

Adding a Gender Lens to the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact Monitoring Framework

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Working to address gender issues is critical to advancing sustainable urban food systems, since women often experience significant inequalities that can affect their capacity to participate. We make the case for applying a gender lens within the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP) monitoring framework. Drawing on the findings of a pilot project in Nairobi, Kenya, we set out a pathway for individual cities to work on gender measures, and propose a programme of work for the MUFPP to provide collective support to signatory cities on gender.

The importance of gender in urban food system sustainability assessments

The MUFPP has been signed by over 200 cities since its launch in 2015. Its overall goal is to provide strategic options to cities that are aiming for more sustainable food systems. It enables diverse cities across the globe to share experiences and good practices that combat the challenges of urbanisation and promote the right to food for their citizens.

To help the signatory cities assess progress towards their commitments under the MUFPP, a monitoring framework was designed in consultation with 40 cities, led by RUAF with input from FAO and the MUFPP Secretariat. This framework contains 44 qualitative and quantitative targets and indicators under the six MUFPP work streams: Ensuring an enabling environment for effective action (governance); Sustainable diets and nutrition; Social and economic equity; Food production; Food supply and distribution; and Food waste¹. This monitoring framework was piloted in three cities: Nairobi (Kenya), Antananarivo (Madagascar), and Quito (Ecuador), with funding from FAO and the Water Land and Ecosystems (WLE) programme of CGIAR's International Water Management Institute.

The MUFPP monitoring framework is robust and detailed, but the organisations and cities that helped to create it also acknowledge shortcomings, particularly relating to gender and climate change. The MUFPP has been signed by

municipalities in both the global South and North, and each city's economic, social and political situation is different. Although cities are guided to select and adapt indicators that suit their situations, the current options unintentionally homogenise the experiences of urban residents.

Gender identity is critical to assessing urban food systems because women often experience significant inequalities in the urban environment that can affect their capacity to participate in the food system. As many people experience multiple forms of discrimination and oppression, the inequalities can be nuanced further by considering intersecting factors such as race, ethnicity, class, ability or sexuality (see article by Young and Rodríguez on page 18). For instance, low-income female-led households are at higher risk of food insecurity due to unequal access to land; women farmers are disproportionately affected by climate change and disasters. The 2016 report 'How to green food systems in a gender-smart way: a matter of insight and smart interventions'² identifies five "gender asymmetries" within food systems that impact how they function and determine who benefits (see Box 1).

Although not specific to the food system, other inequalities also impact households. For example, men face inequalities in areas like school dropout rates, employment, violence, and criminal activities.

Box 1. Gender asymmetries within food systems, identified by Groverman and van der Wees²

- i) Access and control of social and material assets
- ii) Opportunities to participate in agricultural markets and benefit from added value
- iii) Access to technology and knowledge
- iv) Experience of resilience and vulnerability to risks
- v) Participation and representation in all levels of decision making, power and leadership

In order to address the complex asymmetries in an urban context, cities must first acknowledge they exist, then assess their situations and find ways to implement transformative processes.



Gender and climate change indicators meeting hosted by NEFSALF in January 2020 Photos by Mazingira Institute



To help cities conduct assessments, the RUAF Global Partnership recommends that the MUFPP monitoring framework be developed further to include analysis of how citizens' experiences may differ as a result of their gender (and other intersecting factors), and how these experiences can impact the collective ability of residents to meet the MUFPP targets³.

To this end, a review was conducted of all 44 MUFPP indicators through a gender lens. The resulting Gender Framework shows where it would be helpful for data to be disaggregated for gender (see Table 1)³. However, much of the disaggregated data required may currently be unavailable, and may require mandated policies for the public sector to start collecting new information and implementing new analysis processes.

The Nairobi experience of piloting the MUFPP monitoring framework

Nairobi City County signed the MUFPP in 2016. In 2019 it was one of three signatory cities that pilot-tested a selection of relevant indicators⁴. This pilot project was delivered by RUAF with support from FAO and Wilfrid Laurier University. RUAF partner Mazingira Institute helped Nairobi to apply the indicators.

As well as being Kenya's capital, Nairobi is one of 47 counties, each responsible for planning agriculture, including urban agriculture. Nairobi passed the Nairobi City County Urban Agriculture Promotion and Regulation Act in 2015; it is also developing a Food Strategy. As part of the pilot project on MUFPP indicators, the City established a Cross-Sectoral Consultative Group (CCG).

Twelve indicators covering all six of the MUFPP work streams were selected for pilot testing; three of the 12 were adapted and restructured from the monitoring framework for better local application.

Mazingira Institute undertook a gender analysis of the 12 indicators using the Gender Framework³, as shown in Table 1. It was supported in this analysis by the WLE programme.

Box 2. Primary data collection for indicator 36

The CCG conducted a rapid census of fresh fruit and vegetable outlets in two sample areas of Nairobi, one low-income and one high-income.

The low-income area had 86 fresh fruit and vegetable outlets per 1,000 people, all within walking distance, whereas the high-income area had only 5.5, mostly not within walking distance. However, many residents in the high-income area had cars and there were seven supermarkets. Kiosks, almost all run by women, were present everywhere, and there were fewer handcarts (mkokoteni) operated mostly by men. This suggests that more women than men are involved in informal sector food distribution.

Mazingira Institute found that the availability of disaggregated data varied between the indicators. Some indicators used available government statistics. Although these are collected monthly by area and gender, they are not usually analysed. Data collected by the MUFPP pilot project team, on the other hand, were disaggregated, such as for training (see Indicator 30 in Table 1).

New field data were also specifically collected for the project related to indicator 36 on fresh fruit and vegetable outlets (see Box 2).

Validation and further stakeholder discussion in Nairobi

A follow-up meeting on the MUFPP indicators was organised with Nairobi farmers and processors at Mazingira Institute in January 2020. About 25 members of the Nairobi and Environs Food Security, Agriculture and Livestock Forum (NEFSALF) made their own analysis of gender and climate change. In relation to gender, they looked especially at the findings of indicator 36, on the roles of men and women in food processing and distribution.

Elements of the five "gender asymmetries"³ (see Box 1) were reflected in the discussion and participants confirmed the following points:

MUFPF work stream	Nairobi indicator selection (*adapted or restructured)	Requirements for gender analysis	Nairobi findings
Governance	3. Presence of a municipal urban food policy, strategy and/or action plan	Disaggregate by gender % in municipal bodies	Women are less than 50% of senior staff in Food and Agriculture Sector, CCG, and Secretariat Food Strategy not yet gender sensitive
Sustainable diets and nutrition	11. Number of adults with type 2 diabetes	Disaggregate by gender %	Current data not disaggregated but improvements planned
	12. Prevalence of stunting for children <5	Disaggregate by gender %	Current data not disaggregated but improvements planned
Social and economic equity	20. Percentage of children and youth under 18 benefitting from school feeding	Disaggregate by gender %	20% of children benefitting, but data not disaggregated
	23. Presence of food-related policies and targets with a specific focus on socially vulnerably groups	Disaggregate policies and targets by gender %. Women as a socially vulnerable group	Policies and targets do not address women as a vulnerable group, except widows and orphans in Vision 2030. A food emergency monitoring tool addresses vulnerable groups in informal settlements
Food production	26. Presence of municipal policies and regulations that allow and promote agriculture production and processing	Determine if policies and regulations are gender-sensitive	Gender equality is not mentioned in the Urban Agriculture Promotion and Regulation Act 2015 but is observed in practice
Food supply and distribution	30. No. of food producers getting training and assistance in past 12 months	Disaggregate gender % of technical training beneficiaries	65% of 17,491 farmers who received training are women 60% of 4,200 new requests for training were from women
	36. *Number of fresh fruit and vegetable outlets per unit area	Disaggregate gender % of those operating fruit and vegetable outlets	Most kiosk operators were women while mobile traders were mostly men Men used wheelbarrows while women were on foot
	37. Proportion of annual budget invested in food markets or retail outlets providing fresh food to city residents	Gender N/A	2.3% in 2019-20, Kenyan Shillings 250 million (c. \$2.5 m)
	39. Presence of food safety legislation implementation and enforcement	Gender disaggregation N/A	Legislation is in force Enforcement is weak in the informal sector, where women traders predominate (see Indicator 36)
Waste, environment and the circular economy	33. *Annual proportion of urban organic waste collected that is re-used in agricultural production (indicator moved from food production)	% women and men in waste processing groups	Not available from current statistics Other research shows older women and male youth make up waste groups, with males dominating
	43. Presence of policies or regulations that address food waste prevention, recovery and redistribution	Stakeholder representation by gender, ethnicity and class	Not measured

Table 1: Nairobi City County Indicators: Gender Analysis

- Women sell at the local market, but they depend heavily on men throughout the supply chain because men have more access to funds and resources;
- Men have better farming strategies and negotiation skills;
- Women need to improve their negotiation skills, and both men and women need to reflect on traditionally-accepted roles for men and women. These points could be covered in training;
- Women are better skilled at vegetable growing;
- Women tend goats and keep poultry;
- Men are better at keeping large livestock like cattle, a traditional source of wealth (participants acknowledged their bias);
- Men were said to produce the goat milk, an innovative urban income;
- Youth and children of all ages and genders should be involved in family farming projects so that biases change.

Combining specific data collection with a follow-up stakeholder workshop to validate and more deeply explore issues around gender proved invaluable, and surfaced new angles that the data alone did not capture. Multi-stakeholder discussion can be instrumental in identifying local priorities and how best to start to address them, which in turn helps with development of gender measures that really make a difference.

Reflections on next steps

The Nairobi example provides a route for individual cities to work towards gender measures that advance sustainable food systems:

- 1) identify priority areas of the food system to tackle;
- 2) gather available data;
- 3) validate with participatory discussions;
- 4) identify next steps and implement;
- 5) build up transformative actions over time with plenty of participation.

To overcome issues over data disaggregation, it is necessary to identify:

- which stakeholders should collect what data;
- how this data should be disaggregated;
- where policy is required for data collection to happen;



5th Milan Urban Food Policy Pact Annual Gathering. Photo by Joy Carey.

- resources to facilitate policy-creation that enables disaggregation of data by gender.

For the MUFPP to provide collective support to all signatory cities over gender, the following work is recommended:

- **A menu for change:** A follow-up piece of work to the RUAF Global Partnership report to provide further guidance on transformative approaches within the food system, including practical examples from cities on how they enable shared control of resources and decision-making.
- **Action research:** Collaborative action research between academics and MUFPP signatory cities to produce examples of how specific gender issues can be addressed. This could be done through regional clusters of cities that focus on specific “gender asymmetries”.
- **MUFPP monitoring framework 2.0:** A collaborative project to further enrich the whole of the MUFPP monitoring framework with clear gender and climate change measures.

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