



## Milestones

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### Guatemala's comprehensive policy on gender equality

For the first time in its history, Guatemala's Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food has a comprehensive Policy on Gender Equality.

Developed with the support of various international organizations, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Institutional Policy for Gender Equality and Strategic Implementation Framework 2014-2023 is an attempt to systematically mainstream gender in all areas of the ministry's work, including its institutional mechanisms, with special emphasis on integrated rural development and food security and nutrition programmes and processes. The new policy also represents a key milestone in Guatemala's implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

The process began in September of 2013 when the Government of Guatemala requested technical assistance for the country's recently-established Special Cabinet for Women. Various offices of the FAO stepped in to support the policy formulation and worked with the Ministry

of Agriculture, Livestock and Food to revise the draft policy, ensuring that gender equality and women's empowerment could be factored into the implementation plan of the National Integrated Rural Development Policy; that a gender sensitive approach informed the provision of agricultural and rural extension services; and that strategic guidance was provided for gender sensitive food and nutrition programmes.

A three-pronged approach was adopted to create an institutional framework for policy implementation involving capacity building within ministries, multi-stakeholder workshops to discuss the unique challenges faced by rural women, and meetings with a key civil society organization representing rural indigenous Guatemalan women

According to FAO Gender and Development Officer Hajnalka Petrics, who has been involved in the process since its inception, while the approval of the policy is a major milestone, in many ways the work has only just begun. Much remains to be done by way of the policy's implementation, monitoring and evaluation plans. **■**