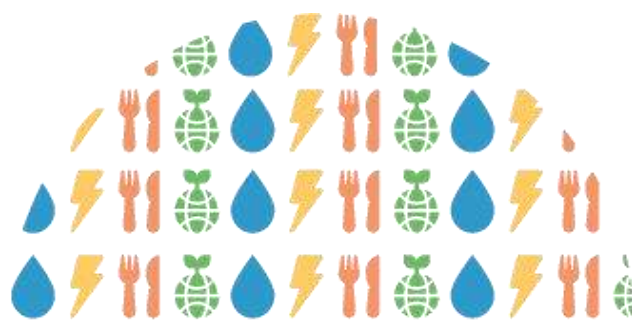




BONEX

Boosting Nexus Framework Implementation in the Mediterranean

Deliverable 5.6 Gender Action Plan

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PRIMA
PARTNERSHIP FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA



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Executive summary

BONEX PRIMA project's main aim is to provide practical and adapted tools, examine concrete and context-adapted technological innovations, enhance policies and governance, and facilitate **WEFe Nexus practical implementation that balances the social, economic, and ecological trade-offs**.

To achieve such an ambitious goal, within BONEX, **gender mainstreaming** has been identified as a **key transversal priority** throughout the implementation of the project activities, with also relevance to the inclusive multi-actor approach and transdisciplinary orientation of the project.

BONEX interventions on solutions, as well as communication and dissemination activities, are to be examined as regards their impact on gender and minorities, as well as their alignment with relevant initiatives such as the the Union for Mediterranean (UfM) Water Agenda, the Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) principles which consider the support of Gender Equality by all partners, the Women Empowerment Principles from UN Women, among others.

A specific task on Gender has been included in WP5 (task 5.6) to ensure that gender mainstreaming is effectively applied in all stages of the project. Moreover, a **Gender Committee** has been formed by 29 representatives of the consortium, including the third party, to ensure that gender issues and minorities are well represented throughout the WEFef development process, in terms of voices representation and recommendations of workable solutions.

This report is the first version of the BONEX Gender Action plan and provides guidelines and specific actions to address and prevent potential gender biases that could occur within the project are we are committed to integrating sex and gender aspects into the foreseen research and innovation activities, including equal opportunities for women and men, and considering the gender dimension of research contributing to excellence in research.

First assessment leads to the following results:

- BONEX has a balanced team, with 43.5 % of women and 56.5% of men.
- Women are well represented in the BONEX decision-making bodies. The coordinator is a woman as well as the leader of 3 of the 5 WPs. In addition, women represent 50% of the Operational Project Coordination team and 50% of the Advisory Board.
- The Gender Committee is formed by 29 members, representing all project partners and the Third Party, from which 55.2% are women.

Introduction

BONEX PRIMA project's main aim is to provide practical and adapted tools, examine concrete and context-adapted technological innovations, enhance policies and governance, and facilitate **WEFe Nexus practical implementation that balances the social, economic, and ecological trade-offs**.

To achieve such an ambitious goal, BONEX brings together 16 partners from 8 different European and non-European countries, and a third party, who will cooperate with the research and innovation as well as stakeholder engagement, dissemination and exploitation activities as included in the project work plan.

Within BONEX, **gender mainstreaming** is a **key transversal priority** throughout the implementation of all these activities foreseen, with also relevance to the inclusive multi-actor approach and transdisciplinary orientation of the project.

Gender mainstreaming requires raising awareness and the elaboration of gender action plans with the corresponding monitoring. Further, it needs to make sure that stakeholders are included and verbally addressed in a gender, minority sensitive and balanced manner throughout all steps of the BONEX WEFe Framework, among others. As part of this, the multi-actor approach, the selection of WEFe solutions and the choice of assessment and performance criteria and scenarios need to ensure representation of gender and minority issues and impacts, specifically on these groups.

BONEX interventions of specific WEFe solutions, as well as communication and dissemination activities, are to be examined as regards their impact on gender and minorities. A specific task on Gender has been included in WP5 (task 5.6) to ensure that gender mainstreaming is effectively applied in all stages of the project.

In addition, BONEX is aligned with:

- The Union for Mediterranean (UfM) Water Agenda which recognises the WEFe nexus concept as the key to ensuring human well-being, reducing poverty and contributing to sustainable development, and the interlinks between water, food, energy, and ecosystems (including GHG), **which could both negatively and positively affect one another**, and the promising role of Nexus as a tool to consider synergies, the trade-off and cross-cutting issues such as gender, stakeholder engagement, rights, poverty, and transboundary cooperation.
- **Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI)** principles which consider the support of Gender Equality by all partners, not only in demonstration developments but also in near-to-market and decision-making activities. Figures 1 and 2 show the work performed on the frame of the [EU project RRI Toolkit](#) on what means Gender Equality in RRI terms and how to introduce it in your daily work:

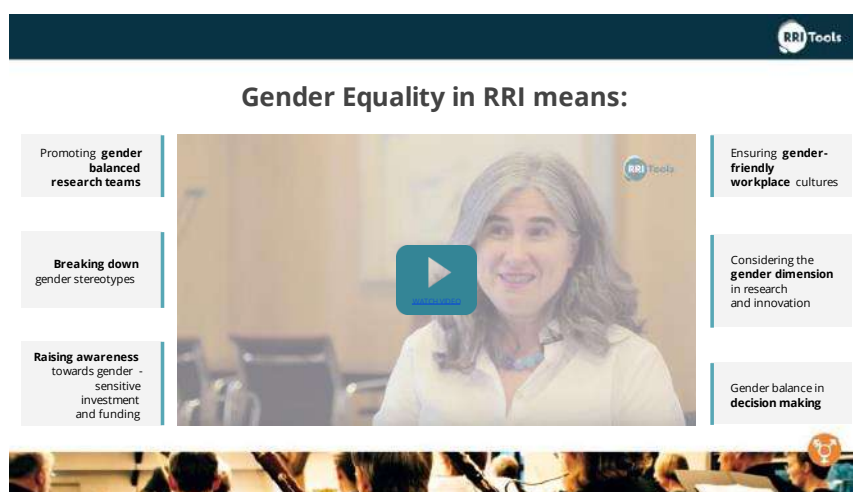


Figure 1. – RRI Toolkit (<https://rri-tools.eu/gender-equality>)^{9a}

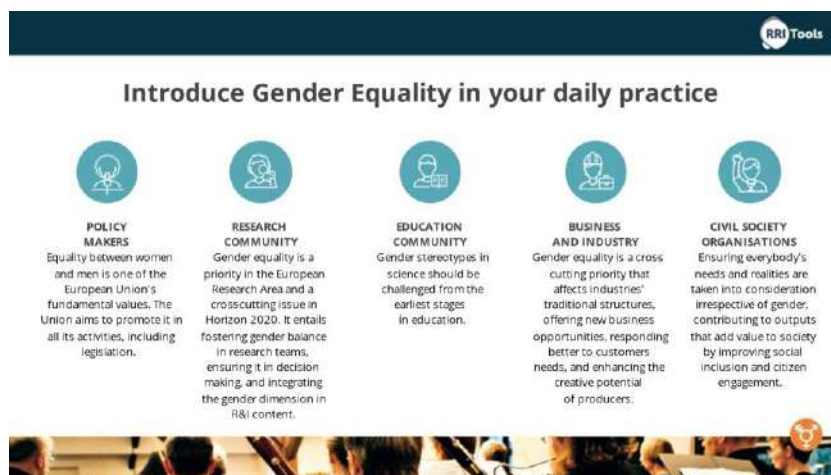


Figure 2 -RRI Toolkit (<https://rri-tools.eu/gender-equality>)^{9b}

A **Gender Committee** has been formed in the frame of the project to ensure that gender issues and minorities are well represented throughout the WEFef development process, in terms of voices representation and recommendations of workable solutions. It will seek to ensure that gender biases of current and proposed public, private, and civil society WEFef Nexus practices and their governance are addressed in a way that guarantees equality between men and women and appropriate consideration of minorities.

This report is the first version of the BONEX Gender Action plan and provides guidelines and specific actions to address and prevent potential gender biases that could occur within the project.

1 Gender dimension key concepts

The European Commission (EC) is a global leader in integrating the gender dimension in research and policy. Many efforts have been made in the last years to integrate sex and gender analysis into research and innovation as an effective path to add value to research, secure Europe's leadership in science and technology, and support its inclusive growth.

Despite the efforts, there are still inequalities that need urgent attention. According to the EC "*She Figures 2018*" Report (Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, 2019)². In EU Member states is still present a disproportion between women and men, in both the academia and private sector. This is even more important when related to senior levels and decision-making positions.

In academia, women make up less than 50 % of doctoral students, doctoral graduates, and academic staff. In the top academic grade, in particular, women are a clear minority and their position since 2013 has improved only slightly. A lower proportion of women working as R&D researchers (33.4% in 2015) can be observed, while often representing the majority of the R&D supporting staff. This may be one of the consequences of fewer women getting a doctoral degree, even though they are more likely to graduate at the bachelor's level than men. The average growth rate of doctoral graduates between 2007 and 2016 was slightly higher for women and it is important to point out that this increase has been observed in several specific fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) where women are strongly underrepresented.

Finally, women are still underrepresented in scientific authorship in the EU-28. The ratio of women to men in the corresponding authorship for all fields of R&D combined was 0.47 between 2013 and 2017, which is equivalent to 32% of all publications having a woman as a corresponding author.

Within BONEX, the objective is to actively work to ensure a high presence of women as authors of the project publications and articles.

In the private sector, the situation is not better. In 2016 in fact, in two-thirds of the countries analysed, 8.1% of women were employed under precarious working contracts compared to 5.2% of men.

In the vast majority of countries, women working in scientific R&D earn less on average than men, with the gender pay gap being barely wider than in the total economy.

Furthermore, the results of the Interim evaluation of H2020 found that fewer funded research proposals than expected, incorporated sex and gender analysis. This is correlated to the lack of knowledge about how to effectively consider a gender perspective and conduct gender and sex analysis, in addition to the absence of training on gender issues (European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, 2017)¹.

Therefore, The EC and PRIMA Foundation are truly committed to going on supporting gender equality, and this has been reflected in specific actions taken within the Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe programmes:

- For some entities, it is mandatory to have a **Gender Equality Plan** implemented to be eligible for funding.
- Gender balance is one of the **evaluation criteria** assessed by evaluators to prioritise and rank proposals which are above the threshold.
- This is needed to **balance project teams and leading roles** for gender equality.

Balanced teams bring several benefits to the workplace. For example, having women and men on the teams means highlighting the different points of view and approaches that emerge from different life experiences. This multiplicity of perspectives supports the creation and innovation processes and helps organizations to better take advantage of new opportunities. It also encourages organizations to challenge gender stereotypes.

- The **gender dimensions** should also be considered during the **project implementation phases**.

The integration of gender dimensions into research activities contributes to increasing the added value to the project results, outcomes, and impacts, not only at the societal level, but also in terms of market penetration of the project results. It helps researchers and managers to rethink and reshape the current behaviours and attitudes and develop solutions that are best suited to the needs of specific target groups.

BONEX project is committed to integrating sex and gender aspects into the foreseen research and innovation activities, including equal opportunities for women and men, and considering the gender dimension of research contributing to excellence in research.

We truly believe that an inclusive science needs innovative research methods, meaning that excellent research considers sex, gender, and intersectionality.

1.1 Definitions

It is important to get familiar with the specific nomenclature related to gender and sex dimensions. Table 1 includes the definitions of several key concepts to understand the gender dimension.

Table 1.- Key concept definitions

Key concept	Definition
Sex	Sex refers to biological characteristics that distinguish between males and females.
Gender	Gender refers to sociocultural norms, identities and relations that (1) structure societies and organisations and (2) shape behaviours, products, technologies, environments, and knowledge.
Gender identity	Gender identity is the personal sense of one's gender. Gender identity can correlate with a person's assigned sex at birth or can differ from it. Gender expression typically reflects a person's gender identity, but this is not always the case. While a person may express behaviours, attitudes, and appearances consistent with a particular gender role, such expression may not necessarily reflect their gender identity (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gender_identity) ¹⁶ .
Gender bias	Gender bias is the often unintentional and implicit differentiation between men and women by placing one gender in a hierarchical position relative to the other in a certain context, as a result of stereotypical images of masculinity and femininity.

Gender mainstreaming	Gender Mainstreaming Gender mainstreaming is a strategy towards realising gender equality. As written on EIGE's official webpage, "it involves the integration of a gender perspective into the preparation, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, regulatory measures and spending programmes, to promote equality between women and men, and combating discrimination" (https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/what-is-gender-mainstreaming) ⁶ . Gender Mainstreaming is the gender equality strategy, which means that project objectives and results are defined in such a way that the wishes and needs of men and women are equally valued and favoured through the project activities.
Gender Sensitivity	A gender-sensitive policy, activity or project that ensures a balanced gender relationship through equal distribution and sharing of power between women and men in the project.
Gender pay gap	The gender pay gap (GPG) is the difference between the average gross hourly earnings of paid women and men employees expressed as a percentage of the average gross hourly earnings of paid men employees. (More information may be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/microdata/structure-of-earnings-survey) ⁷ .
Climate equity [adapted from ICLEI and WRI]	Climate equity ensures that all people have access and opportunity to benefit from climate actions, while not bearing an unequal burden of the impacts of climate change. This requires a holistic approach to equity in climate work that divides the burden of responding to climate change amongst those who contribute the most to the issue while sharing the opportunities and benefits that equitable climate action presents with those that are most impacted.
Gender Disaggregated Data	Data that can be broken down by gender groups - men, women and gender minorities - to allow for analysis of the different challenges they face.
Inclusive Climate Action (ICA)	The consideration of how people and communities may be impacted by climate change and climate actions, given their well-being, prosperity, and location in a city. Implementing innovative and transformational actions that tackle both climate change and social injustice
Inclusion / Inclusivity	The practice of including relevant stakeholders and communities, particularly marginalised groups, in the policy-making and urban governance process, to ensure a fair policy process with equitable outcomes despite their differential needs.
Intersectionality	'Intersectionality' describes overlapping or intersecting categories such as gender, sex, ethnicity, age, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation and geographical location that combine to inform individuals' identities and experiences. Researchers and engineers should not consider gender in isolation; gender identities, norms and relations both shape and are shaped by other social attributes.
<i>Sources:</i> European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, 2020 ³ European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, 2020 ⁴ M.S. Ujeyo, et. al, 2017 ¹⁰	

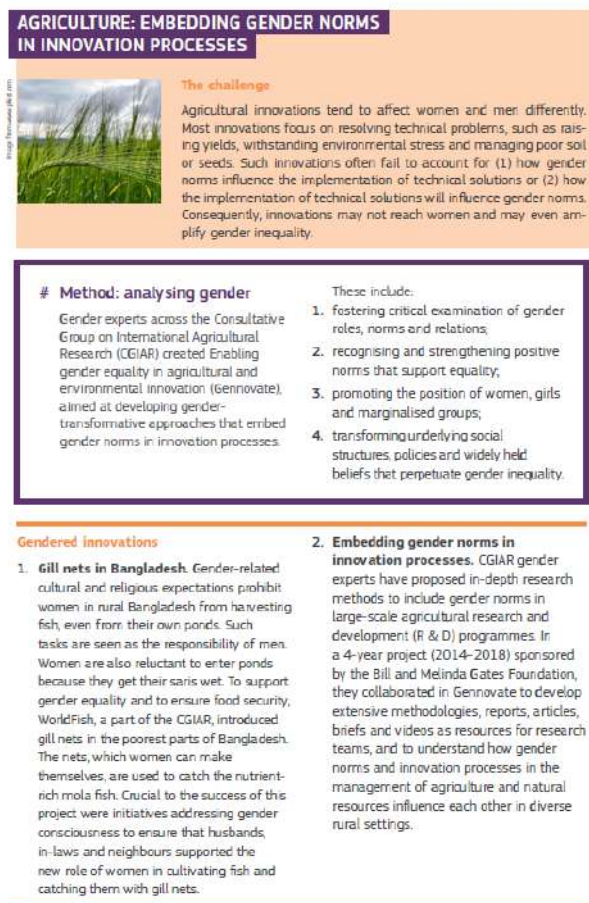
1.2 What is Gendered innovation?

Gendered Innovations was initiated at Stanford University in July 2009. Within FP7, the EC funded an Expert Group working on "Innovation through Gender/Gendered Innovations" (2011-2013), aimed at developing the gender dimension in EU research and innovation. The U.S. National Science Foundation joined the project in January 2012. From 2018 to 2020, the Horizon 2020 Expert Group, Gendered Innovations (G12), updated and expanded the Gendered Innovations methods and case studies.

According to the [Gendered Innovations project](#), "**Gendered Innovations harness the creative power of sex, gender, and intersectional analysis for innovation and discovery. Considering these approaches may add valuable dimensions to research. They may take research in new directions**"¹².

The goal of the project is to provide scientists, researchers, and engineers with practical methods for sex and gender analysis, as well as several case studies as concrete illustrations of how sex, gender and intersectional analysis leads to innovation. To match the global reach of science and technology, methods of sex and gender analysis were developed through international collaborations.

Gendered Innovations stimulate gender-responsible science and technology, enhancing the quality of life for women, men, and non-binary worldwide, and adding value to research and engineering, society, and business. For a summary, see [Sex and Gender Analysis Improves Science and Engineering](#) (Tannenbaum, et.al, 2019)⁹. See also [Gendered Innovations 2: How Inclusive Analysis Contributes to Research and Innovation](#)⁹.



AGRICULTURE: EMBEDDING GENDER NORMS IN INNOVATION PROCESSES

The challenge

Agricultural innovations tend to affect women and men differently. Most innovations focus on resolving technical problems, such as raising yields, withstanding environmental stress and managing poor soil or seeds. Such innovations often fail to account for (1) how gender norms influence the implementation of technical solutions or (2) how the implementation of technical solutions will influence gender norms. Consequently, innovations may not reach women and may even amplify gender inequality.

Method: analysing gender

Gender experts across the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) created Enabling gender equality in agricultural and environmental innovation (Gennovate), aimed at developing gender-transformative approaches that embed gender norms in innovation processes.

These include:

1. fostering critical examination of gender roles, norms and relations;
2. recognising and strengthening positive norms that support equality;
3. promoting the position of women, girls and marginalised groups;
4. transforming underlying social structures, policies and widely held beliefs that perpetuate gender inequality.

Gendered innovations

1. **Gill nets in Bangladesh.** Gender-related cultural and religious expectations prohibit women in rural Bangladesh from harvesting fish, even from their own ponds. Such tasks are seen as the responsibility of men. Women are also reluctant to enter ponds because they get their saris wet. To support gender equality and to ensure food security, WorldFish, a part of the CGIAR, introduced gill nets in the poorest parts of Bangladesh. The nets, which women can make themselves, are used to catch the nutrient-rich mola fish. Crucial to the success of this project were initiatives addressing gender consciousness to ensure that husbands, in-laws and neighbours supported the new role of women in cultivating fish and catching them with gill nets.
2. **Embedding gender norms in innovation processes.** CGIAR gender experts have proposed in-depth research methods to include gender norms in large-scale agricultural research and development (R & D) programmes. In a 4-year project (2014–2018) sponsored by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, they collaborated in Gennovate to develop extensive methodologies, reports, articles, briefs and videos as resources for research teams, and to understand how gender norms and innovation processes in the management of agriculture and natural resources influence each other in diverse rural settings.

The EC report *Gendered Innovations 2: How inclusive analysis contributes to research and innovation* (2020)⁴, prepared by the Gender Expert Group, includes 15 case studies (Annex A) from several different fields of research as well as policy recommendations and methods for implementation of gendered innovation.

The expert group describes the added value as follows, “Integrating sex and/or gender analysis into research and innovation:

- adds value to research in terms of excellence, creativity, and business opportunities.
- helps researchers and innovators question gender norms and stereotypes, and rethink standards and reference models.
- leads to an in-depth understanding of diverse gender needs, behaviours, and attitudes.
- addresses the diverse needs of citizens of the European Union and thereby enhances the societal relevance of the knowledge, technologies and innovations produced.
- contributes to the production of goods and services better suited to new markets.”⁴

Figure 3 -Case study included in the EC Gendered Innovations 2

The expert group have developed different methods for supporting Gendered innovations. General methods included:

- Analysing sex
- Analysing gender
- Intersectional approaches
- Co-creation and participatory research
- Asking about gender and sex in surveys.

The detailed methodology can be found in Annex B of the policy review [Gendered Innovations 2: How inclusive analysis contributes to research and innovation by the European](#) (2020)⁴.

2 Gender and Climate Change

According to UN Women:

the climate crisis is not “gender neutral”. Women and girls experience the greatest impacts of climate change, which amplifies existing gender inequalities and poses unique threats to their livelihoods, health, and safety.

Women highly depend to the access to natural resources to secure food and water for their surveillance and the one of their families.

Climate change negative effects- including global warming, sea-level rise and changes in seasonal rainfall - are strongly affecting availability and quality of water for agriculture, which is the most important employment sector for women in low- and lower-middle income countries. As global average, 45% of the agriculture workforce are women.

This situation is putting more and more pressure on women and also girls, that may leave school to help their mothers. In the worst situation, the increasingly unliveable conditions force them to migrant. According to UN Environment, it is estimated that 80% of people displaced by climate change are women.

Furthermore, an increase in extreme weather events such as floods and droughts will have severe consequences on global health and infrastructure.

Women are often the most impacted by climate change but, despite the disproportionate risks that they face, their unique skills and knowledge are key in responding to the climate crisis.

Therefore, the climate actions to be proposed and delivered should be rooted in the principles of inclusivity and equity and response to social inequalities.

As an example, CARE proposes a [gender continuum](#) as a self-assessment program quality and learning tool to position a project according to the level of gender integration, from harmful to transformative. The tool is to be used by any staff involved in the project management, design, implementation, and/or monitoring evaluation and learning, throughout the project lifecycle.

HARMFUL	NEUTRAL	SENSITIVE	RESPONSIVE	TRANSFORMATIVE
Programming that ignores the economic/ social/political roles, rights, entitlements, responsibilities, obligations, and power relations associated with being female and male; as well as the dynamics between and amongst men and women, boys and girls	Programming that works with gender norms. Reinforces and may take advantage of pre-existing gender inequitable structures, systems, and divisions in society relating to gender. Does not consider how gender roles and relations can impede the achievement of programming outcomes, or how programming can negatively affect gender roles and relations.	Programming that adapts to gender norms. Works around existing gender differences and inequalities to ensure equitable allocation/ services/support aligned with the pre-existing gender differences, structures, systems, and power divisions in society. Aware of the effect of leveraging inequitable gender norms for the outcomes of programming.	Programming that challenges inequitable gender norms. Responds to the different needs and constraints of individuals based on their gender and sexuality. Opens space for discussing, challenging, and engaging with inequitable gender structures, systems, divisions, and power relations. Provides the opportunity for participants to question, experiment and challenge gender inequities.	Policies and programs that change inequitable gender norms and relations to promote equality. Not only has the ambition to transform gender, but has the resources, willingness and capacity to institutionalise transformative programming.

Figure 5 - CARE Gender Continuum – Retrieved from [CARE, 2019, Gender Marker Guidance Note](#)

3 BONEX gender action plan

As previously mentioned, a specific task (task 5.6) on **Gender mainstreaming and management** has been included within WP5. It lasts the whole project duration, and all partners contribute to its implementation.

The main objectives of this task are to challenge gender stereotypes and to reinforce the involvement of women in science and research, technological developments, marketing and management activities; and to

achieve gender balance in our project and the partners' teams, encouraging consortium members to implement gender equality measures in their organizations.

By the end of the project (M36) a Gender Action Report (D5.6 final version) will be delivered, documenting the extent to which actions promoting gender equality have been performed throughout the project.

The activities to be carried out in the frame of the project have been organised as follows:

- **Assessment of the balance between women and men in the project** team implementing project activities, at all levels, in the RWG and DP Local Steering Groups, and the speakers/participants invited to the BONEX events.

This will be assessed every 6 months by BIOZUL and will constitute a picture of the current situation to acknowledge gender balance, as well as a tool to include improvements in future activities and projects.

A first assessment of the balance in the project team was performed during the proposal preparation phase leading to the 45% of women in the project team, of a total of 47 persons named. A second assessment have been performed in month 6, October 2022, and the situation has slightly changed. The current project team is composed of 67 researchers and managers, of which 42% are women (see table 2).

The assessment for the composition of the BONEX target groups, RWG and DP Local Steering Groups, in terms of gender is being developed as the groups are being formed.

By month 12 we will have the first results and take any needed actions if the composition is not as balanced as expected.

Also, by month 12, the assessment will be done for the participants of the events, especially the stakeholders' workshops, organised by the BONEX partners.

- **Establish a Gender Committee** composed of representatives of all partners to make sure that gender dimension is fully acknowledged in every single activity and product released from the project to resolve stereotypes when appeared, considering gender dimension when analysing social relations, roles, and norms.

The Gender Committee has been recently established. The team is of 29 members, representing all project partners and the Third Party, from which 55.2% are women.

The first meeting of the Gender Committee is foreseen before the end of 2022. BIOAZUL, as coordinator and Gender Manager, will organise it and prepare the corresponding agenda. After this meeting, it is foreseen that the Gender Committee will meet at least twice a year, face to face, if possible, alongside the project's general meetings, or online. The outcomes of the assessments will be presented during the meetings to propose any necessary contingency measures.

- **Dissemination of the gender activities and results, combined with gender equality advocacy campaigns** within the project sector. Advocating for gender equality alliances, such as the Women Empowerment Principles, helps promote good practices in the research and innovation field. For this purpose, examples of successful women working in this field will also be showcased.

A primary objective on gender is to support the capacity building of project partners in gender mainstreaming and gender equality so that the Gender Action Plan presented in the current document is well understood and properly adopted by them and by external stakeholders participating in BONEX activities.

Partners have been asked if their organisations have already developed and implemented the Gender Equality Plan. Six partners have the Gender Equality Plan, one is preparing it and one does not have it yet. As part of the work to be performed by the Gender Committee, a revision of the regulatory framework on gender will be performed for the non-European countries participating in BONEX, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia.

BIOAZUL, as a signatory of the [Women's Empowerment Principles](https://weps-gapanalysis.org/) (WEPs)¹⁴ initiative, established by UN Global Compact and UN Women, has carried out the business-driven Gap Analyses Tool developed by WEPs (<https://weps-gapanalysis.org/>)¹⁵, for assessing their gender equality performance and draw a strategy to

advance internally in gender equality. That was a very useful exercise before starting to work on the company's Gender Equality Plan.

Partners will be invited to dedicated webinars on the Gap Analyses Tool to advance internally in the gender strategy.

Moreover, other initiatives on Gender issues related to research and innovation are being identified to support the BONEX gender advocacy activities such as the [EU project RRI Tool](#) ¹¹ in the frame of which several tools and training materials have been developed.

In addition, in the BONEX CDP (deliverable 4.1) gender dimensions have also been considered since the use of gender-neutral communications in all our activities will be essential. Taking into account that our activities will be carried out officially in English, but the regional languages of each of the DPs will also be used, the strategies for a correct use of the language are different according to the characteristics of each language.

On the other hand, the balanced representation of men and women in the different activities, means and material to be developed throughout the project is also considered.

3.1 BONEX team gender balance

BONEX has a balanced team, with 43.5 % of women and 56.5% of men, for implementing the project activities. Women are involved in research and innovation as well as in exploitation management and dissemination activities.

Table 2.- Gender balance BONEX project teams

Partners	Number of team members working on the project	Number of women (%)	Number of men (%)
BIOAZUL	7	4 (57%)	3 (43%)
UCO	6	1 (17%)	5 (83%)
FW	3	1 (33%)	2 (67%)
UAL	4	3 (75%)	1 (25%)
UNI Kassel	3	2 (67%)	1 (33%)
CBR	5	1 (20%)	4 (80%)
UNIBO	3	1 (33%)	2 (77%)
GJU	7	3 (43%)	4 (57%)
IUCN-ROWA	2	1 (50%)	1 (50%)
NOVAENERGIA	1	0 (0%)	1 (100%)
AUB	2	1 (50%)	1 (50%)
IAV	7	5 (71%)	2 (29%)
NBI	6	2 (33%)	4 (66%)
NOVA	4	2 (50%)	2 (50%)
SL	3	1 (33%)	2 (67%)
INRGREF	3	2 (67%)	1 (33%)
ORMVASM	3	0 (0%)	3 (100%)
TOTAL	69	30 (43.5%)	39 (56.5%)

3.2 BONEX management bodies gender balance

Women are well represented in the BONEX decision-making bodies. The coordinator is a woman as well as the leader of 3 of the 5 WPs. In addition, women represent 50% of the Operational Project Coordination team and 50% of the Advisory Board as can be seen in table 3.

Table 3.- Gender balance BONEX management bodies

Partners	Total	Women (%)	Men (%)
WP leaders	5	3 (60%)	2 (40%)
Operational Project Coordination team	4	2 (50%)	2 (50%)
External Advisory Board	4	2 (50%)	2 (50%)

The project envisages the creation of a Gender Committee, led by the Gender Manager (Antonia Lorenzo, BIOAZUL), and composed of representatives of all partners to make sure that the gender dimension, gender equality and women empowerment concerns are fully acknowledged in every single activity and product released from the project. The committee's tasks are to resolve stereotypes and consider gender dimension (when analysing social relations, social roles and norms) as indicated in WP5.

The Gender Committee is formed by 29 members, representing all project partners and the Third Party, from which 55.2% are women.

3.3 BONEX Stakeholder engagement and gender

To maximise the impact of BONEX in the MedRegion and beyond, BONEX foresees approaching several key target groups with different levels of engagement in BONEX project activities. The three groups are: 1) Local DP Steering Groups; 2) Regional Working Groups (RWGs) and 3) BONEX Community of practice.

A targeted Communication, Dissemination and Exploitation Strategy has been developed for this purpose, including interviews, surveys, the organisation of demonstration and policy workshops, and a final international conference. Special attention will be given to **involving and reaching women to be well represented in the surveys and events**, as they are the primary group negatively affected by unbalanced WEF practices as an increased quantity and quality of water in agriculture "leads to [women's] participation in food production and the manifestation of their agency" (FAO, 2018)⁸.

BONEX promotes gender-sensitive policies and development for areas where women are employed as cheap farm labour or food processing. DPs have been selected to ensure that problematic constellations, such as gender or inequalities, are addressed. Women's interests and views will be considered in the NBPs development, and their presence will be ensured in all project activities, decision-making bodies, and stakeholder target groups.

4 Conclusions

BONEX consortium is fully aware of the importance of gender mainstreaming for the project success. We truly believe that an inclusive science needs innovative research methods, meaning that excellent research considers sex, gender, and intersectionality.

Month 6 assessment results are very promising. There is a deviation in the 5 women in the project teams, which is not considered very significant but the Gender Committee will monitor the results by the assessment to be done in month 12 to see if the tendency is negative in terms of women involved in the project activities, and propose contingency measures.

The Gender Committee meetings, every 6 months, will be key not only to assess the project gender sensitive issues but also to better link the gender dimensions tackle in the different project activities. -

The Gender Committee will also evaluate the use of several tools identified, apart from the WEP Gender analyses gap to better support the project activities and project partners on implementing the Gender Action Plan throughout the project activities.

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