual interactions, showed enthusiastic willingness to cultivate and adopt millets for food/nutrition and business opportunities.

Activity 1.4

Mobilization Phase III - Facilitating membership in FPOs

Here the focus was 2 pronged –efforts were being directed towards facilitating formal membership and encouraging active participation in business transactions. Women farmers are encouraged to take up shareholder membership through reduced share-capital requirements and are supported to engage in direct selling and transactions with FPOs. These efforts are contributing in strengthening their financial agency, as payments will reach their personal bank accounts, enhancing transparency and autonomy. The mobilization is also supporting existing members, especially men, to become more consistent business partners with their FPOs beyond single transactions.

Activity 1.5

Networking and Partnering Opportunities - Participation in Forums

Here, the focus is on improving market visibility and commercial linkages for FPO products. Niche and region-specific commodities, including tribal produce often collected and processed by women, are being identified for product profiling, testing, and value addition. Support has been extended for packaging, labelling, and preparation for participation in district-level and external forums, exhibitions, and buyer-seller meets. Through these platforms, women and FPO representatives interacted directly with larger market actors, explored new business avenues, and strengthened their networks.

Collectively, these activities have increased awareness, improved women's participation in FPO systems, and created pathways for leadership development and economic agency, laying a strong foundation for sustained gender-equitable growth within FPOs.

Emerging Patterns



Patterns in Inter/intra state; FPO composition; Agri value chain	Recommendations for change in Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gujarat: Mobilisation required coordination, especially with FPO leaders. Mixed groups were not possible; in male-led meetings, only men came. • Maharashtra: Almost all activities required coordination (women FPOs, routine meetings, technical sessions). • Odisha: All activities required coordination, though intensity varied. • AP: Mobilisation meetings required coordination; familiarity with villages made it easier. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of village leaders to who can give legitimacy of the training that would create trust • Initiation can be extended to family members to assuage any of their apprehensions • Establish advance planning calendars co-created with FPO leadership to support timely mobilisation. • Use micro-group meetings at the hamlet or street level instead of large gatherings. • Reduce dependency on leaders for mobilisation.
<p>Activities requiring coordination with FPO/SHG/FIG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gujarat: Mobilisation required coordination with the FPO. • Maharashtra: Almost all activities required coordination due to the nature of women-led FPOs. • Odisha: All activities required coordination with FPOs, especially mobilisation and governance. • AP: Mobilisation meetings required coordination; long-term association with villages helped. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue building a local collective network for ensuring minimal disruption in project activities • Create equitable and respectful learning environments. • Ensure inclusion of marginalised caste groups.
<p>Differences in women’s and men’s responses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men asked more technical questions. • Women showed interest in mobilisation, organic practices, and FPO membership. • Women avoided competitive or confrontational discussions; men dominated the floor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage women to sit in the front and speak first, balancing power dynamics intentionally. • Promote peer support systems, pairing confident speakers with first-time participants.

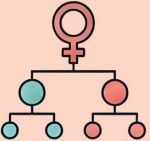
Patterns in Inter/intra state; FPO composition; Agri value chain	Recommendations for change in Action
<p>Comfort in mixed-gender settings</p> <p>Gujarat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women are not comfortable. • They sit separately, talk among themselves, but do not share openly. • Ghoonghat prevents speaking in front of elders or leaders. <p>Maharashtra</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women do not speak immediately; after repetition, they ask questions. • Recap helps. • Older women need more time. <p>Odisha</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women attend but rarely speak. • Believe their answers may be wrong. • Speak privately after the meeting. <p>AP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patterns depend on caste-based street arrangements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure a summary or paraphrasing of the meeting key points to enhance the recall capacity of people • Incorporate patterned responses from participants through a system where women are asked to speak each time alternatively. • After someone speaks, especially when previous forms of contention have been identified, encourage others to give input through questions like “What do you think about what was shared by...”, “Where this would work Or not work”, etc. • Use visual tools and participatory exercises to support women who hesitate to speak publicly. • Facilitate dialogue guidelines and time-bound speaking turns to prevent male dominance.
<p>Caste and confidence patterns</p> <p>Gujarat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Darbari women rarely leave home. • OBC women attend in groups. • SC women’s voices are undervalued. <p>Maharashtra</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher caste women silence lower caste women. • Strong local caste politics influences meetings. <p>Odisha</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women with education/financial security are taken more seriously. <p>AP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a meeting is held in OBC street → SC women do not come. • If held in SC street → OBC women may still join. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Session on Indian Constitutional Rights • Introduce rotational meeting venues to increase reach across caste-based localities. • Conduct multiple smaller meetings in different localities instead of one centralized meeting. • Engage neutral public locations and community spaces to avoid exclusion. • Identify caste-diverse leadership teams for mobilisation.




The focus is on strengthening governance, leadership, and institutional systems within FPOs so that women and marginalised farmer groups can participate meaningfully in decision-making. The activities are currently addressing gaps in governance processes, legal compliance, and leadership development through a structured, gender-inclusive capacity-building approach.

GENDER ACTION PLAN (GAP)

Activity	Rationale/Gender Interface	Measures & Actions
 <p>Module development and ToT for MTs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training which is not designed for inclusivity often excludes women through language, pace, and delivery methods. • Training was needed for MTs to build their knowledge about the various functions and processes of FPO governance for gender and social inclusion, learn about the new changes in the legalities, and mandatory compliance requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed structured modules covering FPO governance, compliance, and statutory processes, explicitly integrating gender and social inclusion principles. • MTs receive the training and demonstration. • MTs were oriented to promote regularisation of BoD meetings, inclusive agenda-setting, and systematic documentation with attention to women’s participation. • Provide regular updates to MTs on changes in compliance and legal norms, enabling consistent and inclusive advisory support.
 <p>Training of FPO members</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women shareholders and women BoDs often lack clarity on roles and responsibilities of BoDs, limiting their confidence and agency. • Many FPOs, despite being operational for several years, require periodic refresher training on FPO functioning and evolving legal and compliance mandates This is particularly due to frequent changes in the BoDs, which necessitate continuous capacity building to ensure new members effectively understand and perform their roles. • Inadequate understanding of mandatory compliance, documentation processes, and statutory timelines often leads to financial penalties, operational disruptions, and risks of license suspension, affecting overall business continuity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplified complex legal and compliance concepts using visual tools, group exercises, and real-life scenarios. • Through participatory and fun activities, training delivery is designed for longer-term retention and better understanding for FPO members, and inclusive governance. • Training followed by continuous handholding support and document verification is done to gauge FPOs’ current status and advise tailored to each FPO’s compliance status. • Encourage more regular meetings of BoDs to discuss matters pertinent to FPO members and take timely action, with mandatory women’s attendance.

Activity	Rationale/Gender Interface	Measures & Actions
 <p>Creation of parallel leadership channels: Sub-committees Formation, Integration of women in leadership positions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In FPOs, usually the CEO/Director/Chairperson is anchoring the ship, which is the FPO, which becomes very burdensome for a single person to manage, especially considering their own commitments to their agricultural land. This affects FPO growth and restricts leadership opportunities for members. FPO members, even BoDs, feel disconnected from FPOs, due to their limited involvement in the FPO operations, beyond just being a figurine Others often rely on the CEO, and rarely contribute as they feel a person is enough, and they don't think they are required. Women participate mostly in mobilization, internal operations and procurement-related roles. Mixed group scenarios limit women's participation strongly in states like Gujarat. Women's contribution is high in organic practices, seed preservation, primary processing, yet not valued in formal FPO decision ecosystems. Leadership pipeline is weak - women BoDs often silent, and governance training is irregular. Women rarely involved in the marketing-facing part of the operations, and often confined to operations such as procurement, limiting their opportunities for growth and skill building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacitate women members who are already part of decision-making to be effective in discharging their leadership roles. Key committees required were identified and formed based on the context-specific requirements of the FPOs The committee members were groomed and trained to take on more responsibilities and develop leadership skills to act as a second line of leadership for the FPO Look for opportunities for women to become committee heads, especially those who have prior experience in agri-collectives and committee theme-specific requirements. Each committee to have at least 1 Board member At least 1 woman as committee head. Participation of women and vulnerable groups will be ensured through membership in Committees and attendance in meetings. Particular attention would be given to women's voices in group meetings and planning, enhance active and meaningful involvement. Issues/opportunities identified by NSP during mobilization meetings, would be taken as agenda points in the AGM meetings to highlight their issues as well as ensure opportunities for developing a parallel leadership line of women concentrated commodities as a business model. They will be trained on their duties and the appropriate skills required for them to perform their role.

Activity	Rationale/Gender Interface	Measures & Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Except for input business or procurement business, FPO is not able to diversify into multiple commodities with market-ready consumer products due to time limitations, as the harvest window is very short, and any delays in taking appropriate actions can translate into huge losses. This means most of the FPOs are confined to limited services and products. Investment or credit-seeking activities are few and far between, as this requires continuous follow-ups and time. Without enough working capital, FPO's ability to scale, diversify, and add value-additions is minimal. • If the proportion of women in the BoD is low, women very rarely actively participate, express their opinions/dissent in the meetings, as they are often overlooked or dismissed as a deviant occurrence instead of the issue being experienced by many due to gendered influence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With an increase in the number of women in leadership positions, and data evidence created through NSPs' meetings, the probability of their voice being heard, women's issues being recognised, and their crucial role being recognised is higher, as they get more backing and will feel more comfortable in expressing themselves. • Enhance decision-making capacity in women through targeted interventions like specific exposure visits to women-run companies. • The inclusion of women members is to be made mandatory in all training and meetings in the FPO.
 <p>Vision-building for the next 3 years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the reasons why FPOs don't last long is that others often take over the thinking and planning for them. They are not involved in the planning process of their own institution. So, when they are suddenly handed the reins as the external agency leaves, the FPO collapses. • With the withdrawal of the external agency support, there is an exodus of knowledge, talent, skill, and resources, without which the members are overwhelmed and stumble, if at all, to survive by barely emerging from drowning by breathing on the surface. • The current model of developing FPO is not organic, and is very fund-centred. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A vision-building exercise will be taken to understand the aspirations of the FPO members and chart out the pathway towards achieving them. • Participations and inputs are taken from all of the actors at multiple levels- CEOs, BoDs, NSPs, farmers, community leaders, POPI and other agencies and then amalgamated to identify the capacity-building requirements to achieve that goal. • The pace is determined by taking in current capacities of the different FPOs and setting the steps to achieve that. • For its sustainability, CSA practices will be promoted along with the conservation of indigenous practices.

Capacity Building Initiatives

Activity	Rationale/Gender Interface	Measures & Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The problem with such an approach is that once the supporting agency, which brought in on a need basis, skilled personnel for FPO development, the local community talent pool is ignored and not developed.• These external persons have a heavy outward approach, limited contextual understanding, so all the operations are designed to cater to these external entities, rather than working in consideration of the local ecosystem. This system is bound to collapse as they also leave.• Without any leadership or plans, the FPO doesn't get direction to grow. Even when enthusiastic BoDs and local CEOs take up the mantle, FPO rarely grows beyond the basics to attain its true potential, moving slowly, plateauing, then reaching pinnacles.	



(Women farmers navigating digital advisory services)

Implementation So Far

Activity 2.1

Module development and ToT for MTs

The module focuses on the roles and responsibilities of BoDs, mandatory legal compliance requirements, and timelines for filing records, all of which are essential to avoid penalties and ensure business continuity.

Participatory tools, such as the Snakes and Ladders game, are being used as learning aids to engage with complex governance topics. MTs have received field demonstrations through Zonal Coordinator shadowing, enabling them to observe real-time governance practices and support the FPOs with documentation and compliance systems. This ToT is currently strengthening a cadre of trainers who will continue mentoring FPOs throughout the project period.

Activity 2.2

Training of FPO members

Training sessions for FPO members are currently being conducted to refresh governance knowledge and introduce new legal norms and accountability structures. Many FPOs have been operational for years, but changes in leadership and limited awareness of compliance processes have created governance gaps. The training, therefore, focuses on refreshing institutional memory, enabling shareholders to understand their rights and responsibilities, and creating an environment in which BoDs are held accountable. Through participatory demonstrations, discussions, and interactive tools, FPO members are enhancing their understanding of financial transparency, record-keeping, convergence opportunities, and leadership responsibilities. Continuous handholding and document verification are being provided to assess the current compliance status and guide FPOs in addressing shortcomings.

The training is strengthening confidence and long-term, trust-based relationships among Board members to engage with government departments, line agencies, and financial institutions, thereby improving access to resources and strategic planning. Members are also expressing interest in further training on economic management, marketing, and business expansion, which is being planned as follow-up support.

Activity 2.3

Creation of parallel leadership channels- Sub-committees Formation, Integration of women in leadership positions

The project team is creating parallel leadership structures through sub-committee formation to distribute responsibilities beyond the CEO and Director roles and reduce dependency on a single leadership figure. The committees are formed based on context-specific operational needs such as procurement, marketing, finance, and value-addition enterprises.

Efforts are being made to ensure that each committee includes at least one BoD member and at least one woman, to promote gender-balanced decision-making.

Women are being upskilled and trained to take on leadership responsibilities and lead committees, where they already have strong engagement in agri-collectives or value-chain-specific skills. This is helping women gain visibility in market-facing roles, where participation has traditionally been limited. As sub-committees begin driving diversified enterprise planning and monitoring operational tasks, women's voices will start gaining legitimacy and their confidence to contribute steadily increase. FWWB is also supporting committees to improve their performance and establish their authority by identifying credit and investment opportunities, to scale-up and value addition.

Activity 2.4

Vision-building of the next 3 years

A context-specific, need-based, individual FPO vision plan was co-created with diverse stakeholder groups- CEOs, BoDs, NSPs, farmers, POPIs, and community leaders.

This exercise is designed to address a common challenge where external agencies drive planning and decision-making, leaving FPOs unprepared to sustain operations independently after project withdrawal. Through a participatory approach, individual and institution-level aspirations are being identified, and capacity-building needs are being mapped accordingly. Steps are currently being set based on each FPO's existing capacity, enabling a phased, realistic approach to growth. The visioning process also integrates CSA and the conservation of indigenous practices, ensuring that plans align with sustainability and local ecosystem needs.

This approach builds ownership among FPO members, strengthens their long-term planning capacity, and reduces their dependency on external actors.

Emerging Patterns

Patterns in Inter/intra-state; FPO composition; Agri value chain	Recommendations for change in Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing willingness among women to join committees, but hesitation in market-facing roles. • Weak compliance systems and irregular meetings. • Limited attempts to seek investment due to poor documentation, with very few maintaining digital records. • Most FPOs are confined to input and raw procurement businesses; limited diversification. <p>Influence of cultural and gender norms on participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrictions by husbands/in-laws on mobility. • Low confidence is observed in women in the mixed-group meetings • Caste norms influence seating, speech, and attendance patterns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued exposure visits & mentoring needed to build confidence • To address women’s growing willingness to participate yet hesitation in market-facing or leadership roles, capacity development must be phased and confidence-oriented. • Women-only preparatory workshops, followed by gradual transition to mixed meetings, can strengthen articulation and negotiation abilities before exposure to larger platforms. • Structured governance systems, including fixed meeting calendars, attendance accountability, and simple documentation templates, could improve compliance and regularity. • To overcome poor digital record-keeping, low-tech mobile-based MIS, training of local youth as digital fellows, and peer-learning exchanges among mature FPOs can build comfort and transparency needed for investment readiness. • Diversification pilots such as small value-addition units led by women committees can demonstrate feasibility beyond input and raw procurement models. • Addressing cultural and gender norms requires family and community sensitization, including husband-and-son engagement dialogues, showcasing examples of successful local women, and scheduling sessions at convenient timings.

Patterns in Inter/intra-state; FPO composition; Agri value chain	Recommendations for change in Action
<p>Comfort with mixed-gender events</p> <p>Gujarat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As women feel uncomfortable, they sit separately and talk only among themselves. • Ghoonghat and the presence of elders prevent speaking. <p>Maharashtra</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initially hesitant, but speaks after repeated prompting. • They ask many questions once they have comprehended the content through repeated iterations. • Recap is important; older women need more time. <p>Odisha</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend but do not speak, feel their knowledge is inadequate. • Women share their thoughts individually with the trainers after the meeting is concluded. <p>AP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed-gender groups are mostly comfortable, but variance in participation is observed, being influenced by caste-based street location. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage participatory group activities and arts such as dramas • Time-bound speaking turns and role-based facilitation can prevent male dominance and encourage women's voices. • For mobility restrictions and exposure visits, short-distance field trips, female escorts, and cluster-level joint programmes provide acceptable alternatives.

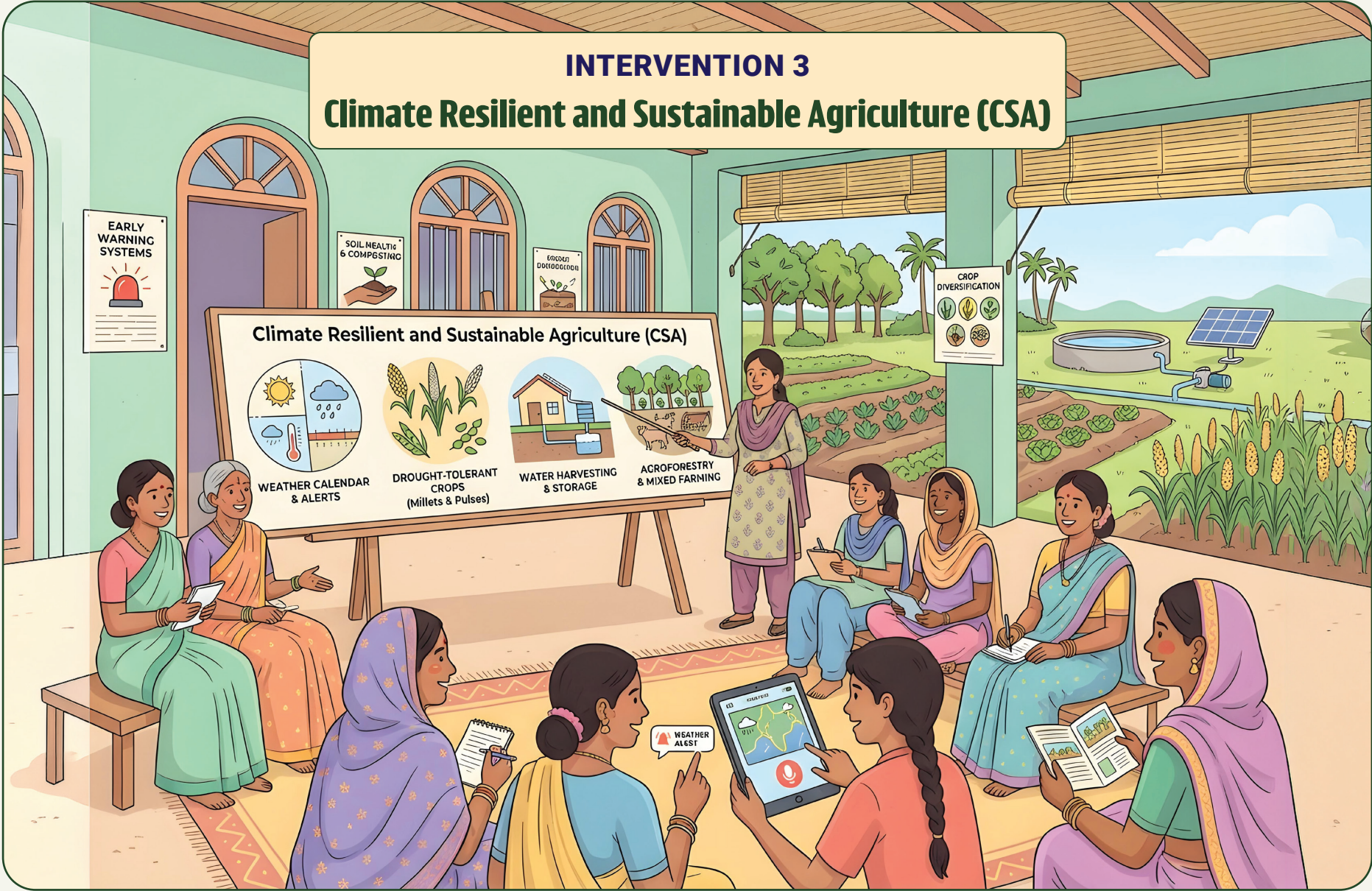
Patterns in Inter/intra-state; FPO composition; Agri value chain	Recommendations for change in Action
<p>Family permission required?</p> <p>Gujarat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If women-only meetings, permission is seldom needed. • Permission needed for exposure visits (distance, travel). <p>Maharashtra</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permission required, along with supporting media evidence of their attendance, such as photos, WhatsApp video calls, etc. • Trainers feel one of the reason why women are hesitant to participate is because their husbands demand higher nurturing (care support), but women still have some room for negotiation if denied. <p>Odisha</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permission required from the family members • Timing crucial-after 3 pm best. • Women leave after 1-1.5 hours due to responsibilities. <p>AP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No permission needed unless the travel distance is long. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unless there is no other alternative, all training is to be conducted in the villages • Wherever possible, the provision of travel reimbursement should be enabled. • Interactive demo workshops to be conducted for women to learn the practical skills required. • Skilling of women in business development and management. • Invite other family members, particularly males, to the training.
<p>Patterns in speaking, silence, seating, and disagreement</p> <p>Gujarat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to observe patterns in the interaction between men and women due to strict segregation being maintained in the attendance of training. • On rare occasions, where there is a mixed group meeting, there's a blanket silence observed unless repeatedly prompted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For meaningful participation and leadership development of women, more defined strategies are required for adoption that respond to cultural norms, mobility restrictions, confidence gaps, and operational barriers. • A phased participation model can be introduced, especially in FPOs where there is low representation/participation of women in FPO's decision-making. It can start with women-only preparatory sessions to build their understanding and confidence, followed by integrated mixed-group forums

Patterns in Inter/intra-state; FPO composition; Agri value chain	Recommendations for change in Action
<p>Maharashtra</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women share disagreements after the meeting, not during. • They believe men won't accept their views publicly. • Women actively participate and ask a lot of questions. • Older women need repeated iterations to understand the training content. <p>Odisha</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women share disagreements after the meeting, not during. • Women disparage other participants after the training is over and share it with the trainer, especially if it is a man. • Women with higher education and economic well-being's options are valued and deferred to. • Women disparage other women of different castes after the training is over. • Women sit around the perimeters if they don't think it is relevant to them. • Domestic work limits interest. <p>AP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women are generally outspoken • Domestic work limits interest. <p>Leadership roles, responsibilities, tokenism, and male dominance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many women are BoDs only symbolically (compliance fulfilment). • Women rarely discuss money, markets, or assets. • Women seldom lead meetings; they primarily attend. • Women lack confidence with accounts and legal documents. • Male BoDs often ignore women's input. • Women may face private undermining, though not always visible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve inclusion and check dominance of particular groups, there's a need for rotating meeting venues across caste-based localities, ensuring mixed seating, scheduled turn-taking, and facilitated moderation. • Structured recap sessions. • Discuss with FPOs to adopt governance systems that institutionalise equality, rather than treating it as training-based behaviour. For equality to be sustainable, it must be built into the FPO's rules, structures, and decision-making systems rather than relying on individual motivation or training. Institutionalization ensures that gender-inclusive practices continue even when leadership changes or external support ends. • Institutionalize agenda-sharing before meetings so women and others can prepare. • Require decision documentation with the names of individuals contributing (for ensuring visibility of women's voices and contributions) • Using structured speaking turns so each member is heard without domination. • Mandatory quorum rules that decisions can't be passed without women's attendance. • Conducted ToT sessions combining technical demonstrations with facilitated reflection on gendered roles, power asymmetries, and participation barriers within FPOs.

Patterns in Inter/intra-state; FPO composition; Agri value chain	Recommendations for change in Action
<p>Regularity in attendance</p> <p>Gujarat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few women attend in mixed settings, but rarely speak up. • Their husbands do FPO work; women know membership/position but not functions. • Some women do not attend as they feel they have nothing to say, or don't know what is expected. <p>Maharashtra</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women BoDs attend all meetings. • Some speak; others lack understanding and stay quiet. <p>Odisha</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some women actively participate. • Others attend but are silent. • Night meetings prevent women's attendance. • Women feel they are added only to complete compliance requirements. • In a mixed Board, women avoid participating in business discussions. • In a women-majority Board, women take more leadership. <p>AP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In women FPOs, women agree with the concurrent leadership and give assent, but may not take strong positions. • In mixed FPOs, men neither involve women nor women show interest. • Women feel household responsibilities prevent deeper engagement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct women only training to better understand from women about their limited interest and possible solutions for it. • Joint spousal sensitization sessions and engagement of husbands/ in-laws can be taken up to reduce mobility restrictions and shift household norms.

Patterns in Inter/intra-state; FPO composition; Agri value chain	Recommendations for change in Action
<p>Experience of the training outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subcommittees, after formation, have taken focused work and started initiating activities. • The number of regular monthly meetings has increased • Accountability mechanisms have been introduced. • Despite regular meetings, it is happening in the evening, because of which women are not able to attend. The timing is such because meeting times sometimes extend. • Due to the fixing of meeting dates, there is a lower range of uncertainty and higher member turnout, which is in contrast to the earlier pattern, where any time or date was declared for the meeting with very short notice, because of which many missed out due to prior engagements. • Many women BoDs exist symbolically and avoid speaking due to fear of rejection or lack of knowledge. • In FPOs where Meetings that are often held in the evenings prevent women's attendance, as only men are usually able to attend, because women have domestic work. • Women leaders are more effective in women-majority or women-led FPOs. • Women need sequenced learning-- slower-paced, recap-based, practical-first training improves comprehension and understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FPO suggested that sub-committees have made work easier due to equal distribution of work, as well as being accountable, as people know who is supposed to do what. • A simpler and easily consumable IEC module for women is required. For example, any training should be practical and begin with what women already know, such as business training on milk or paan • Creating smaller working committees (finance, procurement, value-addition, marketing) led by women provides real responsibility and reduces tokenism. • Ensure fixed monthly meeting schedules at women-accessible times • Peer-led learning circles where a woman from the group can reiterate what the trainer has spoken about and explain it to others as a recap for others to comprehend & retail & practice as well. • Sequenced training for older women, as many of whom may have had limited formal education or exposure to technical or financial concepts. Instead of single, intensive trainings, content is broken into shorter modules delivered over multiple sessions, starting with basic concepts and gradually moving to more advanced topics. Each session includes repetition, recap, and hands-on demonstrations before new information is introduced. Visual tools, simple language, real examples from their daily work, peer support groups, and practice exercises help reinforce learning.

Patterns in Inter/intra-state; FPO composition; Agri value chain	Recommendations for change in Action
<p>Effectiveness of Women BoDs</p> <p>Attendance</p> <p>Gujarat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some attend but do not speak. • Husbands handle FPO work; women know only their membership position. • Some do not attend at all due to feeling unprepared. <p>Maharashtra</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most attend; some speak, others stay silent due to a lack of understanding. <p>Odisha</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some actively participate; others attend but stay silent. • Night meetings prevent women’s participation. • In mixed BoDs, women avoid business discussions. • In women-led FPOs, they take more active roles, such as milk collection record maintenance. <p>AP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women in all-women FPOs tend to agree/support but may not lead. • In male-led FPOs, men do not involve women; women also show less interest due to household burdens. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showcase examples of successful women-led businesses to build confidence in women. • Introducing value-addition pilots run by women, such as grading, sorting, packaging, processing, or direct marketing, to diversify FPO businesses and build space for women’s decision-making power. • Each committee must submit written decisions and progress updates periodically • Review progress quarterly with community feedback. • Introduce performance-linked recognition for inclusive leadership. • Annual public social audit on gender inclusion during AGM so that participation is meaningful and accountable. • Develop a leadership ladder model beginning with exposure visits, mentoring, and decision roles.






Capacity Building Initiatives

FWWB is strengthening climate resilience among agricultural stakeholders by framing, delivering, and applying climate information in actionable ways. Training programs, workshops, and knowledge-sharing platforms are enhancing stakeholder skills and capacities to implement CSA strategies.


The approach emphasizes technical excellence, agro-climatic along with socio-political awareness, digital readiness, and strong partnerships to support multi-dimensional, inclusive scaling. By integrating local knowledge, business models, and stakeholder engagement, FWWB is guiding FPOs and farmers toward sustainable agricultural transformation. Activities are co-designed through rigorous decision-making processes, prioritising fit-for-purpose interventions and building institutional capacity to promote equitable, context-specific CSA adoption. Small-scale farmers and their communities are receiving practical tools and innovations that address both current needs and future resilience. FWWB is leveraging respective strengths, sharing knowledge about what is working, and ensuring no stakeholder is left behind.

Gender Action Plan (GAP)

Activity	Rationale/Gender Interface	Measures & Actions
 <p>Bio-inputs preparation and nutritional management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cost of production is increasing due to chemical-intensive and GMO crop cultivation practices. • Farmers are compelled to take loans from informal channels to initiate production. • Women apply fertilisers and pesticides as per the instructions from male relatives, not really getting the knowledge on how to do the same. • Excessive use of chemical-intensive fertilisers and pesticides is deteriorating health and deteriorating the quality of potable water. • Lack of awareness about the optimum usage of fertilizers and pesticides 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training on bio-input production and application based on the resources made to be available in decentralised manner.. • Encourage bio-input-based group entrepreneurship to promote an income model as well as reduce work burden and save time for women. This would extend women’s access and control over inputs. • Improve participation in decision-making at different levels-intrahousehold, community, national • Advance control over/access to resources such as agro-climatic information, technology, credit, and livelihood incomes. • Easing of workload by encouraging agricultural practices and technologies that decrease women’s workloads and drudgery. • Promote gradual chemical reduction targets (season to season) instead of abrupt elimination. • Use existing women’s collectives as peer learning hubs. • Promote shared production models to reduce repetitive individual labour and ensure the supply of adequate quantity of raw materials.

Activity	Rationale/Gender Interface	Measures & Actions
 <p>App-based Agro advisory</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As climate variability and change intensify – with erratic rainfall, prolonged dry spells, and more frequent pest outbreaks – timely, tailored information is crucial for decision-making. Yet without intentional inclusivity, emerging technologies risk reinforcing existing inequities rather than overcoming them. • Barriers include limited phone ownership, digital literacy gaps, high data costs, and social norms influencing technology use. • Information must be accessible, trusted, and usable • Digital inclusion steps are often missing. • These systems overlook social validation dynamics (farmers adopt when peers validate, not just when experts advise) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combining scientific forecasts with indigenous knowledge, building trust and ownership among communities. By ensuring that people understand and act upon early warning information, it becomes not only a technical service but a social contract of preparedness and collaboration. • Information must be accessible, trusted, and usable. • Translating forecasts into local languages and delivering them through familiar channels such as WhatsApp ensuring that information translates into early action.
 <p>Pre-production and Production</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recurrent droughts and unpredictable rainfall patterns continue to threaten pastoralist livelihoods • Adoption of new models is strongly influenced by social validation and demonstrated evidence rather than training alone. • There’s a need to harmonize actionable ideas, identify existing strategies and complementary approaches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equip farmers with the knowledge, skills, and practical tools needed to address climate change challenges effectively and actively contribute to climate action across the continent. • Combine drought-tolerant seeds + soil moisture management + advisory + market linkages. • Align input supply timelines with forecast windows. • Integrate livestock and crop advisories for mixed farming households. • Strengthen the capacity of stakeholders with a particular focus on scaling climate-smart solutions and agricultural innovations that support resilience, sustainability, and food security. • Initiate conversations to facilitate capacity sharing and exchange of existing approaches, on-the-ground experiences, and scaling lessons.

Capacity Building Initiatives

Activity	Rationale/Gender Interface	Measures & Actions
 <p>Drudgery reduction technology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technologies are often designed without women's input. Labour-saving tools sometimes increase women's work instead of reducing it. Access does not equal control. Intra-household norms determine whether time saved becomes leisure, income, or more work. Women's work burden is reduced by enhancing their access to technologies, practices and infrastructure and by promoting an equitable distribution of responsibilities, including at the household level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify peak drudgery points across value chains (weeding, fodder collection, water carrying, post-harvest processing). Quantify hours spent per tasks and health strain points (like back pain, chemical exposure, repetitive bending, skin issues, etc). Mapping of government schemes supporting farm mechanisation. Support women in applying for subsidies in their own name. Advocate with departments for women-friendly equipment standards. Generate knowledge on the gender division of labour in different agricultural sub-sectors and agri-food value chains to assess women's work burden. Strengthen the capacities to upscale women-friendly technologies and practices that increase productivity, and reduce drudgery and vulnerability in the face of climate change.



(Women leading bio-input preparation training)

Implementation So Far

Activity 3.1

Bio-inputs preparation and nutritional management

Training on bio-inputs such as Jeevamrit and Dashparni extract is equipping women farmers across Nilachakra, Swastikrupa, and Daridra Narayan FPCs with knowledge on soil fertility, pest management, and organic farming. Demonstrations on vermicompost preparation, seed selection, and raised bed plantation are enhancing practical understanding of climate-resilient practices. Participation increases women's awareness and technical confidence while fostering the adoption of environmentally sustainable approaches.

Activity 3.2

App-based Agro advisory

Digital advisories are delivering timely climate information to farmers, translating scientific forecasts into local languages via accessible platforms such as WhatsApp.

Activity 3.3

Pre-production and production Support

Meetings and consultations, including discussions with experts such as experts from DAAT centres and agricultural research institutes, are focusing on crop management for paddy and other key crops. Recommendations on nutrient management, water use, and pest monitoring are being integrated into field-level trainings. Side-income models, such as local hen rearing, are being introduced as supplementary livelihood strategies.

Activity 3.4

Farmer Field School (FFS)

FFS sessions are being conducted across FPOs to implement crops such as finger millets, vegetables, moringa, and fodder, while integrating organic practices, including Jivamrit and Bijamrit applications. These activities are strengthening coordination with NSPs and enhancing farmers' capacity for climate-informed decision-making.

Activity 3.5

Community seed bank

Training was provided on the community seed bank and the role of vithhana mitras (friends of seeds), best practices in seed production and its precautions, precautions for seed harvesting and grading, seed grading, processing and packing techniques, required equipment, tools, and machinery for seed bank operations, and marketing techniques.

Activity 3.6

Drudgery reduction technology

SRFMTTI is conducting specialised training on women-friendly machinery in ASR and Vizianagaram districts. Sessions expose women farmers to hand weeding, reaping, tillage, and other tools to reduce labour burdens while improving efficiency. Youth engagement and skill-building opportunities are being promoted alongside exposure to machinery.

These CSA activities, conducted over the past six months, have focused on capacity building, inclusive participation, and practical adoption of climate-smart practices. While long-term impact is still unfolding, the emphasis is on equipping farmers, especially women, with actionable knowledge, tools, and strategies to respond to climate variability, build women's agency and enhance resilience across FPOs and farming communities.

Emerging Patterns

Patterns in Inter/intra-state; FPO Composition; Agri Value Chain	Recommendations for Change in Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Across all states, women’s participation was more robust in mobilisation and organic practices. Still, it is limited in market-facing, technical, and governance-oriented sessions due to gender norms, perceived lack of decision-making power, and confidence barriers. • Adoption and attendance varied by crop value chain, age group, caste, and family restrictions. <p>Gujarat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women came more for mobilisation but avoided business/pesticide/governance sessions because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o They felt women do not do these tasks. o Decisions are not in their hands. o Learning is seen as “not useful” if they cannot influence decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In places with stricter provisions on women’s mobility, we can start with women-only technical batches first, followed by mixed-group combined classes to build confidence • Use sequenced learning, breaking complex/technical CSA content into smaller modules with repetition, visuals, and practical demonstrations • Female trainers or co-trainers where women hesitate (e.g., Gujarat) to increase comfort and openness. • Train extension workers and NSPs to interpret digital advisories and contextualise them during field visits. • Build capacities to promote bundled CSA packages rather than standalone practices.
<p>Maharashtra</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSA sessions led by government technical experts also attracted more men. <p>Odisha</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSA attendance varied by crop. Example: Groundnut-heavy villages → more men due to pesticide/seed-related knowledge. <p>AP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation depended on crop pattern. • Villages with groundnut saw more male attendance due to the technical nature (pesticides, seed selection). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct peer field days where farmers observe results firsthand. • Share short testimonial videos of local farmers explaining outcomes in their own language. • Integrate non-smartphone (IVR/voice-based) services for feature phone users to get access to digital agro-advisories. • Promote apps with action-oriented messaging -e.g., instead of rainfall forecast, send: ‘Delay sowing by 5 days in Block X; expected rainfall on 12-14 June.’ • Create feedback loops where farmers can report whether advisories matched field realities.

Patterns in Inter/intra-state; FPO Composition; Agri Value Chain	Recommendations for Change in Action
<p>Activities with predominantly male participation -Why?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities involving pesticides, seed varieties, market linkages, and business planning were male-dominated. • Technical training delivered by external experts (Govt departments) attracted men. • Business/governance topics reinforced norms of men handling finances and market engagement. • Women’s perception: <i>“These decisions are not done by us at home; so why attend?”</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial literacy training • Shadow leadership opportunities where women co-lead meetings or decision processes. • Mentoring by strong women leaders from other FPOs (cross-learning exposure). • Conduct couple-dialogue workshops on shared responsibilities. • Use gender role-reversal exercises during trainings. • Engage male champions to model equitable workload sharing. • Publicly recognise households practicing shared labour norms.
<p>Differences in women’s and men’s responses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men ask more technical questions; women prefer simpler, practical guidance. • Women are more interested in mobilisation, organic practices, and FPO membership-related topics. • Women avoid confrontational or competitive discussion settings; men dominate discussions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Micro-enterprises for input supply handled by women • Female co-facilitators for technical sessions • Demonstration + follow-up visits • Linkage with govt. schemes • Setting up of Custom Hiring Centre
<p>Men’s reactions to women attending</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Odisha: Men sometimes encourage women to speak more than trainers do. • Gujarat: Women are more comfortable with female trainers; conversation becomes casual. • Maharashtra: No significant positive or negative reactions observed. <p>AP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents answer more if the facilitator is of the same gender. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Male champion engagement workshops, which are structured sessions designed specifically for men, husbands, fathers, brothers, sons, and male leaders, to build understanding about the value of women’s participation in agriculture, FPO governance, and market-facing roles. Here, men would reflect on how gender norms affect household wellbeing and FPO performance, encourage shared decision-making, and promote supportive behaviours such as permitting mobility, sharing workload, and acknowledging women’s knowledge and capabilities. • Such workshops can help shift the mindset from ‘men allow women’ to ‘men and women collaborate as equal partners’. Male champions then become advocates within their own communities, influencing other men and creating positive ripple effects.

Capacity Building Initiatives

Patterns in Inter/intra-state; FPO Composition; Agri Value Chain	Recommendations for Change in Action
<p>Attendance variation by age</p> <p>Gujarat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women aged 40-50 attend the most. • Younger women opt for non-farm livelihoods, as their families believe agriculture has no future. • Middle-aged people migrate seasonally. • Younger women are more interested in organic farming and FPOs. <p>Maharashtra</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mostly women aged 35-60 attend. • Families encourage younger women's education/career, reducing their attendance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sequence complex content into small modules • female-led FFS plots. • Schedule sessions at locations and times accessible to women, considering mobility, caste norms, and caregiving responsibilities. • Establish equipment banks managed by women's groups or FPO sub-committees. • Introduce low-cost entry options, starter kits, or partial adoption pathways to reduce financial risk. • Promote collective procurement, shared tools, and community-level input preparation through FPOs, SHGs, or PGs. • Align adoption strategies with seasonal cash-flow realities. • Create local troubleshooting mechanisms (lead farmers, para-extension workers).
<p>Odisha</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women aged 27-35 attend mostly. • Older women form only 20-30% of participants. • In Kalahandi, women aged 40-55 participate more. <p>AP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women aged 30-40 attend most. • No unmarried women attend. 	

Patterns in Inter/intra-state; FPO Composition; Agri Value Chain	Recommendations for Change in Action
<p>Do women see the knowledge as “theirs”?</p> <p>Gujarat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only around 20% adopt the practices. • Women seek family permission before applying knowledge. <p>Maharashtra</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women initiate, but the family decides continuation after seeing results. • Husbands trust women only after evidence. • If FPO-connected, men have more confidence in women. <p>Odisha</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Husbands’ opinion “does not matter”-women decide independently. <p>AP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women are interested but prefer buying inputs instead of preparing them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstration + follow-up model- first exposure, then monitoring visits for troubleshooting. • Public recognition of women’s contributions in FPOs by intentionally acknowledging and celebrating women’s achievements, knowledge, and leadership roles during formal community events- such as Gram Sabhas, FPO AGMs, committee reviews, and exposure sharing meetings. Examples include inviting women to present their learnings, facilitating their leadership in discussions, publicly appreciating their contributions, or awarding leadership certificates. • Identify and support progressive women and men farmers as peer champions, ensuring visibility across caste and age groups. • Facilitate cross-village exposure visits where adoption is already visible and credible.
<p>Do women teach other women?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More likely in women-only groups. <p>Can women explain practices to men at home?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often hesitant unless evidence is visible. <p>Do men accept knowledge coming from women?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More likely when women belong to FPOs or when the community sees results. 	

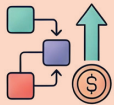
Patterns in Inter/intra-state; FPO Composition; Agri Value Chain	Recommendations for Change in Action
<p>What motivates adoption?</p> <p>Primary motivators (Women & Men)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced drudgery • Time savings • Health benefits • Cost savings • Visible results • Peer validation (especially from progressive farmers) • NGO/facilitator trust • Adoption increases when interventions align with lived realities, reducing labour, lowering risk, building confidence, and reinforcing social validation, especially for women whose decisions are embedded within household and community norms. <p>State-wise details</p> <p>Gujarat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeing benefits (e.g., ragi health value). • Cost matters a lot for women (convincing family is essential). • Men adopt after feedback from male peers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Backyard demonstration plots led by women for peer validation before family-level adoption. • CSA integrated with business incentives • Expand women-only FFS groups first, gradually integrate mixed groups • Pair each FFS with climate-market pilots (solar drying, etc.) • Prioritize interventions that show immediate and observable outcomes (yield improvement, cost reduction, labour savings, health benefits). • Use demonstration plots, side-by-side trials, and before-and-after comparisons to accelerate adoption across genders. • Integrate male engagement modules to reduce family resistance and legitimize women's participation. • Frame adoption benefits in terms of household-level gains (income, health, reduced labour) to strengthen family buy-in. • Design intentional crossover opportunities that allow women to enter technical and market-facing roles and men to engage with health and sustainability outcomes. • Track adoption not just by numbers, but by who adopts what, who decides, and who benefits.

Patterns in Inter/intra-state; FPO Composition; Agri Value Chain	Recommendations for Change in Action
<p>Maharashtra</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption after visible results. • NGO advice valued. • Men don't prioritise health/time savings. <p>Odisha</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption when results and health benefits are visible. • Cost matters due to financial constraints. <p>AP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs habit-change (they prefer buying inputs). • Adoption increases after seeing results. • Men are also influenced by NGO advice. • Men actively engage in technical and climate-smart agriculture-based sessions, whereas women participate more in mobilization, organic practices, and SHGs/PGs/FPO discussions. • Women's attendance and confidence are influenced by caste, age, meeting location, and family permission norms. • Sessions involving pesticides, machinery and tools, markets, and credit are male-dominated due to cultural perceptions of competence and authority, and gendered role segregation. • Adoption improves when results are visible, peer validation is strong, and tools reduce drudgery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct women-focused, hands-on demonstrations on bio-input preparation (e.g., jeevamrit, compost cultures) with repeated practice sessions rather than one-time trainings. • Establish village-level bio-input production units managed by women's groups/FPO sub-committees. • Facilitate couple-dialogue sessions on input cost planning and crop decisions. • Encourage joint signature systems for input purchase decisions within FPOs. • Support working capital through linkage to SHGs or revolving funds. • Facilitate forward linkages with FPO procurement systems to ensure assured offtake. • Create transparent pricing models to build women's financial literacy and input cost comparison skills. • Integrate sessions on safe handling, protective equipment, and long-term health impacts of chemical overuse. • Introduce soil testing camps • Develop simple, visual dosage charts in vernacular language for fertiliser and pesticide application.
<p>What discourages adoption?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High cost, Fear of failure, Family resistance, Lack of technical confidence, Women's limited control over finances • Gendered division of labour, Time required for making inputs • Low confidence in handling tools, Lack of follow-Up, Seasonal constraints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote low-cost, low-risk entry practices • Ensure facilitators follow up consistently after training to address fear of failure and technical doubts. • Invest in continuity of engagement, not one-off sessions, to sustain confidence and habit change.

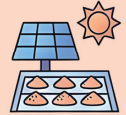



FWWB’s initiatives in marketing and value-chain development focus on strengthening women-led FPCs and SHGs by enhancing technical, entrepreneurial, and market-oriented skills. These interventions are designed to promote inclusive participation, women-friendly practices, and sustainable income generation, while addressing gendered barriers in agriculture and allied sectors. Partnerships with technical, market, and training stakeholders ensure that interventions are grounded in practical application, thereby enhancing women farmers’ capacity to lead value-added enterprises.

GENDER ACTION PLAN (GAP)

Activity	Rationale/Gender Interface	Measures & Actions
 <p>Value chain development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural women play a critical role in agriculture, rural transformation and resilience building, yet they encounter greater obstacles than men in accessing and benefiting from productive resources, assets, services, technologies, markets, decent work and social protection; excessive work burdens due to multiple productive, household and community roles; and discriminatory social norms limiting their participation in public life and freedom of choice and mobility. Women are primarily concentrated in production. Need strategies that would make value-chains inclusive, distributing income, assets, and resources more equitably. Limited mobility to distant markets. Restricted control over income despite labour contribution. Lower asset ownership and access to working capital Time poverty and unpaid care burdens Limited exposure to pricing mechanisms and trader negotiations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity development to enhance women’s technical, business and entrepreneurial skills, promote women-friendly and labour-saving agricultural technologies and practices; strengthen rural women’s leadership and participation; and improve capacities of institutions and organizations for gender-responsive action. Identify ‘leverage nodes’ where women can shift from labour roles to revenue roles. Set up village-level processing units for grading, sorting, milling, dehydration, or packaging. Partnerships with national stakeholders and other development actors to strengthen Programme impact and foster uptake of approaches for rural women’s socioeconomic empowerment. Support will be provided by FWFB’s catalytic credit program to also look for credit opportunities.. Technical and hands-on training in value-added processing. Exposure visits to operational enterprises for practical insights, especially to women-owned enterprises. Support for branding, packaging, and market linkages. Promotion of eco-friendly and low-cost production technologies. Women move from passive participants to decision-makers and economic actors with authority. Established or strengthen women-led enterprises. Skills development and confidence building through technical, operational, and market activities.

Capacity Building Initiatives

Activity	Rationale/Gender Interface	Measures & Actions
 <p>Raheja Solar Dryer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to fluctuating prices of tomato, garlic, and onion, farmers face huge losses every year • The cold storage warehouses available facility can be availed by large farmers and traders, who get higher prices during the off-season. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To prevent post-harvest loss, solar driers were introduced for higher price realization • Women trained to maintain the quality of the product to sell to external buyers through FPOs • Credit support provided through a blended fiancé model to allow the women and the FPOs to take up this processing model for business.
 <p>I-Milk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of the milk is sold as a raw product to a seller with minimal margin. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training on milk quality control • Market buyers

Implementation So Far

Activity 4.1

Raheja Solar Dryer buy-back partnership on 3-Day Exposure Visit cum Training on Use of Solar Dryer for Drying of Tomato and Onion Produce

FWWB, in collaboration with Raheja Solar Food Processing Pvt. Ltd., organised a three-day exposure visit and training program on solar drying technology for tomato and onion produce at the Indore facility. Six participants, including four women members and two CEOs from Motakhokhara and Gohilwad FPCs, attended the program. The training focused on equipping participants with practical skills in operating solar dryers, managing temperature and airflow, and maintaining product quality through grading and proper handling. Participants also learned hygiene practices, packaging techniques, and ways to optimise production for buy-back arrangements. Through hands-on experience, the women members gained confidence in developing village-level solar-drying enterprises, reducing post-harvest losses, and enhancing income from value-added produce, while demonstrating the potential for eco-friendly, women-led agribusinesses.

Activity 4.2

Milk Value-added Products Development (Khoya and Peda) Training (The I - Milk Chain Model)

Women members from Chafa FPC, We for Empowerment FPC, and Aovi FPC visited Adarsh Milk Dairy Bazar in Sawangi Village, Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar. During the visit, participants received detailed guidance on preparing milk-based products such as Paneer, Khova, Kulfi, Dahi, and Lassi. Trainers provided insights on hygiene, product quality, branding, packaging, and marketing strategies. Participants also explored the operational model of a milk collection centre and learned how women could establish small-scale dairy enterprises in their villages. This exposure strengthened participants' understanding of dairy value chains, built entrepreneurial confidence, and highlighted practical opportunities for women-led business development in milk production and processing. The training provided practical instruction on Khoya and Peda production, including milk boiling, evaporation, temperature control, and moisture management. Participants learned to assess quality parameters (texture, bonding, colour) and grade products into A, B, and C categories. The program also emphasised hygienic handling, packaging, labelling, and storage practices, as well as market preparation and branding strategies. As a result, women members gained confidence and technical competence to lead local dairy enterprises, diversify income streams, and produce high-quality, market-ready dairy products.

Activity 4.3

Value-Added Products Development from Local resources (Soap making) Training

Conducted an organic soap-making training session at Nilachakra FPC, Choumukh, Baliapal, with 35 women members of the Ganga Mata SHG. The training introduced participants to eco-friendly soap production using natural, readily available ingredients such as gram flour, multani mitti, sandalwood powder, turmeric, reetha (soapnut), and coconut oil. The program included demonstrations on mixing, moulding, drying, and packaging, with hands-on practice for participants. Women gained practical skills in producing natural soaps, understanding product quality, and identifying potential local markets. The training enhanced their confidence in establishing small-scale home-based enterprises, increased livelihood opportunities, and promoted sustainable, chemical-free personal care alternatives within the community.

These initiatives collectively demonstrate FWWB's approach to promoting women's participation in value addition and market-oriented agricultural activities. By combining hands-on technical training, exposure visits, and entrepreneurship support, women farmers are better equipped to establish and manage enterprises, enhance income, and participate actively in the agricultural value chain while fostering sustainable, eco-friendly practices.

Emerging Patterns


Patterns in Inter/intra-state; FPO composition; Agri value chain	Recommendations for change in Action
<p>How men react to women attending</p> <p>Odisha</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Men encourage women to speak more—sometimes more than trainers. Men start topics, and women follow. <p>Gujarat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women are more comfortable with female trainers. Use more casual, free language with women. <p>Maharashtra</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific issues observed. <p>AP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> People respond better to same-gender facilitators. On-stage male/female interactions influence who answers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce more group-based activities Activities can have elements of gender swapping exercises to build sensitivity about the other person’s positionality, To address the pattern of women speaking only after meetings and silence in mixed groups, we can incorporate short breakout groups during the session. Use seating circles to avoid hierarchy. Schedule parallel thematic sessions—technical for men, organic/home-based/processing for women. Gradually blend sessions to build shared learning. Integrate women-focused entry points (drudgery reduction, cost saving, nutrition, home enterprises). Use simplified visual materials and translation. Practice roleplays and negotiation simulations, Look for ways to introduce task-sharing opportunities with men gradually.
<p>Value-chain integration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FPOs primarily operate in pre-production and production, but minimal linkages exist to processing, packaging, retail or institutional markets. Very few examples of structured enterprise models, except for onion/tomato drying and dairy-based processing. Working capital for investment shortage is a dominant barrier, limiting expansion and risk-taking. Women’s potential in value-added enterprises remains untapped, despite their keen interest and availability. Women see knowledge as beneficial only when they control decisions or see visible payoffs. Women’s contributions increase in women-only spaces, women-led FPOs, and when trainers are female. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop service-based business models (such as machinery leasing groups, nursery units, etc). Support FPOs to gradually move into processing, packaging, branding, and market aggregation, with a phased and risk-calibrated approach. Prioritize low-capex, scalable value-added enterprises (e.g., drying, grading, primary processing, collective branding) aligned with local crops and demand. Facilitate structured linkages with institutional buyers, processors, and retailers to reduce market uncertainty. Facilitate direct interaction between women committee members and multiple traders to compare pricing logic. Provide weekly mandi price updates via WhatsApp/voice calls. Encourage women to present pricing proposals during FPO meetings. Ensure payments for produce and processed goods are transferred to women’s bank accounts. Support KYC documentation and digital banking literacy. Promote DRE technologies for value-addition and infrastructure development. Support periodic performance reviews for women-led enterprises and committees.




Capacity Building Initiatives

FWWB’s exposure visit initiatives focus on building practical knowledge, enhancing entrepreneurial skills, and strengthening market linkages for women farmers and Farmer Producer Companies (FPCs). Through targeted visits and hands-on training, participants gain insights into value addition, post-harvest management, and market-oriented strategies, enabling them to develop sustainable agri-enterprises and improve livelihoods. These interventions are designed to promote gender equity, empower women participants, and foster peer learning across FPCs.

GENDER ACTION PLAN (GAP)

Activity	Rationale/Gender Interface	Measures & Actions
 <p>IIPM Millets and Fruits Value-Addition and Business Marketing Training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers in most of the FPOs under the project in AP are cultivating millets as well as fruits such as pineapple, custard apple. Yet price realisation is low, even when one goes through FPOs, due to the sale of primary products. • Most of these farmers who grow or forage these products are women. • These products are mostly grown naturally, without chemicals. • The distant terrain and scattered produce make logistic costs high and eat away at the profit margins. • As these are mostly perishable products, farmers find it difficult to negotiate a better bargain due to the paucity of time. • Though grading would allow them to fetch higher prices, very few do sort and grade to sell products due to a lack of technical knowledge. • Sometimes the FPOs’ entire lot is rejected by traders due to non-uniformity in quality standardisation. • Even those few FPOs which have millet processing units require training on hygiene and grading and sorting practices. • Due to their seasonal nature, women can ensure income through this source for a few months a year, making them rely on other activities to ensure their household’s survival. • Most produce is sold in raw form with minimal value capture. • Distant terrain increases aggregation and logistics costs. • Women contribute labour but rarely influence pricing or marketing decisions. • Without technical standardisation and market-facing capacity, value chains continue to extract labour but not profits from women producers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing their technical knowledge, entrepreneurial skills, and decision-making capacity within their FPCs. • Familiarise farmers with the nutritional benefits and market potential of resilient crops like millets. • Provide hands-on exposure to value addition processes for millets and fruits. • Impart knowledge on fruit processing techniques, packaging, and branding. • Create awareness about market linkages, e-commerce opportunities, and competitive marketing strategies. • Build confidence among FPC members, particularly women, to independently manage the processing and marketing of value-added products. • Introduce environment friendly, affordable, moisture-resistant packaging options.

Activity	Rationale/Gender Interface	Measures & Actions
 <p>Junagadh university</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited mobility Lower access to extension services, and sociocultural norms that restrict participation in the training space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen women farmers' access to scientific agricultural knowledge, modern technologies, and enterprise opportunities Training places women at the centre of decision-making in production, processing, and value-addition, contributing to their economic agency and leadership within FPOs

Implementation So Far

Activity 5.1

IIPM Millets and Fruits Value-Addition and Business Marketing Training

In collaboration with the Indian Institute of Plantation Management and Food Science and Technology (IIPM), we conducted a two-day hands-on training on millets and fruit value addition, processing, packaging, and marketing at Pulivendula, Kadapa District. Farmers from five FPCs, including women members, participated, gaining practical skills in cleaning, grading, drying, and preparing millet-based snacks and fruit products, as well as knowledge of hygiene, quality standards, packaging, branding, and market linkages. The training enhanced technical expertise, confidence, and entrepreneurial skills, enabling women-led FPCs to reduce post-harvest losses, add value to produce, access competitive markets, and strengthen sustainable livelihoods.

Activity 5.2

Two-Day Exposure Visit of Women Farmers to Junagadh Agricultural University

A two-day exposure visit was conducted for 31 women farmers representing Gohilwad and Motakhokhara FPOs at Junagadh Agricultural University. The program introduced participants to scientific crop management, climate-resilient techniques, and women-friendly agricultural machinery. Practical demonstrations covered improved groundnut cultivation practices, integrated nutrient and pest management, water-efficient irrigation methods, and preparation of low-cost bio-inputs. Participants also explored solar dryers, seed planters, mini decorticators, and processing technologies, and engaged in hands-on learning to develop value-added groundnut products. The visit aimed to strengthen women's technical capabilities, reduce drudgery, and inspire entrepreneurship within FPO-led agri-business models.




Emerging Patterns




Patterns in Inter/intra-state; FPO composition; Agri value chain	Recommendations for change in Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest-related produce and low-input cost crops like cereals have shown higher interest in and participation by women. • In plain land districts such as Vizianagaram, there is a general withdrawal of millet cultivation due to lack of price realisation and abundant rainfall. <p>Gujarat: Exposure visits had the maximum number of women.</p> <p>Maharashtra: Exposure visits had more men.</p> <p>Junagadh University</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many women expressed that hands-on training helped them understand concepts practically, especially related to bio-input preparation and groundnut product processing. • They appreciated learning about women-friendly tools aimed at reducing physical hardship and emphasized the usefulness of value-addition knowledge for income enhancement. • Several participants expressed enthusiasm for initiating small processing units and further training in marketing and packaging. • The experience strengthened peer bonding and encouraged a mindset shift towards leadership and entrepreneurship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Along with value-addition activities, there is a need for focus on promoting better production-related practices to increase yield and quality of the produce • Look for long-term market linkages • Introduction of DRE-based cold storage through convergence to prevent post-harvest losses. • Promote village-level cleaning, grading, and basic processing units to reduce perishability pressure. • Introduce low-cost technologies (solar dryers, dehullers). • Train women operators. • Train women on label compliance basics (ingredients, weight, date).

INTERVENTION 6 Convergence



GENDER ACTION PLAN (GAP)

Activity	Rationale/Gender Interface	Measures & Actions
 <p>Kamadhenu scheme linkage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women’s roles in livestock-based agriculture are extensive but largely informal • They have limited access to government schemes, technical training, and enterprise ownership. • The KAMADHENU scheme can provide an entry point to formalize women’s engagement in bio-manure production, enabling them to transition from unpaid labour to income-generating agri-entrepreneurs. • This would address the gendered barriers to asset ownership, knowledge access, and entrepreneurial visibility directly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation of women farmers on the KAMADHENU scheme and eligibility processes. • Technical training on bio-manure preparation using locally available inputs. • Promotion of group-based enterprise models to reduce individual risk and enhance collective bargaining. • Integration of entrepreneurship concepts—costing, pricing, and marketing—alongside technical inputs. • Encouraging women-led leadership roles in production and enterprise management.
 <p>Mushroom Spawn</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women farmers often lack access to quality inputs and capital for enterprise diversification. • Mushroom cultivation and spawn production offer low-cost, low-land, and climate-resilient livelihood options, well aligned with women’s time availability and skill sets. • This intervention can strengthen women’s economic agency and control over income. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribution of spawn to SHGs under Odisha’s department’s convergence mechanisms. • Encouragement of village-level mushroom spawn production units. • Hands-on training on production cycles, hygiene standards, and post-harvest handling. • Emphasis on group ownership and local market supply to reduce entry barriers. • Linkage with FPOs for scaling.
 <p>Digital Green</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women farmers, despite being deeply involved in cultivation, often receive delayed or second-hand information and depend on male intermediaries for technology access. • Most of the FPOs have weak institutional governance systems, transparency, and business planning capacities, primarily through digital platforms. • Women FPO members are frequently excluded from business decisions due to limited access to structured information, literacy barriers, and underrepresentation in leadership positions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through this partnership, the aim is to democratize access to data, enabling women Board members and staff to participate meaningfully in planning, forecasting, and financial decision-making. • The inclusion of gender-disaggregated MIS supports monitoring equity in benefits, participation, membership growth, and enterprise opportunities for women farmers.

Activity	Rationale/Gender Interface	Measures & Actions
 <p>Engagement with Government and Financial Institutions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women’s limited interaction with formal institutions restricts their access to credit, insurance, and technical services. • Direct engagement with government departments and banks helps dismantle institutional barriers and normalizes women’s presence in financial and administrative spaces, enhancing financial inclusion and institutional confidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visits to govt. agencies such as DDH, Veterinary Office, RSETI, and UCO Bank. • Orientation on KCC, insurance schemes, and livelihood-focused government programs. • Facilitation of dialogue between FPO representatives and institutions.
 <p>Interaction with R&D and Technical Institutions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women farmers are often excluded from innovation ecosystems and technical research spaces. • Exposure to R&D institutions bridges the knowledge gap and enables women to adopt high-value, climate-resilient, and diversified livelihoods, while validating their role as innovators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposure to interactions with ICAR institutes on fisheries, horticulture, mushrooms, and processing. • Demonstration of women-friendly tools and technologies. • Knowledge sharing on value addition, mechanisation, and renewable energy • Focus on diversification beyond primary production.
 <p>MoU with SRFMTTI</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanization often bypasses women due to design bias, lack of access, and training gaps. • It would integrate gender-responsive mechanization, reducing drudgery and enhancing productivity while ensuring women’s access to tested and suitable machinery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formalized collaboration for machinery testing and training. • Focus on ergonomics, safety, and women-friendly design. • Inclusion of women in machinery demonstrations and feedback loops. • Capacity building for FPOs on machinery management and rental models. • Link with govt schemes

Implementation So Far

Activity 6.1

Linking Women Farmers with the KAMADHENU Scheme

Under the KAMADHENU scheme of the state government, women farmers were engaged in capacity-building activities focused on preparing bio-manure through an entrepreneurship model. The intervention aimed to enhance technical and entrepreneurial skills, increase income-generation opportunities, and ensure active participation of women in agriculture and allied sectors, strengthening their agency and leadership within their communities.

Activity 6.2

Input Assistance and Mushroom Spawn Production Units

As part of ongoing convergence efforts, Women Self-Help Groups (WSHGs) received input assistance under the state sector to support agricultural productivity. Simultaneously, low-cost mushroom spawn production units were established at the village level to promote entrepreneurship among women farmers. These activities provide practical, income-generating solutions while enhancing technical capacities and encouraging sustainable, women-led agri-businesses.

Activity 6.3

Engagement with Government and Financial Institutions

Formal visits were conducted to key institutions, including the District Development Horticulture Office (DDH), Block Veterinary Office, RSETI, and UCO Bank, to explore training programs, government schemes, and financial support mechanisms for FPOs and farmers. Officers from UCO Bank introduced schemes such as Kisan Credit Cards (KCC), Lakhpati Didi Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana, and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana, encouraging women and men farmers to enrol. The Block Veterinary Officer emphasized preventive livestock health measures, including stool examinations, to improve productivity. These engagements strengthened linkages for capacity building, technical guidance, and financial inclusion.

Activity 6.4

Interaction with R&D and Technical Institutions

While interacting with field team members, ICAR-CIFA provided knowledge on freshwater aquaculture, pearl farming, ornamental fish farming, fish processing, and value addition. ICAR-CIWA demonstrated mushroom cultivation, moringa processing, bakery production, and women-friendly tools and technologies. ICAR-CTCRI shared expertise on tuber crop cultivation and value addition, while ICAR-CHES guided orchard development with high-value plantation crops. Collaborations with Coconut Development Board, Coir Board, OUAT, I-CONCEPT Bio-Village, and DERAS Farm exposed farmers to sustainable farming practices, farm mechanization, solar technologies, integrated intensive farming, and community seed banks.

Activity 6.5

MoU with SRFMTTI

Formal agreements were signed with the Southern Region Farm Machinery Testing and Training Institute (SRFMTTI) to facilitate capacity-building, testing, and adoption of farm machinery. These collaborations ensure women farmers and FPOs gain access to mechanized solutions that are efficient, labour-saving, and aligned with gender-responsive agricultural practices.

Activity 6.6

Digital Green - FPO Digitization & Data-Driven Business Management System

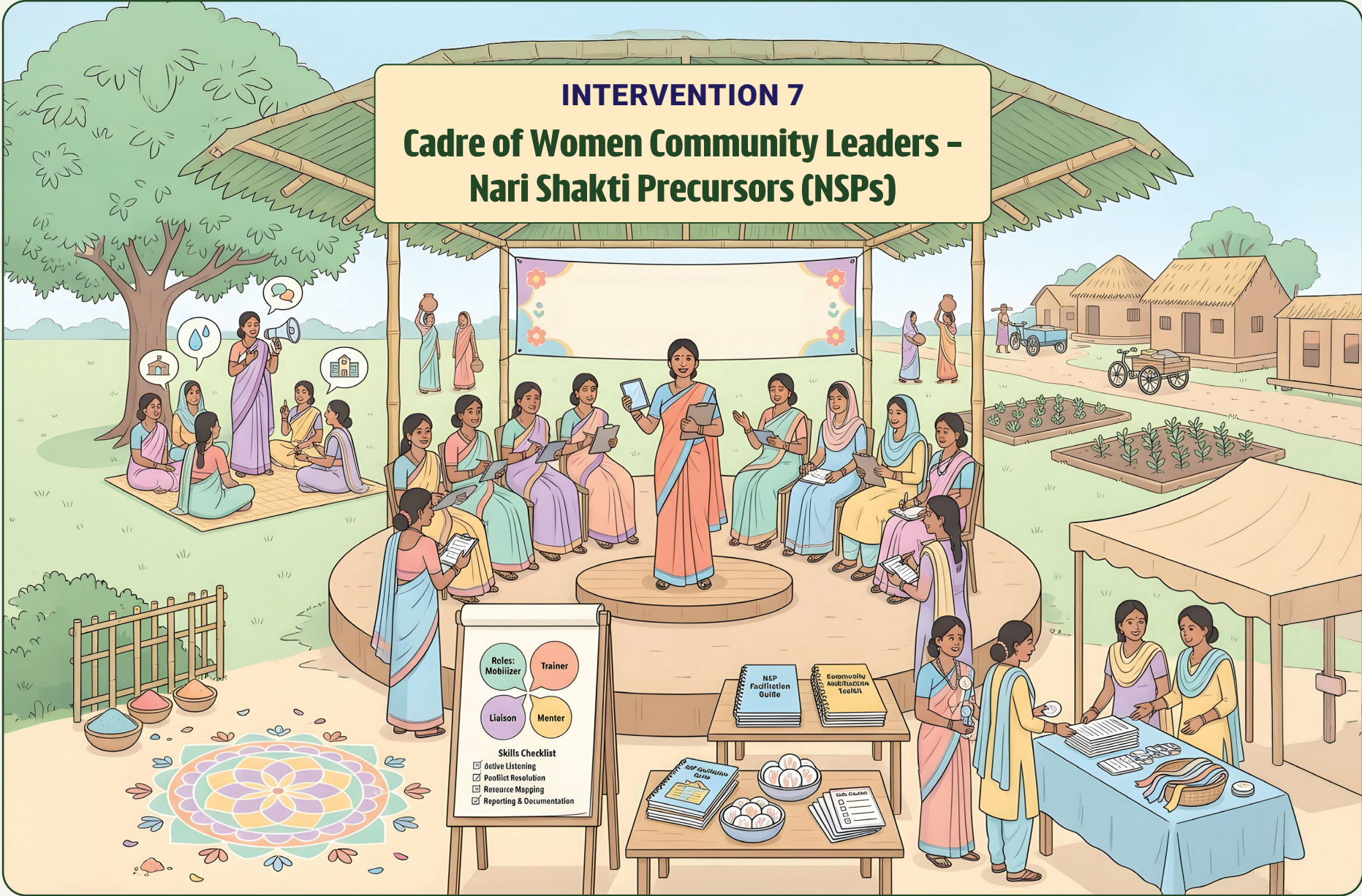
Through a partnership with Digital Green, AI-driven agricultural advisories were developed to improve access to climate and agri-information for farmers, with a special focus on women. The program emphasizes responsible and inclusive digital transformation, integrating farmers' needs and decision-making contexts to ensure equitable benefits and practical adoption of climate-smart solutions.

Emerging Patterns


Patterns in Inter/intra-state; FPO composition; Agri value chain	Recommendations for change in Action
<p>KAMDHENU</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women showed high interest when the intervention combined technical training with income visibility. • Confidence about taking this up increased when the women perceived recognition from government institutions. • Time constraints and mobility emerged as key limiting factors for many. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutionalize women-led producer groups under the scheme for sustained enterprise ownership. • Provide follow-up mentoring on market linkages and compliance. • Integrate childcare, time-sensitive scheduling, and proximity-based training models. • Link enterprises with FPO procurement and branding initiatives.
<p>Mushroom Spawn</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women adopted mushroom enterprises rapidly due to quick returns, low mobility requirements, flexibility and low investment. • Group-based ownership enhanced peer learning, reduced work burden, and risk-sharing. • Market access remained localized and informal. • Technical troubleshooting support was frequently required. • In Odisha, due to the frequency of tropical storms, a stronger mushroom farming structure is required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen backwards and forward market linkages for mushroom enterprises. • Introduce simple record-keeping and pricing tools for women's groups. • Provide refresher training and on-call technical support. • Explore integration with FPO aggregation and processing models.
<p>Engagement with Government and Financial Institutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for youth skilling identified, particularly in the agricultural domain, such as certified training on agricultural machinery. • Due to the merging of local banks, many bank accounts are dysfunctional. • Inconsistencies identified in various government ID cards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop women-friendly financial literacy modules linked to scheme enrolment. • Support women in documentation and account activation. • Institutionalize regular interface meetings between FPOs and service providers. • Encourage banks to track gender-disaggregated outreach.

Capacity Building Initiatives

Patterns in Inter/intra-state; FPO composition; Agri value chain	Recommendations for change in Action
<p>Interaction with R&D and Technical Institutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women showed strong interest in processing and value addition, if capital support is enabled • Practical demonstrations enhanced comprehension and confidence. • Interest in adoption was higher for low-cost and locally adaptable technologies. • Follow-up support remained critical for the application. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translate technical learnings into localized training modules. • Develop pilot enterprises with handholding support. • Prioritize women-friendly, labour-saving technologies. • Strengthen linkages between R&D institutions and FPO extension systems.
<p>MoU with SRFMTTI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women expressed interest in drudgery-reducing tools. • Cost and ownership emerged as key constraints. • Preference for group-based or individual-based machinery access models differs based on the type of machine. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote shared ownership and custom-hiring models. • Advocate for subsidy alignment for women-led collectives. • Track gender-disaggregated adoption data. • Facilitate training in other states.



GENDER ACTION PLAN (GAP)

Activity	Rationale/Gender Interface	Measures & Actions
 <p>NSP cadre development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For long-term impact, it is crucial to develop the capacities of community members to enable them to build leadership and lead as change agents • This would reduce the reliance on external actors/ agencies • A cadre of local resource persons should be developed; community leaders must be appointed to percolate information more effectively. • The leadership skills can be incorporated through participation in Gender Action Learning System (GALS) related activities for acquiring attributes such as confidence, management and coordination skills, making their voice count, learning how to have a positive influence in their groups and skills for conflict resolution. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting a dedicated training exclusively for women leaders to create a safe environment for open dialogue. • Facilitating one-to-one interaction to encourage expression and build confidence. • Structured group work to practice leadership roles and collective problem-solving. • Resource mapping activities to recognise community assets and strengthen place-based planning. • Introduction to AI-based poster development to improve digital confidence and advocacy skills. • Body mapping exercise to highlight drudgery, occupational health risks, and women-friendly solutions. • Leadership role rotation to ensure all participants receive opportunities to speak and present.

Implementation So Far

Activity 7.1

NSP Training – Strategic and Technical Capacity Building

On 23rd August 2025, FWFB conducted a one-day interactive training session for Nari Shakti Precursors (NSPs) in Kothavalasa, Vizianagaram District, Andhra Pradesh. The training aimed to strengthen both the strategic and technical capacities of community leaders to support farmers in their districts better. Morning sessions focused on one-to-one discussions on field challenges and expectations, including water and motor requirements, farm tools, agri-finance, pest control, sesame marketing, and working capital linkages. Afternoon sessions involved group exercises to map hard and soft resources and stakeholders across Vizianagaram and Paderu districts, enabling NSPs to develop a strong understanding of local assets and opportunities.

Activity 7.2

Resource Mapping and Stakeholder Analysis

NSPs were divided into three groups to prepare charts identifying available hard and soft resources and key stakeholders in their districts. In Paderu, hard resources included forests, water sources, cultivable land, connectivity, and administrative infrastructure, while soft resources encompassed human skills, cultural capital, and livelihood practices. Vizianagaram's hard resources included forest and coastal areas, irrigation infrastructure, roads, and public service facilities. In contrast, its soft resources encompassed educational institutions, social support programs, cultural heritage, and community engagement initiatives. Primary stakeholders were farmers, SHGs, FPOs, and tribal communities; secondary stakeholders included government departments, ITDA, NGOs, cooperatives, and banks; tertiary stakeholders included buyers, processors, exporters, and research institutions.

Activity 7.3

Health and Drudgery Awareness through Body Mapping

A participatory body-mapping exercise was conducted to help NSPs identify common health issues faced by farmers, including respiratory diseases, skin conditions, neurological and toxic effects, nutritional and lifestyle-related conditions, and musculoskeletal problems. This activity enhanced the NSPs' understanding of health challenges, particularly those impacting women farmers, and emphasized the importance of gender-responsive interventions to reduce drudgery and improve overall well-being.

Activity 7.4

Best Practices in Pre-Production, Production, and Post-Production

NSPs worked in groups to document field-level best practices across multiple crops, including paddy, millets, coffee, black pepper, tamarind, maize, sesame, and other local crops. For paddy and millets in Vizianagaram, pre-production practices included soil testing, nursery preparation, and seed treatment; production involved integrated nutrient and pest management; post-production emphasized mechanized harvesting, storage, and value addition. In ASR, coffee and black pepper cultivation included organic nutrient management, shade regulation, intercropping, and integrated pest management. In contrast, tamarind cultivation focused on minimal tillage, rainwater harvesting, and organic pest control. Organic maize, sesame, and paddy cultivation included the use of biofertilizers, intercropping, IPM, post-harvest drying, storage, and value addition through processed products.

Activity 7.5

AI-based Poster-making

To introduce technology and encourage creative thinking, NSPs participated in an AI-based poster-making exercise. This activity enabled them to visually represent their ideas on resource use, best practices, and gender-responsive interventions, enhancing their skills in communication, planning, and advocacy.

Activity 7.6

Gender Mapping

As part of gender mainstreaming, NSPs were trained in gender mapping exercises to identify constraints, opportunities, and power dynamics within households, communities, and agricultural value chains. This provided them with tools to plan interventions that enhance women's participation, leadership, and decision-making in farming and allied activities.

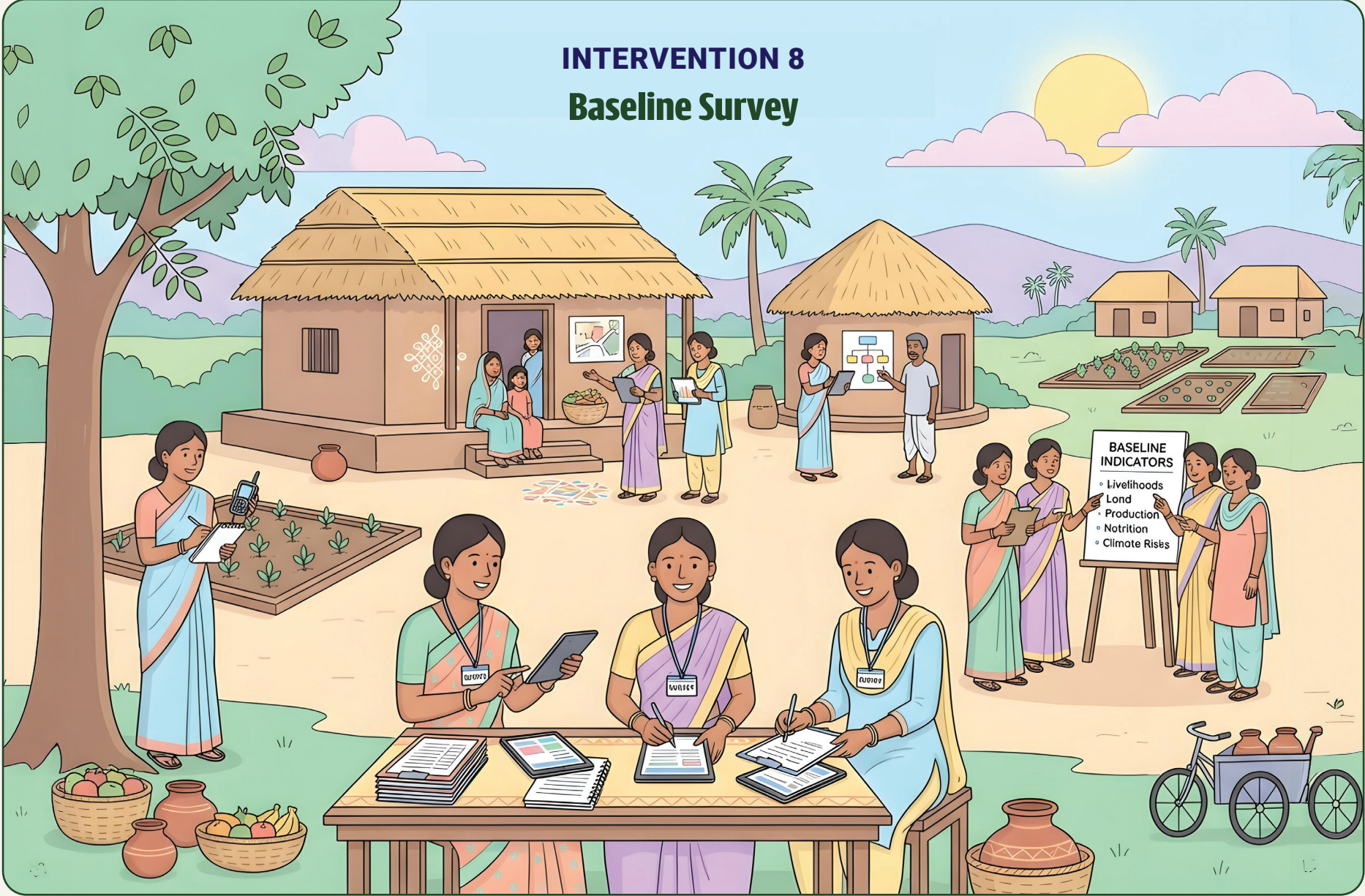
Emerging Patterns

Patterns in Inter/intra-state; FPO composition; Agri value chain	Recommendations for change in ACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Uneven participation due to differences in confidence, literacy, and exposure levels.• Need for continuous hand-holding rather than one-day training for sustained leadership.• Limited representation of younger women, who are more digitally confident and could strengthen outreach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Need for more market-oriented and business planning components, not just technical farming practices.• Follow-up structures required, such as monthly review meetings, mentoring plans, and district-specific action plans.




(Body mapping exercise)

INTERVENTION 8 Baseline Survey



Gender Action Plan (GAP)

Activity	Rationale/Gender Interface	Measures & Actions
 <p>Baseline</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FPOs often lack structured systems for compliance, documentation, business planning, market analytics, and performance monitoring, leading to financial losses, penalties, under-utilisation of resources, weak decision-making, and stagnated growth. Due to a lack of gender disaggregated data, gendered barriers such as low representation in leadership, limited decision-making authority, restricted mobility, and minimal involvement in market-facing operations, which directly affect the FPO's sustainability, are not clearly visible clearly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A tool has been developed to establish a comprehensive and holistic starting point for assessing the administrative, business, financial, and governance status of FPOs, inclusiveness, and to understand their strengths and operational gaps influencing their performance. The baseline tool should be capturing the systematic data on each FPO of the state's governance, compliance, business turnover, CSA practices, capacity building and gender participation, forming an evidence base for planning targeted support, structured training, and strategic partnerships. This baseline will intentionally integrate the gender metrics to surface inequities to capture differentiated participation of men and women in governance structures (BoDs, committees), business roles, training access, CSA technology adoption, and value-chain contributions. Tracking business volume contributed by women farmers vs. men Clearly recording women's representation and attendance in governance bodies and committees As the gender indicators will be embedded in the baseline tool, it would help determine gender gaps in leadership continuity, agency, economic participation, control over assets, and work distribution, enabling structured action to strengthen women's voice and accountability. Moving away from the traditional objective of a baseline tool to act as a data collection format, this tool would be made so that it functions as a capacity development framework with gender disaggregated data This tool's data collection will be filled with the help of FPO, and the results will be shared with them so that they can also understand their institutional positionality and identify the pinpoints for building their capacity for participatory governance, transparency, and evidence-based decision-making. Act as a practical tool for social and economic inclusion, strengthening institutional governance while promoting equitable participation and ownership.

Implementation So Far

Activity 8.1

Baseline

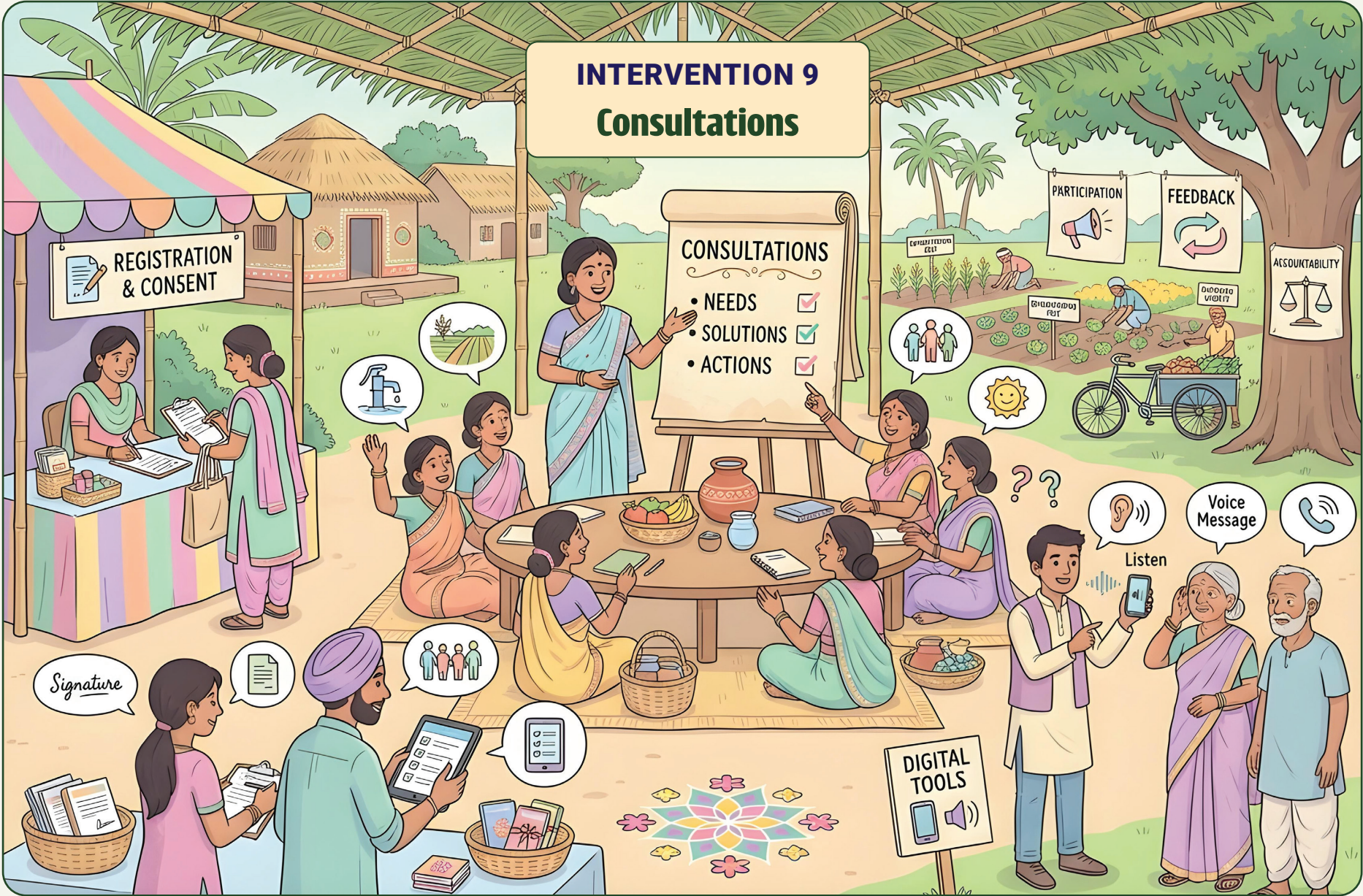
The baseline revealed that while FPOs are structurally established, their operational maturity, gender inclusiveness and enterprise diversification remain weak. Women show a strong willingness and take on high-level production work. Still, their leadership and ownership within an FPO system are minimal due to structural gender norms and limited technical/business exposure. Strengthening FPO governance, targeted farmer skills development, gender-transformative leadership programs, and value-chain enterprise development can accelerate both economic resilience and gender-equitable outcomes.

Emerging Patterns



Patterns in Inter/intra-state; FPO composition; Agri value chain	Recommendations for change in ACTION
<p>FPO Institutional Capacity and Governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost all FPOs are formed recently and remain at an early stage of institutional maturity. • Low diversification of business activities; the majority is confined to input supply and raw produce procurement. • Weak documentation, record-keeping, digital capacity and compliance systems observed - many fields show incomplete or 0 reporting. This leads to financial risks, penalties, and the inability to access credit and other facilities. • Limited use of digital tools, resulting in difficulty accessing loan investments, government schemes and structured business planning. • Board participation is symbolic in several cases, where real decision-making remains concentrated in a few individuals. Governance is often heavily dependent on CEOs or external agency support, with other Directors remaining passive or symbolic. • This showcases that gender gaps are visible in leadership roles, where women are included for compliance but have low participation in real decision-making, mainly regarding finance, business planning, and market-facing functions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce digital training, mentoring on compliance • Scheduled governance training (yearly)- Introduce structured governance and compliance training calendars with refresher modules for BoDs and CEOs. • Group-based and Simulation-based decision-making exercises for learning the rules and concepts • Pilot FFS with proof models to build trust through the collectivized experimentation groups • Encourage co-leadership governance models and joint signature requirements for key decisions. One way is through at least 1 BoD in a sub-committee along with others.

Capacity Building Initiatives

Patterns in Inter/intra-state; FPO composition; Agri value chain	Recommendations for change in ACTION
<p>Farmer-level Knowledge & Skill gaps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical adoption for CSA, post-harvest management and value-addition is very low. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstration plots, farmer-to-farmer trainers, exposure visits • Localized crop-specific and requirement-based training and cluster-based expert networks (KVKs, ATMA, other agencies).
<p>Value-chain Integration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most FPOs operate primarily in input supply and raw procurement, with limited engagement in processing, marketing, or diversified value chains. They primarily operate in pre-production and production, but minimal activities occur in processing, packaging, retail, or institutional markets. • Very few examples of structured enterprise models, except for onion/tomato drying and dairy-based processing. • Working capital shortage is a dominant barrier, limiting expansion and risk-taking. • Women’s potential in value-added enterprises remains untapped, despite interest and availability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a shared governance model with various context-specific and inclusive subcommittees for finance, operations, marketing, and gender • Credit-readiness training, as well as documentation templates • Diversified and resilient business portfolio within FPOs, with special focus on women • Develop women-led micro-enterprises in processing, packaging, seed banks, etc. • Cluster-based standard facilities, solar dryers, milling/packaging units, and other DRE-based technologies



Gender Action Plan (GAP)

Activity	Rationale/Gender Interface	Measures & Actions
 <p>State/National Consultations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women play a central yet under-recognised role in farming and household food security but remain marginalised in leadership, market engagement, resource access, and climate adaptation decisions. • Persistent social norms, restricted mobility, limited ownership of resources, and weak institutional support perpetuate gendered barriers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The stakeholder consultations are designed to deepen understanding of how gender intersects with agricultural systems, climate change, and FPO governance. • Women play a central yet under-recognised role in farming and household food security but remain marginalised in leadership, market engagement, resource access, and climate adaptation decisions. Persistent social norms, restricted mobility, limited ownership of resources, and weak institutional support perpetuate gendered barriers. • State-specific consultations with multi-stakeholder participation (NABARD, government departments, researchers, NGOs, corporations, and FPO leaders). • Roundtable formats and group discussions for collective solution-building. • Gender-focused discussion themes and case examples of successful women-led enterprises. • Emphasis on climate resilience, institutional governance, resource access, and digital/data-driven FPO models. • Identification of enablers, barriers, best practices, and action priorities.
 <p>Think tank</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For sustainable, holistic, and inclusive impact, imbuing diverse perspectives, cross-sectoral and cross-organisational learnings is necessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This Think Tank meeting was convened to build a strong evidence base to understand gender relations within FPOs, identify systemic barriers, and co-design strategies that strengthen institutional capacity to embed gender equality into agricultural and climate resilience interventions.

Implementation So Far

Activity 9.1

State/National Consultations

The consultations brought together FPO leaders, women and men farmers, field facilitators, and partner organisations across Gujarat, Maharashtra, Odisha, and Andhra Pradesh. Discussions focused on gender roles, climate risks, adoption of climate-smart practices, and capacity-building needs. These consultations validated state-specific challenges and opportunities, strengthened stakeholder ownership, and informed the design of gender-responsive, context-specific interventions for the next phase of implementation.

Activity 9.2

Think tank

The Think Tank meeting was held with experts from agriculture, finance, climate, and FPO ecosystems. It comprised senior practitioners, researchers, and sector leaders with extensive experience in agriculture, gender, finance, climate change, and farmer collectives. Participants included representatives from Samunnati, IRRI, APMAS, Kalgudi Digital, Microsave, NABARD, etc.

The discussion focused on strengthening gender-responsive FPOs, building evidence on women's roles in climate-smart agriculture, and designing effective capacity-building strategies. Members emphasised visible outcomes, intersectionality, women's agency, governance, digitisation, and enterprise promotion. Key suggestions included phased implementation, robust action research, gender-friendly technologies, and policy engagement. The meeting concluded with agreement on continued state-level consultations and quarterly think tank engagements.

Emerging Patterns

Patterns in Inter/intra-state; FPO composition; Agri value chain	Recommendations for change in ACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Across states, stakeholders acknowledged the urgent need for gender-transformative rather than gender-sensitive approaches, moving beyond training to institutional policies, accountability frameworks, and systemic norm change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move from token representation to leadership ownership with mandated roles and role rotation. • Institutionalise gender governance frameworks rather than short-term training. • Strengthen market exposure, negotiation, branding, digital tools and enterprise development training. • Build structured mentoring & handholding mechanisms. • Increase infrastructure and climate technology access for women-led businesses. • Strengthen youth inclusion, mixed-gender dialogue formats, and safe participation environments. • Shift program expectations from project-based compliance to long-term sustainability & direct farmer benefit.
<p>Gender-transformative Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With targeted interventions, inclusive governance, and institutional support, women farmers can lead enterprise transformation and create sustainable rural economies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create women-only preparatory sessions before mixed meetings to build confidence. • Introduce male-supporter engagement workshops to shift social norms at the household and community levels. • Public recognition platforms for women leaders at Gram Sabhas, FPO AGMs and district events. • Design women-led trading committees to increase presence in business domains. • Enforce minimum 50% women representation in leadership & mandatory committee leadership rotation.
<p>FPO Strengthening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening FPO governance emerged as a critical priority, requiring structured capacity building on compliance, finance, digital MIS, and business planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training on governance, compliance, business planning, digital MIS systems, and auditing. • Structured handholding and mentorship-based incubation. • Annual performance indicators, including gender outcomes.

Patterns in Inter/intra-state; FPO composition; Agri value chain	Recommendations for change in ACTION
<p>Value-chain Integration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants emphasized diversified value chains, women-led enterprises, drudgery-reducing technologies, climate-smart agriculture, and strategic partnerships for credit and infrastructure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hands-on training on value addition, branding, packaging, machinery use & pricing. Facilitate buyer linkages, contract farming & retail partnerships. Promote women-friendly technologies for drudgery reduction.
<p>Climate resilience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The consultations demonstrated clear momentum for building resilient, women-led agricultural collectives that move beyond production towards trading, brand-based value addition, and climate adaptation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote natural farming, intercropping, water harvesting, and bio-input models. Provide mechanization support (solar dryers, processors, drones, mini-mills). Develop FPO climate resilience centres as learning hubs.



(Mobilisation meeting)

Chapter 5



Key Insights - Emerging Trends and Gender Mainstreaming

This section highlights the project's experience and learnings, providing ample scope to further build on its achievements and expand them across other regions. It highlights several pathways to **scale out and sustain** the current levels of progress made in the four states.

To emphasizing on the sustainability of agri-collectives and the security of vulnerable farmers' livelihoods against climate variability, it is suggested that resilience be built at different levels through a portfolio of complementary interventions. A holistic, comprehensive framework that drives implementation, therefore, empowers the development of climate-resilient farmer collectives and food systems. Some of the key points are shared as follows: **Inclusive Governance and Leadership**

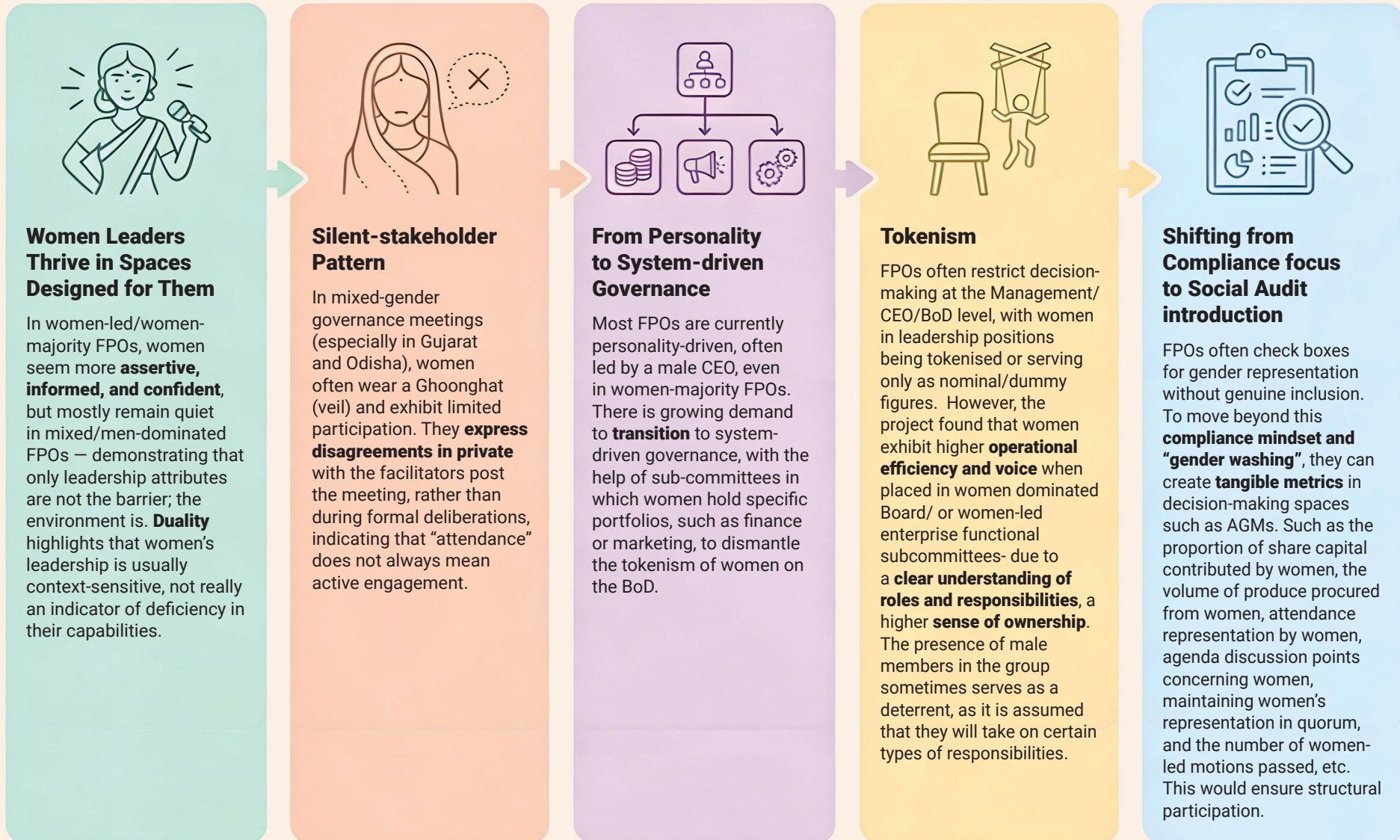
Priority Tasks for Gender Integration in the Project

The reflection loop has helped identify a roadmap with steps to improve gender equity and inclusiveness by systematically recognising and accounting for gender-related issues across the project's core activities, including design, implementation, and monitoring. These are some key considerations for ensuring that women and men feel included and dignified in various project-related activities, participate meaningfully, and learn effectively.

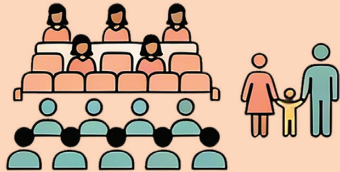


(CSA training)

Inclusive Governance and Leadership



Participation



Gender and Social Norms Continue to Define Women's Participation

Decision to attend meetings subject to family's approval, segregated seating patterns are observed during training, **revealing agency remains negotiated** rather than independent. Women "prefer to sit at the back" or "listen quietly" in mixed settings, indicating **internalised norms of deference** in the presence of men and community leaders.



Women Show High Willingness to Learn but Low Confidence in Public Spaces

Higher engagement of women in small/women only settings. In mixed settings, women refrain from expressing themselves freely due to **fear of judgment or being perceived as 'less knowledgeable'**. This results in a quiet yet visible pattern: women's knowledge deepens, but their public confidence and decision-making voice lag.



Caste-geography Constraints

SC/ST/OBC women were sometimes found to avoid attending meetings held in the other caste-dominated streets, and vice versa. This poses a risk to inclusive governance. It has been observed that in AP and Maharashtra, the choice of a meeting venue is sometimes influenced by local leaders' propaganda.



Household Gatekeeping and Negotiating Mobility pre-conditions

Across all four states, a dominant pattern remains: most women farmers, regardless of their Board status, must seek household permission or provide a **strong justification to attend** exposure visits or training held at distant locations, in comparison to men. They also have to manage all the assigned work before leaving. This suggests that the mainstreaming efforts should include Male Champion workshops at the household level to sustain institutional changes made at the FPO level.



Delivery format

The solely theory-based training has limited uptake and lower active participation among women, especially older women farmers. When adopted, the **sequenced learning mode of delivery** shows a difference in participation enthusiasm. It is preferable to hold the concept-seeding session in women-only mode to create a conducive environment, limiting their fear of judgment/ridicule, followed by a mixed-gender session for practice.



Community Leadership

The deployment of NSPs demonstrated that information flows more effectively **through horizontal peer networks** than through vertical expert-to-farmer models. NSPs who engaged in the project are acting as bridges, successfully disseminating technical requirements comprehensively into vernacular languages and delivering them in line with women's availability and mobility.

Health and Nutrition



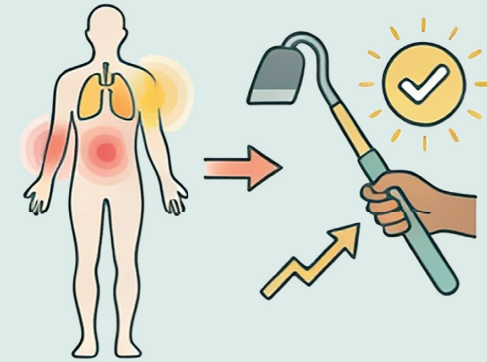
Participation Influenced by lived realities

Women gravitate to sessions on drudgery reduction, time savings, household well-being, and health – reflecting the practical, **multi-burdened reality** of rural women's lives. Program design must meet women where they are – not where we assume they should be.



Health over Yield

One of the behavioural insights that emerged from the CSA training was that the men primarily attend training on topics related to crops which are sold by the household, not just for self-consumption. This was attributed to their **greater decision-making authority** over such crops. In contrast, women participated more actively, or even exclusively, if the crop was for household consumption only. Additionally, the women were keen to adopt a practice if it was low-cost, linked to health benefits, and reduced drudgery.



Health & Drudgery

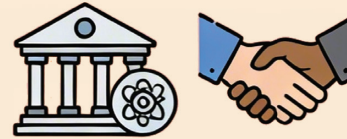
Participatory body-mapping revealed that women and men were largely aware that their **musculoskeletal and respiratory issues** were linked to specific agricultural drudgery. Once the health-drudgery link was visualised, interest in adopting labour-saving tools surged.

Value Chain and FPO Business



FPO Maturity Varies, but Aspirations are Growing

FPOs express interest in market linkages, value addition, and business diversification – but also admit to **gaps in financial literacy and governance discipline**. Women farmers increasingly articulate aspirations such as “earning my own money,” “selling my products in broader markets and signalling a gradual shift from participation to aspiration.



Partnerships are Expanding Exposure and Breaking Isolation

Exposure to universities, Agriculture Research institutes, and conferences has ignited ideas. Technical collaborations are bridging knowledge gaps and making farmers feel part of a larger agricultural ecosystem rather than isolated units.



Mobility as a Gatekeeper

While women are eager for production-level training within the village, their involvement in value chain-related activities drops significantly when it involves interaction with distant markets. Thus, there's a need for **institutionalising female market-facing roles**; otherwise, most women would remain trapped in production-only labour.



Hyper-Localising Value-addition

Usually, due to **mobility-profit trade-offs**, women lose profit margins because produce has to be transported to distant markets, as they cannot accompany the goods (due to social norms/safety concerns), forcing them to rely on male intermediaries. Under the project, the development of the first-mile-processing node (such as buy-back partnership) within the village ensures that value addition happens within the women's mobility radius, allowing them to control the grading/packaging quality and directly earn at the farm-gate, leading to bypassing mobility restrictions and enabling women to capture value before produce enters the male-dominated logistics chain.



Social Capital

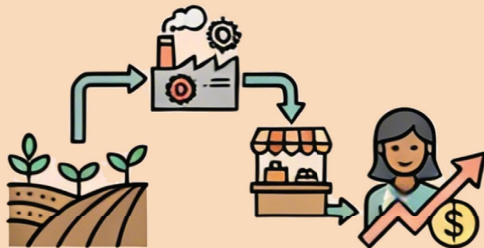
Building social capital by **reactivating current shareholders** and building on the existing vast network of SHGs/PGs/FIGs is seen as necessary for FPO's growth acceleration and sustainability. It would increase farmers' business transactions with FPOs, increasing turnover and profit margins. Also, diversify business opportunities, especially for women farmers.



Digital Gatekeeper

In many places, smartphones remain in the hands of men or youth. This creates an **information lag/disruption for women**, who receive climate and market data second-hand, reducing their ability to make timely farm decisions.

Climate Resilient and Sustainable Agriculture (CSA)



Scalable CSA models beyond extension to entrepreneurship

While women adopt CSA practices such as bio-inputs for health reasons, this alone does not scale the FPO business, as it is mainly done at the individual level by women with restricted investment capacity. Women are more deeply engaged when CSA is converted into an enterprise or enhances earnings, rather than being limited to just a farm practice. This would also give women a financial stake in resilience and help elevate their role/status within the FPO. Also, **providing economic incentives** tied to improved incomes is a compelling incentive to adopt a collective approach for CSA-centric entrepreneurial activities.



Adoption of Practices is Embedded in Family Dynamics

Adoption is not purely an individual choice, but a **family-level negotiation** influenced by trust, risk perception, and social proof—inclusive sensitisation is required to enable other family members to observe positive outcomes. Women are more likely to adopt new CSA technologies after seeing positive results from their neighbours or peers, as this provides them with bargaining power when proposing it to their families.



Convergence is key to building Climate resilience

Schemes across several departments play an essential **complementary role** in promoting climate change adaptation interventions at different levels. Mainstreaming adaptation into the planning and implementation of these can therefore provide a means to scale up local adaptation actions to other areas. A second pathway emerges from the convergence initiative, which has highlighted that despite the availability of several government schemes and programmes, their utilisation remains minimal. Several funds and schemes offered by agencies such as NABARD have significant potential to develop interventions to improve the climate resilience of India's agricultural systems. However, a lack of understanding and awareness among relevant stakeholders about targeting interventions to specific regions based on local requirements limits the efficient use of these funds.

Capacity Building

Confidence threshold



Women tend to show greater confidence in technical matters in women-only spaces but often recede in mixed settings due to fear of being wrong or **socially judged**. Repeated, sequenced learning, where the trainer recapitulated information for their participants, helped clarify topics, encouraged questions that showed comprehension, and built confidence.

Lessons in institutional capacity building



'Seeing is believing'; likewise, creating awareness through videos and evidence, especially for women farmers, so that technological adoption can enable faster mobilisation of farmers for institutional formation. Showing them what other farmers are doing, and what technology can help them achieve, makes it more convincing to adopt innovations.

Capacity Building is Transforming the Project Team's Attitude and Ownership




Team members are increasingly seeing themselves **as knowledge facilitators and ecosystem actors**, not just project implementers. Digitisation has increased confidence in presenting their field insights, as monitored data supports their intuition, improving cross-team credibility. Data help them identify drop-off patterns, non-participation clusters, or gendered differences in adoption. This is assisting FWWB in transitioning from an implementation role to an influencer and agenda-setter in gender- and climate-resilient agriculture.

Chapter 6

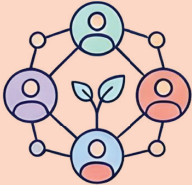



Key Considerations for Gender Integration in Project


Key issues/areas	Emerging Patterns	Key Considerations for Learning
Elevating Women's Role		
 <p data-bbox="276 1006 541 1171">Inclusive and Gender sensitive training planning/design/logistics/content/feedback</p>	<p data-bbox="597 772 746 798">Constraints</p> <ul data-bbox="597 815 1119 1302" style="list-style-type: none"> • Silence in mixed groups (fear of making mistakes). • Ghoonghat norms often restrict voice. • Women fear public ridicule, rejection & conflict. • Meeting location dictates attendance (SC women won't visit OBC streets & vice-versa). • Caste-based seating lowers confidence for women from marginalised groups. The presence of dominant caste women makes women from marginalised communities hesitant to speak up. 	<p data-bbox="1143 772 1384 798">Inclusive designing</p> <ul data-bbox="1143 815 2119 1423" style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify women's and men's priorities, distinct needs, interests, experiences, and resources related to agriculture, climate change, marketing, finance, and technology to develop relevant content for capacity-building initiatives. • Include perspectives from different age groups, castes, class, educational background, and gender. • Respect the traditional knowledge and build on it. • Strengthen men's personal commitment to gender equality and equip them with the knowledge and skills to put that commitment into practice in their own lives. • Training through digital media platforms (using various information and communication technologies) to be considered during and after the training event. • Include aspects for addressing social, economic and legal barriers in women's decision-making and ownership of farm income. • Don't use language that promotes hierarchies of understanding, such as "experts" and "trainees."

Key Considerations for Gender Integration in Project

Key issues/areas	Emerging Patterns	Key Considerations for Learning
	<p>Enablers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC/ST women participate better in decentralised small-group sessions • Older women need repetition & recap of the modules • Female trainers increase women’s attendance, and when female trainers lead, it increases their active participation. • Interactive tools (games) increase retention and engagement • Women express a strong interest but avoid competitive/confrontational discussions in mixed groups. • Women participate in FPOs when the share capital is reduced. • Women prefer to share issues one-on-one in private meetings. 	<p>Implementation for enhanced participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise micro-meetings at the hamlet level, especially for concept seeding • Identify village leaders to give legitimacy and build trust for conducting meetings. • Women only-batches during initial training to enhance confidence and provide a safe space for learning. • Family engagement (husband/in-law) for greater sensitisation • Involve community members who can inspire participants • Schedule sessions during lean periods, post-domestic work. • Encourage women to sit in front and speak first, but don’t put them on the spot. • Use institutional child care facilities such as Anganwadis to reduce the care work burden of women and increase their mobility. • Facilitate a safe space during training by setting some ground rules early. Participants are not to make fun of others’ well-intentioned comments or repeat unflattering stories outside the workshop. Participants’ privacy must be respected to enable experience sharing and learning. • Recognition campaigns to showcase women’s contributions and achievements. • Discourage any disrupters when others are speaking. • Encourage women and men to comment openly on the event’s inclusion processes and on the training methods and content. • Capacitate trainers to handle local gender norms. • Combine training with awareness about maintenance of bank KYC and documents for availing social welfare benefits. • Conduct gender role training workshops/theatre that can shift the perceptions of men and boys at the household/FPO level about who does what, who is responsible, and who benefits.


Key issues/areas	Emerging Patterns	Key Considerations for Learning
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide light refreshments to keep up energy levels and encourage group building. If lunch is required, pay local women to provide it. Consider encouraging men/ male youth to cook and serve. Make sure women and men queue together, not separately. <p>Feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback should be captured, analysed, and disaggregated by gender. • Participants to commit themselves to one action immediately after the course and to share these with others.
 <p>Building a strong network</p>	<p>Barriers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women have shared deterrents for networking, such as time poverty, drudgery, access & mobility issues. <p>Enablers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collective action increases interest (e.g., millet adoption in Amreli). • Women participate in FPOs when the share capital is reduced. 	<p>Economic & Institutional Enablers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower share price for women shareholders. • Incentivise women’s direct dealings with FPOs. • Expand FPO’s network by including women involved in diverse commodities. <p>Collective mobilization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bank on existing collectives for mobilisation; if not available, encourage the formation of village-level collectives. • Share inspiring stories of women with similar backgrounds and conduct exposure visits.
 <p>Women Leadership Pipeline through Sub-committees</p>	<p>Participation Dynamics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women are stronger in field operations than market-facing roles, but rarely realise fair monetary benefits for their work. • Confidence rises with role clarity. • Women directorships persist without real power. • Care work and time poverty are the most significant deterrents. 	<p>Strengthen Leadership Structures and Ownership/Accountability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support a parallel leadership pipeline for women • Target ≥1 woman member per committee and women as committee heads. • Make committee head positions rotational, with written delegation of roles and quarterly reporting and also encourage reporting by women-led committees. • Replace defunct leadership/management members. • Institutionalise “women’s issue minutes” in BoD agendas, particularly insights generated by NSPs during mobilisation meetings; create a follow-up tracker that links each issue to an action and owner.

Key Considerations for Gender Integration in Project

Key issues/areas	Emerging Patterns	Key Considerations for Learning
		<p>Redistributing workload & Incentivising Performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-distribute operational load to avoid overburdening a single individual or a few individuals. • Recognise active women leaders’ contributions, fostering motivation for others. • Engage male champions and encourage HH-level workload sharing. <p>Leadership Capacity Building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build up women’s skills and confidence by enabling them to facilitate group discussions, act as note-takers, or give presentations on behalf of their groups. • Conduct more frequent capacity-building training, with lowered information density to encourage open discussions • Use roleplay for building negotiation skills of women at the HH, community, and FPO levels. • Encourage gender-role reversal plays to foster shared work burden and recognise women’s contributions. • Adopt structured facilitation approaches, such as alternating women’s speaking turns during meetings. • Organise leadership labs to capacitate women with key leadership skills.
 <p>Digital Inclusion - Women as Information Receivers and Action Takers</p>	<p>Access, Usability, and Device-related Constraints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most women prefer voice/audio formats in their local language. • Many women often wait to use other family members’ handsets, especially older women who need assistance operating the device. 	<p>Improving Access & Digital Ownership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve women’s access to mobile phones for receiving timely information, decision-making and networking. • Enable multiple household member registrations on applications to increase acceptance and shared use. • Integrate services for non-Android phones


Key issues/areas	Emerging Patterns	Key Considerations for Learning
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some apps that require a locked screen create barriers for women users. Many women hesitate to enable screen locks due to fear that family members may question their need for privacy. • Many miss out on notifications when on-field, especially in challenging terrain and tribal areas. • Due to the heavy storage requirements and image downloads, some agro-advisory apps are not compatible with the available devices. • Although some women are already registered on advisory Apps, the advisory service provided is redundant or unsuitable due to the limited relevance to the hyperlocal agro-climatic contexts, heavy reliance on HH male members for decision-making, and peer validation. <p>Trust, Familiarity and Platform Preference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WhatsApp group participation shows more takers due to ease and familiarity • Prevalence of high scepticism of unknown apps/digital services stemming from the possibility of digital fraud. 	<p>Making Services Relevant, Trustworthy, & User-friendly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring in timely, context-relevant digital tools and information, and build digital literacy alongside process literacy. • Design apps and services that are built on farmer familiar navigation. • Instead of multiple apps, streamline advisory through a common and popular medium, such as WhatsApp. • Send messages with lighter file sizes and schedule them in the evenings to improve reachability. <p>Ecosystem Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify gaps in digital services and share this feedback with service providers. • Conduct cyber awareness drives with the support of local banks. • Tracking of the impact of the action taken by the farmer based on the received digital information.


Key Considerations for Gender Integration in Project

Key issues/areas	Emerging Patterns	Key Considerations for Learning
 <p>Value-chain strengthening</p>	<p>Gendered Market Dynamics and Negotiation Barriers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Markets tend to reinforce male dominance due to the high presence of men and transactions, unless consciously redesigned. • Women are confident in product preparation, but remain hesitant in negotiation and market-facing roles. • Product aesthetics and branding emerged as knowledge gaps <p>Collective Business Roles, Entrepreneurial Mindsets, and Skill Demand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group-led business roles, such as sorting, packaging, and machine operations, are in high demand among women. • Hands-on exposure to business processes significantly builds entrepreneurial confidence. • Peer bonding has strengthened, contributing to a shift in mindset towards entrepreneurship. • Women often propose initiatives and value-added ideas, many of which incorporate nutrition-related considerations. 	<p>Enterprise Strengthening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More training on value addition and eco-friendly packaging for business expansion. • Identify institutional buyer connections, especially long-term contracts. • Initiate a small pilot of a women-led input business, aligned with FPO's business interests. A hub-and-spoke model can be explored between smaller collectives and FPOs as a more decentralised and suitable alternative. <p>Strengthening Economic Agency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentivise women members doing business transactions with FPO • Direct bank payments to women to increase their agency.


Key issues/areas	Emerging Patterns	Key Considerations for Learning
Empowering Farmer Collectives & Equitable Governance		
 <p>Governance and compliance</p>	<p>Participation and Learning Dynamics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women seem disconnected/hesitant in technical/financial topics • Comprehension improves with demonstrations and repetition. • Women prefer hands-on, practical training; theory is less effective. • Women huddle together, sit at the back, or stay silent in mixed groups. • Women share disagreements or concerns privately with the facilitator after meetings, not during activities. <p>Structural & Social Barriers to Participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women’s participation increases in women-majority FPOs when they are given committee roles. • Co-created plans increase accountability. • Peer recognition triggers confidence. • Meetings held in the evening or with short notice tend to exclude women and witness male-heavy attendance. • Caste dynamics, educational levels and financial status adversely affect attendance and voice. • Women without extensive formal education feel “unprepared” to take on leadership roles. 	<p>Inclusive and Gender Integrated Governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage inclusion and meaningful participation from diverse groups based on caste, class, education, age, locality, gender, and value-chain. • Integrate video formats in governance training modules. • Develop governance and compliance pedagogy for women with limited educational levels. • Guide FPOs with simplified compliance checklists. • Institutionalise gendered governance SOPs (quorum rules, agenda sharing, list the names of the contributors on the document, etc). • Encourage meeting the quorum, including women’s attendance. • Set meeting times to women-friendly hours and share the schedule and agenda well in advance. • Sequence complex content of the training into small modules for better comprehension. • Support and monitor governance meeting through - Training + handholding + MoM document verification • Ensure ownership of FPO plans and vision document. • Reimbursement for travel to enable participation.


Key Considerations for Gender Integration in Project

Key issues/areas	Emerging Patterns	Key Considerations for Learning
 <p>Business development</p>	<p>Enablers for business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women excel in grading, quality & hygiene maintenance. • Time-flexibility and working near home align with women's current responsibilities, making it more likely for them to avail business opportunities. • Participants involved in the exposure and setting up of businesses have gained operational confidence. • Practical skill-based training, when combined with exposure, becomes more productive for participants. • Quality SOPs & grading training for women are necessary to reduce potential risks and improve price realisation. • Cultural acceptance of women's entrepreneurial endeavours is higher in group-based owned-business models. <p>Constraints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear of market-facing tasks remains due to low confidence in their negotiation skills and low prior experience. 	<p>Enhancing FPO's business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilise existing and conduct continuous awareness sessions for shareholders to deepen their consistent engagement with FPO's services. • Include explicit gender targets in business plans (% turnover from women-led products). • Increase FPO products' outreach through media platforms (such as Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp) for greater market access and increase their product visibility. • Identify more local buyers for accessible, sustainable, and economical market access, especially for women, by leveraging the local and sustained demand for products. • More refresher training to enhance business development skills. • Facilitate quicker, lower-interest-rate and credit support for working capital, infrastructure development, to enable entrepreneurial activity • Expansion to more commodities with commercial value. • Greater focus on quality maintenance, processing, and standardisation of the products to achieve higher price realisation. • Support in increasing the turnover and net profit margin to make the FPOs self-reliant and reduce their dependency on external support.


Key issues/areas	Emerging Patterns	Key Considerations for Learning
Climate Resilience & Sustainability through Women-led Action		
 <p>Extension service- Access to information, training, skills, resources, services for CSA Adoption (Pre- production, Production, Post-production)</p>	<p>Adoption Drivers & Decision-making Dynamics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women are comfortable asking questions in female-led training sessions. • Adoption of different practices and technologies is higher when there is peer validation, proof of success, and support through resources. • Women have a higher risk-taking aptitude, but a limited decision-making scope. • Men value yield; women value stability. • Women value health, time-saving and cost-saving adoption practices • Women adopt organic/CSA when visible economic benefit and market assurance exist. • Need for market linkages for CSA produce. 	<p>Learning Approaches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In parallel with lead-farmer models, explore horizontal knowledge-sharing models (peer-to-peer mentoring & replication, Farmer Field School) that promote group sharing and learning processes, both within and between groups. • Support backyard demonstration plots and technical sessions led by women. • Expand women-only CSA cohorts, especially in areas with low participation of women, and gradually integrate mixed groups to encourage joint decision-making. • Use of Decentralised Renewable Energy (DRE) technology through the demonstrations. <p>Linking CSA, Market, & Women’s Agency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSA is integrated with business incentives. Pair each FFS with climate-market pilots (solar drying, etc.) • Institutional tie-ups and convergence • Frame the development of women’s knowledge and skills within broader goals centring on achieving the goals which the family considers essential (e.g., health, nutrition, and education). • Ensure direct links between women’s contributions and their entitlements by building associations between women’s improved economic contributions (income, food and nutrition security) and their rights to equitable benefits, voice in expenditure decisions, and inclusion of their own dreams and aspirations

Key Considerations for Gender Integration in Project

Key issues/areas	Emerging Patterns	Key Considerations for Learning
	<p>Gendered Participation Patterns in Learning Spaces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender segregated participation influenced by crop and the value-chain node (for market production crops such as Groundnut=Men; For HH consumption crops such as Millets=Women). • Male participants and their engagement are higher than that of females in technical sessions related to pesticides, seeds, market, etc. • Men initiate topics, women follow; sometimes men encourage women. 	
 <p>Drudgery Reduction</p>	<p>Benefit of Tools and Technologies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasks that are being performed by women (such as sowing, weeding, harvesting, etc.) become less time-intensive with tool adoption. • Women adopt technology when it reduces time/effort • Access to improved tools reduces dependence on family members or hired labour in areas where there's a labour shortage, migration, or peak agricultural season. 	<p>Demonstration & Institutional Linkages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combine demonstrations with regular follow-up visits to support adoption and troubleshooting • Establish linkages with relevant government schemes to enable access to subsidies, services, and support for accessing women-friendly farm machinery. • Set up Custom Hiring Centres to improve access to machinery and reduce individual investment risks. <p>Targeting Drudgery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify tools and build service models focused on drudgery reduction for both on-farm and off-farm activities. • Identify and promote women-friendly farm machinery, particularly for activities with high participation by women, and ensure they fall within an affordable bracket so women can make a purchase.

Key issues/areas	Emerging Patterns	Key Considerations for Learning
 <p>CSA Enterprise</p>	<p>Exposure and Confidence Building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Seeing is believing’ -practical exposure to successful business ventures accelerates adoption and confidence. • Women respond strongly to a combination of hands-on training and exposure visits • Peer bonds strengthen through shared exposure, leading to greater trust in collective action. • Confidence shifts when women witness successful women-led agribusinesses, reinforcing the belief that “we can run units ourselves”. <p>Gender Norms Influencing Enterprise Choices & Capital Access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low capital enterprises and home-based enterprises see higher acceptance among women. • Value-addition activities remain largely untapped without timely access to capital with feasible terms and conditions for repayment. • Women avoid negotiations due to the prevailing norm that “men handle money”. • Men tend to be supportive when it doesn’t disrupt women’s household roles and responsibilities. 	<p>Agribusiness Model development & System Linkages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote hub-and-spoke models between SHG/FIG-based enterprises and FPOs, along with the possibility of cluster-based branding. • Position FPOs as aggregators and providers of credit or capital support for smaller collective enterprises. • To market chemical-free or organic products, support FPO to meet regulatory, traceability and quality requirements through certifications, licenses and compliance. This will enable FPOs to move beyond local or informal sales and engage with buyers- such as organised retail, government procurement platforms, food processing companies, and export-oriented buyers- who can offer better prices, assured demand, and longer-term contracts. • Build enterprises based on hyperlocal demand and explore supply linkages at the hyperlocal level. • Link seed banks to women’s entrepreneurship (seed sales), identify pathways for bringing women into formal seed systems, and seed licenses for FPO/ Collective. • Recognise and leverage women as an essential consumer segment to expand and diversify market avenues by considering their preferences for product forms. E.g., some women prefer stable, resilient seed varieties rather than high-investment inputs.

Key Considerations for Gender Integration in Project

Key issues/areas	Emerging Patterns	Key Considerations for Learning
 <p>Risk mitigation Digital agro-advisory</p>	<p>Gender Norms and Climate Change's Influence Over Decision-making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone access and the digital literacy gap limit women's direct access to information. • Filtering of messages by men occurs when phones are shared. • Climate variability is altering cropping practices; this year's higher rainfall is shifting a significant number of millet farmers towards paddy cultivation in AP and Odisha. 	<p>Risk Mitigation through Financial Resilience & Advisories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audio format advisories in vernacular to be promoted. • Advisory on crop-loss risk warning should be combined with timely follow-up. • Combine scientific forecasts with indigenous knowledge. • Raise awareness about climate risk mitigation efforts, such as crop insurance. • Increase convergence with social welfare schemes to reduce out-of-pocket expenditure (OOPE) and build resilience.





Friends of Women's World Banking, India

101, Sakar-1, Opp. Gandhigram Railway Station, Ashram Road, Ahmedabad 380 009. Gujarat, India
Call: +91-79-26580119 | mobile +91 9686625411 | Website: <https://fwwbindia.org/>

