

**CCARDESA**  
Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa



# **Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa**

## **GENDER EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION POLICY**

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## Foreword

It is with great pride and a sense of purpose that I introduce the CCARDESA Gender Policy. This document is not just a policy; it's a testament to our collective will to create a more equitable and just society in the agricultural sector. The journey to this moment has been both challenging and enlightening, and I am deeply grateful to everyone who contributed to this significant milestone.

Our commitment to gender equality and inclusivity in agriculture is more than just a moral obligation; it's a strategic imperative. CCARDESA engagements with various stakeholders has provided an invaluable platform for diverse voices to be heard, ideas to be shared, and strategies to be formulated towards addressing gender imbalance in the agricultural research and development landscape. The participants' insights and lessons from similar R&D institutions have been instrumental in shaping this policy.

We have acknowledged the systemic marginalization of women, youth, and persons with different abilities, despite their significant presence in the global, regional, and national populations. Our policy aims to rectify this by ensuring equity, not just equality. We understand that addressing gender disparities in agriculture goes beyond focusing on women alone; it involves creating a balanced approach that includes men, boys, and the varying needs of young men and women and persons with different abilities.

A key aspect of our policy is its focus on gender as it relates to climate resilience, recognizing the unique challenges and opportunities this presents. We aim to leverage existing women and Youth empowerment frameworks, particularly in uplifting women and youth in the agriculture sector. Furthermore, the policy underscores the importance of gender balance in agriculture, advocating for women and youth participation and altering the narrative that has traditionally seen agriculture as a male-dominated field.

We are committed to ensuring that this policy is not merely a document but a living, breathing framework that brings real change. This involves establishing robust implementing structures at all levels and a strong monitoring and evaluation system to ensure accountability and effectiveness. We are inspired by examples such as the one from Burundi, where investing in gender equality in agriculture has yielded significant returns.

Research and evidence-based advocacy are at the heart of our approach. We intend to lead by example, encouraging member states to conduct research that informs policy and advocacy. This data-driven approach will enhance our impact and ensure our actions are grounded in reality.

Finally, this policy addresses the need to change mindsets about gender roles in agriculture and promotes the sector as a lucrative and respectable career choice for all, irrespective of gender.

Finally, I extend my heartfelt thanks to all Durban Gender Side-Event workshop participants, our partners, and stakeholders. Your contributions have been invaluable. Together, we are embarking on a journey to not only change policies but to transform lives and communities.

Dr. Cliff Dlamini

Executive Director, CCARDESA

## **Acknowledgements**

This Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Policy was developed in consultation with various stakeholders, including CCARDESA Secretariat, the Board and regional partners. The CCARDESA Secretariat is therefore very grateful to all its stakeholders for the support rendered during the development of this policy. Thank you to all those who provided online feedback and those who attended the validation workshop.

Appreciation also goes to the workshop participants who gave feedback during the brainstorming session on the CCARDESA Gender Policy at the CCARDESA Agribusiness and Gender/Youth-Responsive Food Systems Side Event during the 8th Africa Agribusiness Science Week in Durban, South Africa.

The Secretariat wishes to recognise and appreciate the technical and financial support provided for the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme EX Pillar 4 (CAADP-XP4) Programme by the European Union and managed by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The development of this Policy was made possible through the CAADP-XP4 programme and gratitude also goes to the Board of Directors of CCARDESA for the support, guidance and direction and the consultant who developed the policy.

## **Acronyms**

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| AR4D      | Agricultural Research for Development  |
| AU        | African Union  |
| CAADP-XP4 | Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme EX Pillar 4                   |
| CCARDESA  | Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa |
| CEDAW     | Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women           |
| CSA       | Climate Smart Agriculture  |
| CSO       | Civil Society Organisations  |
| FAO       | Food and Agriculture Organisation  |
| GDP       | Gross Domestic Product   |
| GESI      | Gender Equality and Social Inclusion   |
| ICPs      | International Cooperating Partners   |
| ICT       | Information and Communication Technology   |
| ICKM      | Information, Communication and Knowledge Management                                  |
| IFAD      | International Fund for Agricultural Development                                      |
| MTOP      | Medium-Term Operational Plan   |
| NARES     | National Agricultural Research Extension Systems                                     |
| R&D       | Research and Development   |
| SADC      | Southern African Development Community   |
| SDGs      | Sustainable Development Goals  |
| UN        | United Nations   |
| WEAI      | Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index   |
| WPAY      | World Programme of Action for Youth  |

## Glossary of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Related Terms

| Key Term                     | Definition  |
|------------------------------|---|
| <b>Gender</b>                | Refers to the roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society at a given time considers appropriate for men and women. Gender also refers to the relations among women and those among men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes.  |
| <b>Gender Equity</b>         | Refers to the fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities between women and men. The concept recognizes that women and men have different needs, priorities, power and responsibilities. Therefore, the gender inequalities should be identified and addressed to avoid imbalances between the men and women.   |
| <b>Gender Equality</b>       | Refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women, men, girls and boys. Gender equality does not imply sameness but implies that the interests, needs and priorities of all genders are taken into consideration. Gender equality is not a women’s issue but should concern and fully engage all genders while recognizing that neither all men nor all women are a homogenous group.   |
| <b>Gender Mainstreaming</b>  | Refers to the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. |
| <b>Gender Responsive</b>     | Describes processes or outcomes that explicitly take gender equality into account, for example through research, data collection, analyses, consultation and other processes. Gender responsiveness implies consistent and systematic attention to gender-based differences and inequalities between women and men, with a view to addressing systemic and structural constraints to gender equality.   |
| <b>Gender Transformation</b> | Actively examines, questions and changes rigid gender norms and imbalances of power that advantage boys and men over girls and women. It aspires to tackle the root causes of gender inequality and reshape unequal power relations; it moves beyond individual self-improvement among girls and women towards redressing the power dynamics and structures that serve to reinforce gendered inequalities <sup>1</sup> .  |
| <b>Social inclusion</b>      | Is the process of improving the terms for individuals and groups to participate in society and improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of people, disadvantaged on the basis of their identity, to take part in society <sup>2</sup> . People may be disadvantaged based on gender, age, location, occupation, race, ethnicity, religion, citizenship status, disability among other factors.   |

<sup>1</sup> UNICEF (2020) Technical Note on Gender-Transformative Approaches in the Global Programme to End Child Marriage Phase II: A Summary for Practitioners.

<sup>2</sup> World Bank (2013) What Do We Mean by Social Inclusion?



## **Executive Summary**

CCARDESA considers gender equality and social inclusion as a cornerstone for not only food security but also an equitable, inclusive and sustainable economic and social development. Therefore, this policy demonstrates CCARDESA's commitment to gender mainstreaming in its programmes, projects and activities while aligning all these to the regional and international gender related instruments and development goals. The policy notes that women and men often have different or complementary roles and responsibilities in agriculture and food security in Africa and in particular women play a vital role in food production, food distribution, and food utilization (UNDP: 2012) hence maintaining food security at household, community and national levels.

In Southern Africa, women provide 80 to 90% of agricultural labour in subsistence agriculture and 70% in cash crop production (Gosling et.al:2020). However, gender inequalities still persist in the SADC region with women and girls being the worst affected in relation to access to productive resources, legal rights among others (SADC: 2014a). According to FAO (2023), if we tackle the gender inequalities endemic in agrifood systems and empower women, the world will take a leap forward in addressing the goals of ending poverty and creating a world free from hunger.

Recent United Nations estimates indicate that Africa has the youngest population in the world, with 70% of Sub-Saharan Africa under the age of 30. Youth are vital players in agricultural transformation and food systems and action is needed to enhance agricultural investments by and with young agro entrepreneurs. CCARDESA places importance to matters of women, youth and social inclusion and this is why it has dedicated this as one of the key thematic areas in its Long-term Strategic Plan and Medium-term Operational Plan.

The CAADP-XP4 programme builds the capacity of women-led and youth-led organisations to participate in strategic events and global climate issues. This entails enhancing partnerships among the multi-stakeholders across sectors and strengthening capacities of the implementing countries on gender strengthening/capacity to realise the programme's outputs. Despite CCARDESA having programmes which have elements of gender mainstreaming, the organisation has not had an over-arching policy to guide a systematic gender mainstreaming across its interventions.

The need for a comprehensive gender policy for CCARDESA is evident in light of the fact that gender and social inclusion issues are integral to agricultural research and development as well as the achievement of the objectives, aims, mission and vision of CCARDESSA. One of the roles of the CAADP-XP4 programme is to strengthen and support women and youth in agribusiness for improved livelihood and increased income. Therefore, CCARDESA cannot effectively achieve its goals without having a gender policy which outlines how it should manage the gender aspects in its interventions and operations. This policy is also necessary in

order to align CCARDESA's activities to the regional and international GESI aspirations and priorities.

The guiding principles of this policy are anchored on a set of regional instruments which recognize gender equality and social inclusion as integral parts of policies, programmes, projects, activities, processes and institutional mechanisms to which CCARDESA is fully committed. Therefore, the CCARDESA GESI Policy guiding principles include stakeholder engagement, capacity building, transparency, equity, technology and innovation and sustainability.

The GESI policy results will be achieved through the implementation of activities in six thematic areas as provided for in the CCARDESA long-term strategic and medium-term operational plan and these are: Agricultural productivity and food and nutrition security; Resilience to emerging agricultural risks: environmental, climate change and transboundary pests and diseases; Commercialization of the agricultural sector and market access; Women, youth and social inclusion; Knowledge and information management, communication and policy support; and Capacity strengthening of CCARDESA and AR4D institutions. In order to ensure that gender mainstreaming and social inclusion interventions are fully implemented, CCARDESA will institute institutional mechanisms including CCARDESA secretariat, partnerships, capacity building, gender responsive communication and resource mobilization.

A results framework will form the basis for monitoring the implementation of this policy. The gender equality and social inclusion actions presented in the framework are derivatives of the proposed actions under each of the thematic areas. Detailed actions and institution wide key performance indicators will be formulated in the strategies and action plans in respective programmes and projects. All units and AR4D institutions should incorporate proposed gender actions and the monitoring and evaluation units will monitor the implementation of the policy and assess the proposed results, including through the use of gender disaggregated information. The CCARDESA Gender Focal Point and those in AR4D institutions and other governing structures among stakeholders will play a critical technical role of providing necessary monitoring and evaluation support. This will assist in collecting harmonised data that can be comparable in the southern Africa region and within the institutions and in programming.

## **1.0 Introduction**

### **1.1 Background**

This document is a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) policy for the Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa (CCARDESA), a Southern African Development Community (SADC) subsidiary. CCARDESA is mandated by member states to coordinate regional cooperation in agricultural research and development. The Policy was prepared with the support of various partners at different levels. CCARDESA considers gender equality and social inclusion as a cornerstone not only for food security but also for equitable, inclusive and sustainable economic and social development. Therefore, this policy demonstrates CCARDESA's commitment to gender mainstreaming in its programmes, projects and activities while aligning all these to the regional and international gender related conventions and development goals.

In mainstreaming gender in agricultural policies, programmes and projects, it is critical to understand that women and men experience life differently, they have different needs, priorities, opportunities and concerns. Thus, various development interventions affect them differently. Women and men often have different or complementary roles and responsibilities in agriculture and food security in Africa and in particular women play a vital role in food production, food distribution, and food utilization (UNDP: 2012), food security at household, community and national levels. CCARDESA places importance to matters of women, youth, and persons with disabilities and this is why the organisation has dedicated Women, Youth and Social Inclusion as one of the key thematic areas in its Long-term Strategic Plan and Medium-term Operational Plan.

### **1.2 Rationale for the Policy**

The need for a comprehensive gender policy for CCARDESA is evident in light of the fact that gender and social inclusion issues are integral to agricultural research and development as well as the achievement of the objectives, aims, mission and vision of CCARDESSA. The organisation recognises the need to strengthen and support women and youth in agribusiness for improved livelihood and increased income. Therefore, CCARDESA cannot effectively achieve its goals without having a gender policy which outlines how it should manage the gender aspects in its interventions and operations. This policy is also necessary in order to align CCARDESA's activities to its Long-term Strategic and Medium-term Operational Plans, regional and international GESI aspirations and priorities.

This policy document will provide CCARDESA with a framework to guide its efforts in achieving its goals in gender equality and social inclusion. Furthermore, the policy will serve as a guide for the staff at CCARDESA as well as those from various partners in agricultural research institutions of SADC member states to ensure an equitable society where men, women, youth and other disadvantaged groups contribute to and benefit from agricultural development without leaving anyone behind.

## **2.0 Situation Analysis**

### **2.1 Existing International and Regional Gender Policy Framework**

The CCARDESA Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Policy is aligned to the international and regional GESI policy frameworks, and these are briefly highlighted below.

#### **The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979)**

The 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is regarded as the bill of rights for women that address discrimination and exclusion of women in various spheres. The convention provides a comprehensive framework to guide all rights-based action for gender equality and gender inequality is understood to be the result of discrimination against women. The Convention states that States Parties shall consider the particular problems faced by rural women and the significant roles which rural women play in the economic survival of their families, including their work in the non-monetized sectors of the economy, and shall take all appropriate measures to ensure the application of the provisions of the present Convention to women in rural areas.

#### **The Beijing Platform for Action (1995)**

The Beijing Platform for Action is an agenda for women's empowerment and affirms women's human rights and economic, social and political empowerment through 12 critical areas of concern that address women's vulnerabilities such as access to education, health, media, environment, economy, power and decision making among others.

#### **Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003)**

The adoption of the Protocol has been seen not only as a critical step towards combating discrimination and violence against women but also a significant step in efforts to promote and ensure respect for the rights of African women. The Protocol requires the promotion of equality between men and women as they exercise their rights to take part in the political, social and economic spheres.

#### **African Youth Charter (2006)**

The African Youth Charter provides a strategic framework for youth empowerment and development activities at the continental, regional and national levels across Africa. It provides an avenue for effective youth participation in the development process and Article 28 of the Charter mandates the African Union Commission (AUC) to collaborate with governments, non-governmental institutions, and developmental partners to identify best practices on youth policy formulation and implementation.

### **Declaration on Youth Development and Empowerment in SADC (2015)**

In the Declaration, the member states express concern about the various challenges that the Youth face including high unemployment, recurrent food and nutrition insecurity, low levels of youth participation and of support for their development and empowerment. It calls for urgent action and attention to economically empowering the youth by developing conducive policies and programmes and enabling environment for their entrepreneurship and business enterprises. It also calls for strengthening youth partnerships and providing mechanisms to enhance their access to resources.

### **World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY)**

The WPAY contains proposals for action to the year 2000 and beyond, aiming at achieving the objectives of the International Youth Year and at fostering conditions and mechanisms to promote improved well-being and livelihood among young people. It provides a policy framework and practical guidelines for national action and international support to improve the situation of young people.

### **Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006)**

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is a human rights instrument with an explicit, social development dimension. It reaffirms that all persons with all types of disabilities must enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms. The convention opens up opportunities to drive forward inclusive policy for people with disabilities and acts as a benchmark on whether social inclusion is being adhered to.

### **Sustainable Development Goals (2015)**

The Sustainable Development Goals are a global call to action to end poverty, protect the earth's environment and climate, and ensure that people everywhere can enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030. Of special interest is goal number 5 'Achieve Gender Equality and Empower all Women and Girls' which has targets such as ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life and undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.

### **African Union Gender Policy**

The policy provides a mandate for operationalizing the AU leaders' commitments on gender and is accompanied by a comprehensive Action Plan that guides the implementation of these commitments. The main purpose of the policy is to establish a clear vision and make commitments to guide the process of gender mainstreaming and women empowerment to influence policies, procedures and practices which will accelerate achievement of gender equality, gender justice, non-discrimination and fundamental human rights.

### **Revised SADC Protocol on Gender and Development (2016)**

The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, which entered into force in 2013 and was later revised in 2016 provides for the empowerment of women, elimination of discrimination, and achievement of gender equality and equity through gender-responsive legislation, policies, programmes and projects. The protocol provides for at least fifty percent of decision-making positions in the public and private sectors to be held by women including the use of affirmative action measures.

### **SADC Gender Policy**

The SADC member states are called to promote an environment that guarantees human, legal rights, constitutional and legal protection to women and men equally at all levels. It has a vision stating that a region where women, men, girls and boys have equal opportunities to participate freely as equal partners in all spheres of public and private life, including in all decision-making processes, and have equal access to and control over productive resources and services, as well as contribute to and benefit from all development processes and initiatives.

### **2.2 Regional Gender and Agriculture Context**

The SADC member states are estimated to have a total population of 345.2 million as of 2018 with a growth average of 2.5% annually and women constitute more than half of the population. The region had a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of US\$721.3 billion in 2018 which grew by nearly 42% from US\$508.7 billion in 2008 (SADC: 2021). In Southern Africa, women provide 80 to 90% of agricultural labour in subsistence agriculture and 70% in cash crop production (Gosling et.al:2020).

However, gender inequalities still persist in the region with women and girls being the worst affected in relation to access to productive resources, legal rights among others (SADC: 2014a). The majority of women working in the agriculture sector receive a disproportionately low share of income compared to their male counterparts. Most women do not have equitable access to productive assets and resources compared to men and it is estimated that the rural wage gap between men and women in some member states is up to 60% and in some cases, women go unremunerated for their agricultural work on family farms (SADC 2020b). According to FAO (2023), if we tackle the gender inequalities endemic in agrifood systems and empower women, the world will take a leap forward in addressing the goals of ending poverty and creating a world free from hunger.

Recent United Nations estimates indicate that Africa has the youngest population in the world, with 70% of Sub-Saharan Africa under the age of 30<sup>3</sup>. Youth are vital players in agricultural transformation and food systems and action is needed to enhance agricultural investments by

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.un.org/ohrls/news/young-people%E2%80%99s-potential-key-africa%E2%80%99s-sustainable-development>

and with young agro entrepreneurs<sup>4</sup> and in the Region, there is growing recognition of the role of women and youth in agri-based (SADC: 2014a). This clearly shows that their majority in population coupled with their role in the sector makes young people capable in contributing to Southern Africa's agricultural development and economic growth when fully engaged in respective interventions in the agricultural value chains.

It has been acknowledged that children, youth, including young women are worst affected by food and nutrition insecurity, in particular, persons with disability. Likewise, in the Region, there is growing recognition of the role of women and youth in agri-based initiatives and in food and nutrition security (SADC: 2014a). Most youth in the region are categorized as poor with inadequate access to economic activities, education, land and credit. The key challenge, therefore, is to ensure that most of the youth (especially in rural areas) have appropriate skills and access to production factors and support services to fully engage in agricultural value chains. Like for women, the youth factor needs to be mainstreamed in regional and national policies and strategies dealing inter alia with access to land, farm support systems and services and rural finance (SADC: 2014b).

Youth are the most affected by high unemployment and economic exclusion and the SADC region is grappling with rising levels of unemployment amongst youth, which stood at 25.1 per cent on average in 2017 (SADC: 2020). Women, youth and other social disadvantaged groups are the most affected by the negative impacts of climate change. Climate change is recognised as a key challenge that CCARDESA needs to address in its interventions in the region and to address the challenges brought by climate change, CCARDESA and other regional partners are implementing initiatives aimed at promoting Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) in the region. However, out of 242 CSA initiatives implemented in the SADC region that CCARDESA reviewed only 28.1% of them had incorporated a gender equality and social inclusion lens (CCARDESA, 2021).

### **3.0 The CCARDESA Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Policy**

#### **3.1 Structure of the Policy**

The CCARDESA GESI policy consists of a vision, mission, goal, guiding principles and policy objectives. The Policy also contains the key thematic areas, implementation structure, monitoring of policy and evaluation mechanisms with an action plan, communication plan as well as resource mobilization and financing plan.

#### **3.2 Vision Statement**

An environment where all stakeholders regardless of gender or social standing are empowered with equal opportunities to contribute towards sustainable agricultural growth and socio-economic development.

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<sup>4</sup> CCARDESA (2019) Long-term Strategic Plan – 2020 -2029

### 3.3 Mission

To achieve gender equality and social inclusion in the implementation of agricultural development interventions within CCARDESA and the SADC region anchored on the concept of sustainability.

### 3.4 Goal

To achieve gender equality and social inclusion in agricultural development in Southern Africa.

### 3.5 Policy Guiding Principles

The guiding principles of this policy are anchored on a set of regional instruments which recognize gender equality and social inclusion as integral parts of policies, programmes, projects, activities, processes and institutional mechanisms to which CCARDESA is fully committed. Therefore, the following are the CCARDESA GESI Policy guiding principles:

1. **Stakeholder Engagement** – a coordinated, and participatory approach will be used to ensure that all stakeholders at various levels in public and private sectors, civil society institutions, the academia as well as cooperating partners are involved. Furthermore, strengthened partnerships, networking and collaboration between and among all stakeholders will be encouraged.
2. **Capacity Building** - institutional capacity building within CCARDESA and its regional partners to ensure adequate integration of gender equality and social inclusion in programmes, projects and activities. Therefore, with capacity built, structures and systems for GESI should be developed or strengthened in the respective institutions in order to fully implement GESI interventions.
3. **Transparency** – promote transparency, open communication and accountability among officials from CCARDESA and regional partners in order for them to not only take responsibility for their decisions made and actions taken but also take issues of gender equality and social inclusion as part and parcel of their responsibilities when designing and implementing their policies, programmes, projects and activities.
4. **Equity** – CCARDESA and its partners shall ensure that men and women, boys and girls, persons with disabilities are fairly treated in all respects and address their concerns while proactively promoting gender equality and social inclusion. Therefore, all forms of discrimination based on sex, gender, age, race, nationality, class status among others should be eliminated.
5. **Technology and Innovation** – improve the generation, dissemination and adoption of gender-responsive agricultural technologies in the region. This, therefore, means that both male, female and youth farmers should be able to not only access but have



control over appropriate and affordable agricultural technologies thereby creating value for their work.

6. **Sustainability** - contribute to sustainable agricultural growth and socio-economic development in the SADC region by protecting the environment, building community support, reducing the risk of project failure while meeting the needs of all stakeholders.

### 3.6 Policy Objectives

- To promote demand driven agricultural technology generation, dissemination and adoption in the region that responds to the needs of both men and women.
- To promoting wider participation of all key stakeholders including the marginalized groups in the planning and execution of AR4D programmes.
- To promote gender equality and social inclusion in all processes of commercialisation of the agricultural sector and market access.
- To empower women, youth and vulnerable people in order for them to make a meaningful contribution in agricultural value chains.
- To facilitate exchange of GESI related information and knowledge between and among all stakeholders for learning, evidence-based policy making, advocacy efforts within the agricultural sector.
- To strengthen human resource capacity for CCARDESA and AR4D institutions in GESI during the design, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages of projects as well as governance, human and financial management.

## 4.0 Thematic Areas

### 4.1 Thematic Area 1: Agricultural Productivity and Food and Nutrition Security

CCARDESA, in its 2020 – 2029 Strategic Plan reaffirms that productivity is an important factor in food and nutrition security. This is with a recognition that, gender is embedded in the distribution of essentially all resources in agriculture, including land ownership, farm management decisions, market access for inputs and outputs, information from extension services, use of information and communication technology among others. Gender is also embedded in the distribution of the gains from increased agricultural productivity, particularly influencing who controls the outputs and decides how the proceeds will be used<sup>5</sup>.

The thematic objective is, ***to achieve increased agricultural productivity and food and nutrition security, with a special focus on smallholder farmers and priority commodities.***

In order to achieve this ambition with a gender perspective, the following interventions will

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<sup>5</sup> Doss, C.R., (2017). Women and agricultural productivity: Reframing the Issues. Department of International Development, Oxford University

be in place:

- **Gender equality and social inclusion in agriculture** – Agricultural Research for Development institutions to include research focusing on increased agricultural productivity and food and nutrition security for all social groups in communities.
- **Gender equality and social inclusive analytical research** – actors to conduct gender analytical research to assess the adoption rates, effectiveness and impact of the existing agricultural technologies, innovations and management practices using tools such as Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI)<sup>6</sup> and gender access and control matrices.
- **Gendered and inclusive sectoral interventions** - Agriculture has a high multiplier effect, which means that agricultural investments can generate high economic and social returns. Therefore, there is need to apply gender lens to interventions that create linkages with other sectors such as water, gender, climate change, higher education, health and technology.
- **Gender responsive and inclusive nutrition sensitive agriculture** - women are charged with the responsibility of not only production of household food crops but also with preparation. Therefore, the inclusion of female farmers in nutrition sensitive agricultural programmes is critical.

#### **4.2 Thematic Area 2: Resilience to Emerging Agricultural Risks: Environmental, Climate Change and Transboundary Pests and Diseases**

The SADC region is experiencing an increase in average temperatures and reduced rainfall due to climate change. Climate change threatens the achievement of sustainable development, and the impetus is to find solutions to the dilemma that disasters related to climate change presents in agriculture. The result of these disasters is that food security, poverty alleviation, and sustainable development ambitions of individual countries and affected regions are hampered<sup>7</sup>. One of the chief concerns is the effect of climate related disasters on smallholder farming which, in most countries is estimated to constitute at least 70% of the population, with agriculture contributing at least a third of the gross domestic product<sup>8</sup>.

The thematic objective is, ***to increase the resilience of smallholder farmers to climate change and reduce the risks in their production systems through a cross-sectoral approach.***

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<sup>6</sup> Developed by International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) and USAID’s Feed the Future program in 2012.

<sup>7</sup> Lipper, L., McCathy N, Zilberman D, Asfaw S, Branca G, (2018) Climate Smart Agriculture: building resilience to climate change. Springer, Cham

<sup>8</sup> Diao X, Hazell P, Thurlow J, (2010). The role of agriculture in African agriculture. World Dev 38 (10); 1375-1383.

Therefore, in order to achieve this objective, the following interventions will be in place:

- **Gender responsive research that integrates indigenous knowledge** – CCARDESA and AR4D institutions will engage in participatory action research involving all smallholder farmers (men, women, youth, persons with disabilities) recognizing them as sources and consumers of knowledge.
- **Gender and social equality - equitable resilience capitals** – There will be deliberate strategies aimed at establishing gender equality and social inclusion in ownership, control of, and access to social, physical, financial and human capitals which will enhance resilience to climate change. This will require the use of gender transformation approaches and innovation in tackling the sociocultural entrenched patriarchal systems.
- **Promotion of diversified livelihoods and gender sensitive climate adaptation options** - CCARDESA and other value chain actors will use a gender resilience lens to advocate for transformation towards consideration of other livelihood and climate adaptation options. These include income generation through improved livestock breeds, honey from apiculture, fish from aquaculture among others. A gender equality and social inclusion analysis of these diverse livelihood options will be undertaken to ensure that the gender inequalities are addressed.
- **Effective information and communication on environmental natural resource use and climate change** – CCARDESA will promote gender sensitive early warning systems that provide climate and disaster information to different categories of farmers in a language that they can understand. Different local actors such as agricultural, community development, extension staff and other local civil society organisations will be involved as they are closer and easily accessible to all categories of farmers.

#### **4.3 Thematic Area 3: Commercialization of the Agricultural Sector and Market Access**

The SADC Regional Agricultural Policy (RAP) recognizes the importance of improved domestic and regional agricultural markets in determining the competitiveness of the region's agriculture and improving incomes for the farmers. Smallholder farmers currently are unable to effectively participate in lucrative and fair markets due to a range of challenges<sup>9</sup>. Some of the challenges faced by smallholder farmers are problems of producing small quantities scattered over a wide geographical area and the lack of entrepreneurial approach.

Thence, the ***thematic objective is to increase commercialization of the smallholder agricultural sector and improve their access to good markets.***

Therefore, in order to achieve this objective, the following interventions will be in place:

- **CCARDESA and AR4D to accelerate efforts for ensuring greater equality in a**

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<sup>9</sup> CCARDESA strategic Plan 2020-2029

**continuum of land rights and access to credit.** There are different land tenure systems in member states, which have to be clearly understood and considered when promoting agricultural production and productivity. Furthermore, CCARDESA will create partnerships with micro finance institutions and link smallholder farmers to access credit in order to increase the production and productivity to meet demands of large markets.

- **AR4D institutions to build capacity for smallholder farmers' integration in value chains** - This will entail improving the entrepreneurship skills and business acumen of smallholder farmers and other actors involved in value addition of agricultural products. Reorganization of framers into associations and creating linkages with other farmers across borders will not only enable access to markets but also serve as a channel for sharing new technologies, innovations and management practices.
- **Promotion of agricultural business forums for different groups of farmers** - in order to ensure participation of women and youths in commercialization and improve market linkages, CCARDESA will create partnerships with AR4D institutions and other organisations working on women and youth empowerment programmes. This will assist in up scaling and replicating some of the existing initiatives that are fully engaged and have reached maturity in agribusiness.

#### **4.4 Thematic Area 4: Women, Youth and Social Inclusion**

'Leave no one behind' is a commitment and transformative promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) made by the United Nations (UN) member states to eradicate poverty, reduce inequalities and end discrimination. This commitment represents recognising the potential of every individual including women, youth, persons with disabilities and humanity as a whole. Gender and other social differences such as sex, age, location, wealth, citizenship status, disability among other factors have an enormous influence upon the success of agricultural interventions. Therefore, to ensure equitable impacts and benefits for everyone, it is important to emphasize on inclusive research and development interventions involving the collection of data on gender and social differences and working towards gender-equitable control of productive assets and resources; technologies that reduce women's labour; and improved capacity of women and youth to participate in decision-making (CIMMYT: 2023)<sup>10</sup>

The objective of this thematic area is ***to empower women, youth and vulnerable people through actions that will make them play a meaningful role in agricultural value chains.***

In order to achieve this objective, the following interventions will be undertaken.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.cimmyt.org/news/gender-youth-social-inclusion/>

- **Empowerment of women, youth and other social groups** – The principle of inclusiveness in the planning and execution of AR4D interventions will be promoted so that women, youth and other vulnerable groups are empowered and play a meaningful role in agricultural value chains. In the process of empowering the targeted groups, gender-transformative approaches will be advanced to ensure that all the socio-economic barriers such as lack of access to adequate land, credit, extension services, water systems, affordable agricultural inputs and reliable markets, harmful traditional norms and practices are addressed.
- **Promote coordination and collaboration among actors** – CCARDESA will enhance its role of coordination of efforts among its partners. Cooperation and collaboration between and among all actors in the SADC region involved in working in areas concerning women, youth and other social groups is critical for achieving gender equality and social inclusion. Partners should not work in silos but ensure that their respective interventions concerning advocacy, provision of financial and technical support, promotion of better crop varieties and livestock breeds, introduction of new and appropriate technologies and innovations, promotion of entrepreneurship along the agricultural value chains among others should be well known and coordinated.
- **Youth employment in agriculture** – CCARDESA and AR4D institutions will support the development and implementation of interventions that will increase the participation of youth in agricultural value chains. Agriculture will be promoted in a manner that it will be attractive to the youth and seen as a money-making sector for the young women and men whether educated or not, in rural or urban areas. There is a large, untapped reservoir of employment opportunities in the agri-food sector, and it is crucial to explore the potential of food systems and enhanced rural–urban linkages to provide more and better jobs for the women and youth (HLPE: 2021).

#### **4.5 Thematic Area 5: Knowledge and Information Management, Communication and Policy Support**

It is a well-known fact that the digital revolution has changed the way people work, access information and connect with each other and that while it offers opportunities to those who can use the new technologies, it also presents new challenges for those who are left behind thereby lagging behind in making informed choices in the agricultural value chains. Therefore, when assessing the opportunities and risks of new information technologies, it is essential to give attention to gender and social differences in order to ensure that the voices of women, youth and other social groups are thereby preventing inequalities (FAO: 2018).

CCARDESA has developed Information, Communication and Knowledge Management (ICKM) system and other digital ICT platforms for sharing AR4D information to a broader group of stakeholders. It provides a robust tool for sharing relevant regional knowledge products, while connecting researchers, extension professionals, communications officers and policy makers.

CCARDESA ICKM is the only regional agricultural knowledge hub that covers all SADC member states and leverages on existing national knowledge and information sharing initiatives.

The objective of this thematic area is ***to ensure that the regional agricultural research for development stakeholders is provided with information and knowledge to make informed decisions and support agricultural transformation.***

In order to achieve this objective, the following interventions will be undertaken:

- **Gender responsive knowledge and information** – As CCARDESA provides knowledge and information brokering services to all agriculture stakeholders through its ICKM system and other digital and ICT platforms, gender and social inclusion will be integrated. It is also important to note that even while the technology revolution could accelerate progress towards gender equality and social inclusion, the same could also aggravate the existing inequalities. Therefore, the gender and social inclusion will be systematically addressed in the planning, design, implementation, monitoring phases of programmes, projects and activities. Gender responsive digital inclusion policies will be promoted to enable both men and women, young and old access and use ICTs in an equitable manner.
- **Capacity building for NARES** – It is important that capacity is built in the NARES on how to manage knowledge products with a gender and social inclusion lens. CCARDESA will continue to monitor its knowledge hub with respect to the percentage of content featuring relevant material on gender and youth; support the partners strengthen information packaging and use of digital innovations in order to transform agriculture with a focus on women, youth and other social groups. In providing capacity to NARES, CCARDESA will pay attention to identification of inherent gender bias and social exclusion in agricultural extension and advisory services programming and management structures. Such support will help the NARES to be equipped with information and knowledge in making informed decisions and support agricultural transformation.
- **Develop and disseminate knowledge products** - CCARDESA and its partners will reflect on how the knowledge products are being disseminated, to whom, when and why to ensure timely dissemination of information to the right audience with the right aim in order for it to be effective. The integration of gender and social inclusion in the knowledge products is crucial to enable the regional agricultural research for development stakeholders have adequate information and knowledge to make informed decisions and support agricultural transformation. Actors should also note that information dissemination to local levels could be affected by insufficient

information and agricultural extension workers, low levels of literacy, language barriers, geographical location among others.

#### **4.6 Thematic Area 6: Capacity Strengthening of CCARDESA and AR4D Institutions**

GESI integration training is an important strategy to build the capacity of partners and staff as this helps in the buy-in for gender integration, women's empowerment, and social inclusion. The capacity strengthening programming should ensure that it raises awareness of GESI constraints along the agricultural value chains so as to prepare institutions to act on opportunities for inclusion and be ready to address challenges encountered (USAID: 2021). The capacity strengthening for institutions can enhance staff capacity to design and implement gender responsive AR4D which will lead to men and women farmers benefiting equally from the developed technologies and innovations. Programmes in capacity strengthening for AR4D institutions also provide good scope for joint project development with the wide range of stakeholders at various levels in member states in their quest to deliver on their mandates.

The thematic area objective is ***to strengthen the institutional capacity of CCARDESA and AR4D institutions in member states to deliver on their mandates.***

In order to achieve this objective, the following interventions will be undertaken:

- **Regular assessment of capacities** – The differences in the capacities among AR4D institutions calls for regular capacity needs assessment to not only establish the capacity needs but also develop activities that will continuously address the identified gaps. This regular exercise will help keep the institutions relevant and effective in providing services as they fulfil their mandates. CCARDESA will promote collective action anchored on strong capacity building and provision of relevant knowledge and information to stakeholders for evidence-based policy making and programme interventions. While conducting the capacity assessment and capacity strengthening, there will be a gender and social inclusion lens applied to the processes.
- **Institutional capacity for resource mobilization** – It was noted that the CCARDESA resource mobilisation strategy and action plan have not integrated gender and social inclusion in its objectives, funding needs or implementation, therefore, it is important that GESI capacity for resource mobilization is built among the target institutions. When mobilising resources, GESI aspects will not be considered as tokenism in order to secure funding from donors who may demand GESI in concept notes or proposals. GESI will be part of the institutional capacity development embedded in all programmes and projects and that way integrating it in resource mobilization and implementation of programmes will be easier.
- **Gender responsive governance and management systems** – The governance and management systems for CCARDESA and AR4D institutions are key in ensuring that the

GESI policy is fully implemented. Women and men, youth and persons with disabilities will be considered not only in the high-level governance and management structures of the AR4D institutions but also the stakeholders these institutions engage with especially when dealing with agricultural production and productivity, business operations, market research and analysis, financial literacy, technologies and innovations among others. Board members and management will be capacitated in GESI in order to offer oversight and carry out the day-to-day duties in agricultural development adequately respectively.

## **5.0 Institutional Mechanisms for Implementing the CCARDESA GESI Policy**

In order to ensure that gender mainstreaming and social inclusion interventions are fully implemented, CCARDESA will institute /introduce the following institutional mechanisms and processes during the life of this policy. Implementing structures will be strengthened/established at all levels and monitor how the objectives are being met.

### **5.1 CCARDESA Secretariat**

The CCARDESA Governance manual presents the CCARDESA governance structure which consists of the Ministers responsible for Agriculture and Food Security, the General Assembly, Board of Directors, Operational Committees of the Board and CCARDESA Secretariat. Of interest to this section of the policy is the CCARDESA Board and Secretariat. The Board provides oversight and direction to CCARDESA Secretariat on behalf of the General Assembly. It monitors and guides the implementation of CCARDESA's programmes and submits reports to the General Assembly. According to the manual, the selection on the Board ensures that the Board is as representative as possible in terms of member states and gender representation. However, it is important to explicitly state what the actual representation in the Board and Board committee is when it comes to gender and social inclusion. This will guide member states as they make recommendations for appointments for instance considering the number of women, men and youth (female and males) to be represented.

The Governance manual also states that there shall be a Secretariat, which shall be responsible for the day-to-day management and technical coordination of the activities of CCARDESA. The Secretariat shall implement the policies and decisions established and approved by the Board of Directors. The four key units of the CCARDESA Secretariat which are of interest to the implementation of this GESI policy include Senior Management, Gender Focal Point, Human Resource and Finance and Administration. The following, therefore, are measures on how best the Secretariat can work to ensure that the Policy is adequately implemented as the staff perform their day-to-day duties.

#### **Senior Management (Executive Director and programme coordinators)**

- Provide leadership on the implementation of the CCARDESA GESI policy.



- Regular engagement of stakeholders for implementation and review of the GESI policy.
- Demonstrate appropriate GESI behaviours and practices.
- Ensure that adequate resources and time are allocated to allow the staff at the Secretariat to effectively fulfil their GESI duties.
- Create an enabling environment where GESI issues can be raised and addressed effectively.
- Regularly communicate and show commitment to the implementation of the GESI policy.
- Investigate and act upon GESI grievances effectively and efficiently.
- Undertake responsibility in adhering to the GESI components of the institutional policy and procedures.

### **Gender Focal Point**

- Create awareness among the CCARDESA staff about the GESI policy.
- Coordinate gender mainstreaming efforts by providing gender related technical support including programme design, implementation and monitoring progress.
- Identify and leverage on opportunities for mainstreaming GESI in the organisation.
- Closely work with the information, communication and knowledge management unit in order to provide advocacy for GESI in CCARDESA and its stakeholders.
- Ensure the CCARDESA programmes and projects are compliant with the GESI policy.
- Develop and review technical documents (e.g., concept notes, proposals, reports, plans, strategies) and ensure that they are GESI responsive.
- Ensure that terms of reference for staff and consultants include GESI considerations whenever appropriate.

### **Human Resource**

- Facilitate development of a gender-friendly workplace and enabling mechanism to prevent gender discrimination or harassment and social exclusion.
- Commit to have diversity among employees in terms of gender and social inclusion as CCARDESA believes that such diversity contributes to its intellectual strength and its effectiveness as a sub-regional agricultural research and development institution.
- Ensure that all employees promote and work towards gender equality and social inclusion as part of their work and functions.
- Ensure that management adheres to the guidelines contained in the Human Resource Policies and Procedures manual that are GESI responsive concerns such as, nursing breaks for female employees who are mothers, maternity leave, paternity leave, performance evaluation, remuneration, gender balance in staff recruitment among others.
- Maintain and ensure confidentiality of reported GESI related cases and any actions taken.

- Regularly analyse workforce demographics and statistics from a GESI perspective.
- Provide adequate facilities suitable for women, men and persons with disabilities such as workstations, sanitation, catering etc.
- Provide support to technical staff to ensure a balance between work related travel and the family and reproductive responsibilities.

### **Finance and Administration**

- Procedures for finance and administration will be GESI responsive and need to be developed, implemented, evaluated and updated regularly.
- Have capacity built for finance and administration staff in gender responsive budgeting and planning as the staff need to have an in-depth understanding of the same.
- Ensure Gender Responsive Budgeting and a more open budget process at all levels.
- Support the resource mobilization processes and ensure that they are gender responsive.
- Support the undertaking of gender audits of the different programmes.

### **5.2 Partnerships**

Since inception, CCARDESA has created and continues to create strategic partnerships and strengthen existing ones in order to deliver on its mandate. All partnership agreements are aligned to the objectives and functions of CCARDESA as prescribed in the charter. Partnerships provide a favourable platform for advancing gender equality and social inclusion in Agricultural Research and Development in the SADC region. In accordance with CCARDESA's implementation model of partnerships and the observance of subsidiarity principles, the implementation of the GESI policy will be done jointly with various partners. Some of the CCARDESA partners include the national agricultural research institutions, national and regional farmers' organisations, youth organisations, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), international cooperating partners, the private sector, media, academic and research institutions and other actors in agricultural value chains collectively being a strong force for helping CCARDESA achieve its GESI policy objectives.

For CCARDESA to successfully implement the GESI policy as well as the institutional strategic plans, the Secretariat needs to develop new and strengthen existing partnerships for overall technical support, policy guidance, linkages with complementary initiatives for resource mobilisation, access to new technologies and innovations, sharing information and lessons learnt for joint planning and dealing with common issues of interest such as GESI in the agricultural context.

Some of the examples of the roles and responsibilities of key partners include the following:

- **National Agricultural Research Extension Systems (NARES)** – These are key in synchronising and harmonising regional GESI policies, goals, priorities while

domesticating the international instruments. In supporting the implementation of this GESI policy, they can promote regional collaboration and coordination on gender mainstreaming and social inclusion initiatives in agriculture and food systems. The Institutions can also facilitate knowledge sharing and capacity building among member states on gender-responsive policies and practices while ensuring that the Gender Focal Persons have adequate resources to carry out their technical assistance role. In addition, partners within the NARES of each country are well positioned to help implement interventions from the CCARDESA GESI policy.

- **International Cooperating Partners (ICPs)** – Development Partners will continue providing technical support, financial resources and infrastructural development to facilitate the implementation of the CCARDESA GESI Policy. Through CCARDESA, there should be establishment of donor coordination mechanisms (to avoid overlaps and duplication) resulting in reduction of existing gender gaps and disparities in agricultural development.
- **Private Sector** – The sector has a unique role in mobilising resources aimed at supporting programmes towards gender awareness creation and mainstreaming, provide incentives through sponsoring women and youth entrepreneurs and persons with disabilities thus strengthening agricultural value chains. In recognising the important role that the private sector plays, CCARDESA has developed a private sector engagement strategy and action plan thus with the GESI policy in place, there will be opportunities for the sector to promote gender equality in their business practices and investment initiatives.
- **Academic and Research Institutions** – The institutions play a key role in providing opportunities for research and capacity building related to sustainable food systems and gender equality. These institutions also contribute to CCARDESA and GESI policy, and research agenda, support in disseminating information through producing relevant materials. The institutions share research evidence on gender to influence planning, policy and legislation by collecting gender-disaggregated data in agriculture in order to track progress on gender equality and social inclusion.
- **Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)** – CSOs such as farmer organizations are key partners to CCARDESA as they play an active role in advocating for gender-responsive policies and practices in agriculture and food systems. Their support also includes providing capacity building activities, facilitating access to credit, farming inputs and marketing opportunities. For this GESI policy, CSOs will play a role in lobbying and advocating for the increased participation of women, youth, persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups, decision-making structures in agricultural value chains.

- **Media** - Provides a platform for dialogue on GESI in the agricultural context and effective communication channels for dissemination and sensitisation of stakeholders at various levels. The media also helps to create awareness about gender equality and social inclusion, the need to implement the GESI policy and promoting gender responsive media coverage and reporting. The media, hugely influences people's perceptions and ideas about GESI in society and this is why they should actively be advocating for GESI and avoid perpetuating gender inequality and social exclusion.

### **5.3 Capacity Building**

As already highlighted above, capacity strengthening of CCARDESA and AR4D institutions is one of the key thematic areas in the CCARDESA Long-term Strategy and Medium-term Operational Plan. Capacity development is required at all levels from the regional (CCARDESA Secretariat) to local (farmers) in order to deliver on their mandates considering that a capacitated team of partners results in actors who are adequately equipped to perform their respective roles in policy implementation. The CAADP-XP4 programme builds the capacity of women and youth-led organisations to participate in strategic events and global climate issues. Therefore, special attention will be given to strengthening women and youth leadership capacity for them to take a more active role in decision-making processes and positions at local, national and regional levels in order to increase their ability to influence policy implementation.

It is important to note that capacity development is an ongoing process, and it ensures that there is a continuous flow of experts to provide services and also equip staff and institutions with appropriate level of skills to remain relevant in providing services. As CCARDESA, the capacity building programmes will be practical, participatory with investment made in not just initial skills development but refresher trainings throughout the life of the policy, programme or project.

CCARDESA gender focal points have undergone various GESI capacity development activities and this will be extended to the rest of the staff. CCARDESA has had a very active capacity-building programme aimed at improving the skills of technical officers, NARES and farmers. Training programmes have been developed and delivered to different target groups and the Secretariat has trained farmers and staff in public sector assisting them to improve their knowledge and skills in various areas. Furthermore, capacity building for CCARDESA will also consider gender transformative approaches, which are key in addressing socio-cultural challenges that perpetuate gender inequalities.

In order for the policy to be successfully implemented, adequate resources will be allocated to support gender equality and social inclusion expertise to sustainably carry out its advocacy and knowledge building and sharing activities.

#### **5.4 Gender Responsive Communication**

Communication plays an important role in facilitating successful implementation of a policy and CCARDESA takes this seriously thus having a thematic area in the strategic plan on 'Knowledge and Information Management, Communication and Policy Support' as already presented in the previous chapter. Policy implementation involves translating policy objectives and principles into concrete actions and putting them into practice. Hence, it is important to have communication strategies for informing stakeholders about the existence of the Policy, progress in its implementation and results attained.

One of the barriers to effective gender integration in implementing various programmes and projects is lack of information at various levels. In order to bridge the information gap, key actors need to design and implement effective communication strategies and provide access to information through a variety of communication channels. The availability of information will lead to better participation of women and men in agricultural related decision-making processes and their knowledge, concerns and experiences will be taken into consideration during implementation.

As part of its commitment towards the provision of information, CCARDESA's Information, Communication and Knowledge Management (ICKM) system is operational, and it is regularly updated with news and cutting-edge knowledge products which inform policy and decision-making processes. CCARDESA leads an active social media component of communication which includes LinkedIn, X (Twitter), Facebook, Institutional Website and Mailing lists where it shares the knowledge products such as events and technical reports, policy-briefs, journal papers, brochures, flyers, photographs and videos. There is need to explore how artificial intelligence can be used to solve GESI challenges especially that research has shown that it is likely to reinforce or even amplify gender inequalities because the data used to train machines is biased. Knowledge products disseminated through the CCARDESA ICKM system ensure that the regional agricultural research for development is provided with information and knowledge to make informed decisions and support agricultural transformation.

Gender responsive communication is crucial to ensure that both men and women, the youth access appropriate and relevant agricultural information among all stakeholders and CCARDESA will systematically and publicly share knowledge, best practices on gender equality and social inclusion as it relates to agriculture. There is also need to make available learning platforms for sharing information and training for both male and female CCARDESA staff so that they are actively engaged in advocacy and awareness raising of GESI.

Given the cross-cutting nature of gender, CCARDESA will address the relevance of gender equality and social inclusion in agricultural context at different levels and this will be done in close cooperation with partners and gender focal points. In the process of implementation, CCARDESA and the National Agricultural Research Systems will ensure that the

communication strategies will be gender responsive by avoiding perpetuating gender inequalities and social gaps in agriculture.

### **5.5 Resource Mobilization**

Implementing this Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Policy will require adequate resources for all the CCARDESA programmes and projects, and it is essential to ensure that the CCARDESA plans and objectives are not disproportionately constrained by inadequate resources. In order to successfully implement the Policy, reliable, predictable, and steady flow of financial resources will be needed which ultimately influence the availability of the much-needed GESI human and material resources. Therefore, what is critical is not only effective resource mobilisation but also timely disbursement, actual utilisation and accountability for the attainment of desired results.

CCARDESA commits to developing a resource mobilisation strategy to steer efforts to boost revenue generation both internally and externally. The strategy will also involve partnering with cooperating partners to jointly ideate and mobilise resources to implement joint projects. The various partners CCARDESA works, and will continue working with include those at regional, continental and global levels and the resources will be mobilised for both the Secretariat and the regional National Agricultural Research Systems.

As part of the resource mobilisation processes, it is important for CCARDESA and its regional institutions to capacitate the staff in resource mobilization by identifying the skills and organizational capabilities needed to deliver on the resource mobilization strategy. Furthermore, the staff will need to have in-depth understanding of gender responsive budgeting in order to facilitate the development of gender responsive budgeting guidelines for the technical and finance teams. The staff need to adopt measures for allocation of sufficient resources for GESI programming to meet commitments at institutional, programme and project levels. The operationalisation of the gender responsive budgeting will not necessarily mean providing separate budget lines for women and other social groups but acknowledging the gender dynamics and have equitable distribution of resources for women and men, boys and girls, persons with disabilities and other social groups.

The CCARDESA Medium Term Operational Plan states that the mobilisation of resources for regional agricultural projects has been one of the areas in which CCARDESA invested significant effort and that through its warm relations with international cooperating partners, more than \$100 million was mobilised for the period 2014 – 2018 and this was used to generate outputs of priority and relevance to the region. The CCARDESA Secretariat developed an institutional profile and undertook a donor mapping and competitor analysis to guide its resource mobilization efforts in line with the CCARDESA Resource Mobilisation Strategy.

The 2023 3<sup>rd</sup> CCARDESA General Assembly strategic direction includes a component on resource mobilization which guides that the resource mobilisation should be conducted at all levels starting from the Board and that the Executive Director would engage Board members to encourage them to become ambassadors of CCARDESA and discuss possibilities for funding for their ambassadorial missions.

Furthermore, the general assembly emphasized that the recruitment of a resource mobilization expert is a matter of top priority and opening a business development unit within the Secretariat which will be a unique sustainable financing mechanism for operations. In addition, the need for clear roles and responsibilities of the Secretariat in resource mobilization (as primary responsibility) was also stressed coupled with clear roles of SADC member states/Ministries of Agriculture and Food Security (to support CCARDESA) and clear role of the Private Sector (to support member states).

## **6.0 Monitoring of Policy and Evaluation Mechanisms**

Results frameworks for objectives and implementation provided in the tables below will form the basis for monitoring the implementation of this policy. The results framework for policy objectives will be a helpful tool for planning, communication and management of results following the implementation of the Policy as it provides clarity around the key policy objectives, indicators, baseline value, targets and means of verification. In addition, the gender equality and social inclusion actions presented in the results framework for the policy implementation are derivatives of the proposed actions under each of the thematic areas. Detailed actions and institution wide key performance indicators will be formulated in the strategies and action plans in respective programmes and projects.

All units and AR4D institutions will incorporate proposed gender actions and the monitoring and evaluation units will monitor the implementation of the policy and assess the proposed results. The CCARDESA Gender Focal Point and those in AR4D institutions and other governing structures among stakeholders will play a critical technical role of providing necessary monitoring and evaluation support. This will assist in collecting harmonised data that can be comparable in the SADC region and within the institutions and in programming.

### **6.1 Policy review**

This policy will be considered for review after the expiration of the CCARDESA Strategic Plan 2020 – 2029. This will allow for simultaneous review of both documents and more importantly provide an opportunity for embedding GESI actions in the future strategic plan and results framework of CCARDESA and its partners. Nevertheless, an earlier review will be undertaken in an event of a major change in CCARDESA'S focus areas, key documents or paradigm shift.

## 6.2 Results Framework for Policy Objectives

| Policy Objective  | Indicators   | Baseline value | Target <sup>11</sup> | Means of Verification                                 |
|---|--|----------------|----------------------|---|
| To promote demand driven agricultural technology generation, dissemination and adoption in the region that responds to the needs of both men and women. | -Number of technologies and innovations that target women, youth and other vulnerable groups developed and disseminated.<br>-Number of technologies and innovations that target women, youth and other vulnerable groups adopted.  | TBC            | TBC                  | CCARDESA reports                                      |
| To promoting wider participation of all key stakeholders including the marginalized groups in the planning and execution of AR4D programmes.            | -Number of stakeholders participating in the planning and execution of the AR4D programmes.<br>-Number of marginalised persons involved in the planning and execution of the AR4D programmes among the participating stakeholders.   | TBC            | TBC                  | -CCARDESA reports<br>-AR4D institutional reports/data |
| To promote gender equality and social inclusion in all processes of commercialisation of the agricultural sector and market access.                     | -Number of trainings to facilitate commercialization and market linkages conducted to empower women, youth and other vulnerable people.<br>-Number of women, youth and vulnerable groups benefiting from the commercialisation of the agricultural sector and market access. | TBC            | TBC                  | CCARDESA reports                                      |
| To empower women, youth and vulnerable people in order for them to make a meaningful contribution in agricultural value chains.                         | -Number of gender responsive and youth focussed value chains and agribusinesses developed or up-scaled.<br>-Number of women, youth and other vulnerable people empowered.  | TBC            | TBC                  | CCARDESA reports                                      |

<sup>11</sup> Targets to be aligned with the revised Strategic Plan.



|  |   |     |     |   |
|--|---|-----|-----|---|
| <p>To facilitate exchange of GESI related information and knowledge between and among all stakeholders for learning, evidence-based policy making, advocacy efforts within the agricultural sector.</p>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Number of women, youth and vulnerable groups participating in AR4D agricultural networks.</li> <li>-Number of women, youths, and vulnerable groups empowered to participate in digital innovations and ICT in agriculture.</li> <li>-Number of technologies and innovations favourable for women, youth and vulnerable groups disseminated through the ICKM.</li> </ul> | TBC | TBC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-CCARDESA reports</li> <li>-AR4D institutional reports/data</li> </ul> |
| <p>To strengthen human resource capacity for CCARDESA and AR4D institutions in GESI during the design, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages of projects as well as governance, human and financial management.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Number of AR4D institutions supported to mainstream gender and social inclusion into their projects.</li> <li>-Number of AR4D people trained in gender equality and social inclusion for research and development.</li> <li>-Number of staff from CCARDESA trained in gender equality and social inclusion.</li> </ul>  | TBC | TBC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-CCARDESA reports</li> <li>-AR4D institutional reports/data</li> </ul> |

### 6.3 Results Framework for the Implementation of the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Policy

| <b>THEMATIC AREA 1: AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY AND FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY</b>   |   |  |   |  |   |  |
|---|---|--|---|--|---|--|
| <b>Thematic Area Objective: To achieve increased agricultural productivity and food and nutrition security, with a special focus on smallholder farmers and priority commodities.</b> |   |  |   |  |   |  |
| <b>Policy Intervention Area</b>   | <b>Expected impact/results</b>  | <b>Key indicators</b>  | <b>Baseline (from adoption of Policy)</b> | <b>Target 2029</b>   | <b>Means of Verification</b>                            | <b>Risks/ /Mitigation Measures/ Assumptions</b>  |
| Gender equality and social inclusion in agriculture   | Research results with disaggregated data on all social groups (men, women, youth, persons with disabilities) producing information on where returns to development investment are the greatest. | -Investment areas for increasing productivity, food and nutrition security for respective social groups.<br>-Research conducted on all social groups.  | -   | 3 research studies conducted focusing on all social groups including men, women, youth, persons with disabilities. | CCARDESA and AR4D institutions' data portal and reports | Data is not readily available.<br><br>Gender disaggregated data remains important for targeting interventions.                         |
| Gender equality and social inclusive analytical research  | GESI research on adoption rates, effectiveness and impact of the existing and future agricultural technologies, innovations and management practices made available for decision making.        | -Evidence of use of GESI analytical frameworks and tools in gender and social specific research and those incorporating GESI components.<br><br>-Number of GESI research studies conducted in member states. |   | 2 country GESI research studies conducted annually   | CCARDESA and AR4D institutions' data portal and reports | To avoid research fatigue only 1 country study to be conducted till 2029.<br><br>Integration of GESI experts in all studies conducted. |

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| Gender responsive and inclusive nutrition sensitive agriculture | Awareness and education on nutrition sensitive information amongst all smallholder farmers especially the female and girls | Appropriate nutrition sensitive materials targeting all smallholder farmers especially women and girls.<br><br>-Evidence of inclusion of GESI sensitive language in the CCARDESA Information, Communication and Knowledge Management strategy | - | All public education and awareness creation materials inclusive of GESI aspects | CCARDESA and AR4D institutions' data portal and education and awareness materials | Inability to access materials if provided online.<br><br>CCARDESA and AR4D institutions to provide key GESI messages for use by implementation units using appropriate platforms. |
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**THEMATIC AREA 2: RESILIENCE TO EMERGING AGRICULTURAL RISKS: ENVIRONMENTAL, CLIMATE CHANGE AND TRANSBOUNDARY PESTS AND DISEASES**  
**Thematic Area Objective: To increase the resilience of smallholder farmers to climate change and reduce the risks in their production systems through a cross-sectoral approach.**

| <b>Policy Intervention Area</b>                                 | <b>Expected impact/results</b>                                       | <b>Key indicators</b>  | <b>Baseline (from adoption of Policy)</b> | <b>Target 2029</b>                                     | <b>Means of Verification</b> | <b>Risks/ /Mitigation Measures/ Assumptions</b>                                  |
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| Gender responsive research that integrates indigenous knowledge | Scientific participatory research incorporating indigenous knowledge | -Evidence of up scaled indigenous knowledge in the technology and farming systems.<br><br>-Database of indigenous knowledge created. | -   | Database of agricultural indigenous knowledge created. | CCARDESA data base           | Minimal consideration of indigenous knowledge by CCARDESA and AR4D institutions. |

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|  |  |  |   |  |  | Review of indigenous knowledge to create awareness on benefits and demerits of indigenous practices.   |
| Gender and social equality - equitable resilience capitals                           | Increased use of gender sensitive sustainable livelihoods assessment framework thus identifying factors hampering resilience building.                   | Evidence of use of GESI analytical frameworks and tools in gender and social specific research and those incorporating GESI components | - | At least 3 research work on resilience building using GESI analytical frameworks done.   | CCARDESA and AR4D institutions' data portal and research reports | No research conducted.<br><br>Programmes conducting gender analysis using GESI analytical tools and frameworks.                                      |
| Promotion of diversified livelihoods and gender sensitive climate adaptation options | CCARDESA and other value chain actors utilise a gender resilience lens and advocate for consideration of other livelihood and climate adaptation options | -Evidence of gender sensitive climate adaptation options developed and implemented.<br><br>-Diversified livelihoods adopted.           | - | -At least 3 promotions of diversified livelihoods conducted.<br><br>-At least 60% of the target group diversify their livelihoods. | CCARDESA and AR4D institutions' data portal and research reports | Farmers not diversifying their livelihoods.<br><br>Promotion of gender sensitive climate resilient livelihood diversification conducted and adopted. |

| Effective information and communication on environment, natural resource use and climate change  | Gender sensitive information on environment, natural resource efficiency use, conservation and early warning systems integrated in CCARDESA ICKM system and other digital and ICT platforms. | Evidence of gender sensitive information on environment, natural resource efficiency use and conservation.  | -  | At least 3 sets of environment, natural resource efficiency use, conservation materials produced. | CCARDESA and AR4D institutions' data portal and research reports | Existing and future environment, natural resource efficiency use, conservation and early warning systems engendered  |
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| <b>THEMATIC AREA 3: COMMERCIALISATION OF THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR AND MARKET ACCESS</b>   |  |   |  |   |  |  |
| <b>Thematic Area Objective is to increase commercialization of the smallholder agricultural sector and improve their access to good markets.</b> |  |   |  |   |  |  |
| <b>Policy Intervention Area</b>  | <b>Expected impact/results</b>   | <b>Key indicators</b>   | <b>Baseline (from adoption of Policy</b> | <b>Target 2029</b>  | <b>Means of Verification</b>                                     | <b>Risks/ /Mitigation Measures/ Assumptions</b>  |
| CCARDESA and CR4D institutions to accelerate efforts for ensuring greater equality in a continuum of land rights and access to credit.           | -Land tenure security assured amongst female and male smallholder farmers.<br><br>-Enhanced credit facilities and promotion of local saving schemes.   | -Evidence of increased agricultural productivity as a result of improved land ownership rights and access to credit by farmers.<br><br>-Number of partnerships created with micro finance institutions including the formal banking system. | Current rate of productivity             | Resultant percentage increase in productivity   | CCARDESA and AR4D institutions' data portal and research reports | Lack of data on productivity due to challenges in disclosure of land ownership status and access to credit.<br><br>Smallholder farmers secure increased productivity as a result of secure land tenure and credit. |

| AR4D institutions to build capacity for smallholder farmers' integration in value chains to improve their capacity to engage in national and regional markets.         | -Smallholder farmers organised linked with other farmers and accessing national and regional markets and other value chain nodes.<br><br>-Smallholder farmers benefiting from networking with a community of practice for smallholder farmers and other value chain actors. | -Number of farmers groups linked and accessing national and/or regional markets disaggregated by sex, headship and age.<br><br>-Number of smallholder farmers recruited on digital platforms interacting in e.g., Communities of Practice, WhatsApp groups. | -  | At least 60% of smallholder farmers trading on regional markets | CCARDESA and AR4D institutions' data portal and research reports | Persistent low yields and low-quality products from smallholder farmers<br><br>Promotion of exchange visits, expo exhibitions and show casing best performing farmers from different categories e.g., female, male, joint, farmers with disabilities and the elderly. |
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| <b>THEMATIC AREA 4: WOMEN, YOUTH AND SOCIAL INCLUSION</b>  |   |   |  |   |  |   |
| <b>Thematic Area Objective: To empower women, youth and vulnerable people through actions that will make them play a meaningful role in agricultural value chains.</b> |   |   |  |   |  |   |
| <b>Policy Intervention Area</b>  | <b>Expected impact/results</b>  | <b>Key indicators</b>   | <b>Baseline (from adoption of Policy</b> | <b>Target 2029</b>  | <b>Means of Verification</b>                                     | <b>Risks/ /Mitigation Measures/ Assumptions</b>   |
| Empowerment of women, youth and other social groups  | Socio-economic barriers such as lack of access to adequate land, credit, extension services, water systems, affordable agricultural inputs  | -Gender inequalities and social exclusion factors in agriculture identified.  | -  | Significant measures for addressing identified gender           | CCARDESA and AR4D institution's research and annual reports      | Resistance from land allocation authorities, traditional  |

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|   | and reliable markets, harmful traditional norms and practices identified and addressed.   | -Evidence of measures for addressing identified Gender inequalities and social exclusion in agriculture. |   | inequalities and social exclusion in agriculture.     |   | leadership and male landowners.<br><br>Traditional leaders, land allocation authorities and male farmers targeted |
| Promote coordination and collaboration among actors | Cooperation and collaboration among all actors in the SADC region working in areas concerning women, youth and other social groups for achieving gender equality and social inclusion enhanced. | Number of formal partnerships arrangements for joint research and programming                            | - | At least 3 institutions leading in GESI work engaged  | CCARDESA annual reports                                     | SADC region has a number of organisations actively undertaking GESI work in agriculture and other related sectors |
| Youth employment in agriculture                     | More jobs and employment opportunities created for male and female youths.  | Number of female and male youths involved in the agriculture enterprises along the value chain.          | - | At least 1000 jobs created in the agricultural sector | CCARDESA and AR4D institutions' research and annual reports | Agriculture is a large employer and has adequate space for both female and male youths.                           |

**THEMATIC AREA 5: KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT, COMMUNICATION AND POLICY SUPPORT**

**Thematic Area Objective: To ensure that the regional agricultural research for development stakeholders is provided with information and knowledge to make informed decisions and support agricultural**

| Policy Intervention Area | Expected impact/results | Key indicators | Baseline (from adoption of Policy | Target 2029 | Means of Verification | Risks/ /Mitigation Measures/ Assumptions |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|--|
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| Gender responsive knowledge and information | Gender and social inclusion information, policy strategies and tools and so on integrated in CCARDESA ICKM system and other digital and ICT platforms.         | Evidence of Gender and social inclusion integration in the planning, design, implementation, monitoring phases of programmes, projects and activities.   | - | At least 80% of the policies, programmes, projects and activities incorporating GESI  | CCARDESA and AR4D policies, programmes, projects and activities, research and annual reports               | CCARDESA to engage gender experts to provide technical support in the policy, programme and project cycles.  |
| Capacity building for NARES                 | Decision making enhanced through support from the gender and youth markers which provide information that serve as indicators                                  | -Percentage of content featuring relevant material on gender and youth<br><br>-Percentage of content featuring relevant material on other social groups e.g., persons with disability, the elderly, and children.                    | - | At least 80% of decisions made using information captured from the gender, youth and social inclusion marker system                   | Information from NARES   | Enhanced capacity of NARES will assist in provision of comprehensive information gender, youth and social inclusion marker system                                    |
| Develop and disseminate knowledge products  | Informed decisions and support for agricultural transformation achieved through available and adequate information and knowledge from research for development | -Number of success stories and best practices in the use of knowledge products promoted in the region.<br><br>-Percentage increase in the participation of women, youth and other social groups along the agricultural value chains. | - | At least 50% increase in dissemination of success stories and best practices<br><br>60% increase in participation of women, youth and | CCARDESA and AR4D institution's policies, programmes, projects and activities, research and annual reports | Knowledge products published online might not reach the intended groups due to inaccessibility.<br><br>A combination of communication channels can increase coverage |



|   |  |  |  | other social groups along the agricultural value chains.  |  |   |
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| <b>THEMATIC AREA 6: CAPACITY STRENGTHENING OF CCARDESA AND AR4D INSTITUTIONS</b>  |  |  |  |   |  |   |
| <b>Thematic Area Objective: To strengthen the institutional capacity of CCARDESA and AR4D institutions in Member States to deliver on their mandates.</b> |  |  |  |   |  |   |
| <b>Policy Intervention Area</b>   | <b>Expected impact/results</b>   | <b>Key indicators</b>  | <b>Baseline (from adoption of Policy)</b>  | <b>Target 2029</b>  | <b>Means of Verification</b>   | <b>Risks/ /Mitigation Measures/ Assumptions</b>   |
| Regular assessment of capacities  | Enhanced capacity assessment and capacity strengthening, for gender and social inclusion lens application among AR4D institutions processes. | Percentage improvement rate in application of gender and social inclusion lens by AR4D institutions. | -  | At least 60% improvement rate   | AR4D institution's policies, programmes, projects and activities, research and annual reports.     | All AR4D institutions show ambition for improving the gender equality and social inclusion profiles.  |
| Institutional capacity for resource mobilization  | GESI institutionalised as part of the capacity development plan and embedded in all programmes and projects including resource mobilization. | Evidence of integration of GESI in the CCARDESA'S resource mobilisation strategy and action plan.    | No funds allocated for GESI actions in the resource mobilisation strategy and action plan. | At least 10% of CCARDESA and AR4D resource mobilisation strategy and action plan and budgets allocated to GESI actions. | CCARDESA and AR4D institution's resource mobilisation strategy and action plan and annual budgets. | CCARDESA has shown commitment to developing a GESI policy that provides guidance on how to integrate GESI in the institutional processes and programming. |

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| Gender responsive governance and management systems | Women and men, youth and persons with disabilities considered by the high-level governance management structures of the AR4D institutions, value chain actors and all other stakeholders dealing with competencies in agricultural production and productivity, business operations, market research and analysis, financial literacy, technologies and innovations and so on | Evidence of incorporation and implementation of GESI Policy provisions in the governance, management systems and programming of CCARDESA and AR4D institutions. | Existing practices of incorporating GESI in the operations and systems of CCARDESA and AR4D institutions. | 80% of the GESI policy provisions budgeted and implemented | CCARDESA and AR4D institutions' resource mobilisation strategy and action plan and annual budgets. | The governance and management systems for CCARDESA and AR4D institutions are key in ensuring that the GESI policy is fully implemented. |
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