



Handout: Gender Transformative Approaches

Women's economic empowerment is essential for inclusive growth in OACPS member states!

Women play a crucial role in African agriculture. Globally, they represent on average 43% of the agricultural labour force and are an integral part of value chains that supply fresh and processed agricultural and biodiversity products to local and international markets. The strengthening of women led-Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) along value chains thus offers important potential for employment, poverty reduction and food security (at the household level), food sovereignty (at national level) and economic growth (national and export markets).

Indeed, studies show that women's economic empowerment is essential for inclusive growth worldwide, meaning growth for all. The latest FAO report on the Status of Women in Food System (2023)¹ shows that closing the gender gap in farm productivity and the wage gap in agri-food-systems would increase the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 1 percent (amounting to nearly 1 trillion USD) and reduce the absolute number of food-insecure people by 45 million.

Furthermore, it states that if just half of development interventions aimed at small-scale producers focused on empowering women, the incomes of an additional 58 million people would be significantly raised, and the resilience of an additional 235 million people would be increased.

In all the value chains covered by the Matching Grant Fund, livestock value chains are particularly relevant for women and youth because they require, on the one hand, relatively low needs of investment and land, and on the other hand have significant income and employment potentials.

Still women face unique challenges which severely limit the potential for food security, growth, and employment, like:

- Less access to resources like inputs, land, water, rural infrastructure
- Less access to capacity development and trainings (e.g., to acquire e-literacy and e-skills), technological inputs, to information and knowledge
- Less access to financial services
- Lack of recognition as entrepreneurs due to, among others, social norms (like disapproval from family)

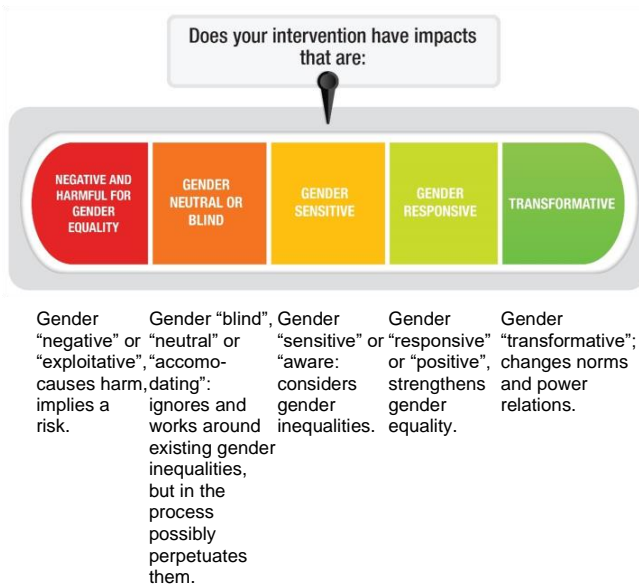
Barriers to the inclusion of women in capacity development measures can prevent making progress in this regard (e.g., missing gender related quality standards of training preparation and implementation, lack of childcare and easy access to training venues, of safe accommodation and transportation).

Since 1990, the gender inequalities have been diminishing in most Members of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS). However, the COVID-19 pandemic has re-intensified gender inequalities and has thus negatively affected women within the value chains while rates of gender-based violence have increased.

Innovative **gender transformative measures** that are aiming at contributing to women's empowerment and reducing the gender gap are a necessary part of working towards gender equality. For example, digital tools have an immense potential to improve social and economic outcomes for women as well as giving access to agro-processing tools and labor-saving technologies (for example, giving them access to trainings, guides and agribusiness tools).

What is meant by gender-transformative approaches (GTA)?

Gender-transformative approaches (GTA) aim at addressing the root causes of gender-based inequality and discrimination. They address sustainably norms and structures that cause gender-based inequality and discrimination. GTAs act on several levels: at the individual and interpersonal level as well as at the societal and structural/systemic level.



Gender Equality Continuum, source: OECD (2022), Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls: Guidance for Development Partners.

What are gender norms?

Gender norms are social norms, i.e., perceived informal, mostly unwritten, rules that define acceptable and appropriate actions within a given group or community, thus guiding human behaviour. Basically, they describe how individuals should behave according to their gender.

To make sure that your project is gender transformative, you can ask yourself:

- Does it reach men and women?
- Is the program designed to the benefit of men and women?
- Is it empowering men and women?



REACH women participants, such as by including them in programme or business activities (as employees, customers, or partners)



BENEFIT women, by improving their circumstances in some way (e.g., filling out a need, giving them opportunities)



EMPOWER women, by strengthening their ability to make and put into action strategic life choices

Example of GTAs

In more concrete terms, gender transformative approaches that contribute to empower women while also allowing growth and climate resilient changes² for all, can look as follows:

1. Using training courses addressing both gender norms and entrepreneurship.

The goal is to have trainings offers that help women and men acquire agribusiness tools but also help create an understanding that women can be entrepreneurs and that they contribute to a dynamic private sector, that is beneficial for all.

One example of such a training is **Gender Makes Business Sense + (GmBS+)**:

Because Gender powers business! GmBS+ comprises numerous business cases and a complete gender and business toolbox. During the training participants learn how to foster their skills and challenge gender stereotypes with these tools. They design their GmBS+ development plan while the GmBS+ training fosters the development of an understanding of participants as businesspersons. It enhances the understanding of the meaning of gender and participants learn to combine gender power with business skills.

More information on the GmBS+ approach is

available in the respective factsheet in the Readiness Programme.

2. Looking at the promotion of employment and growth with a gender perspective with for example, targeted training.

Designing a project with a “gendered” lense will help identify with more precision where disparities can be addressed within an identified common issue to men and women. It allows for specific measures to be implemented that respond to these disparities as well as to the common issue.

For example: The programme Employment promotion for women for the green transformation in Africa (WE4D): Unemployment and underemployment are widespread in Africa. This especially impacts women, who generally do not have the same opportunities as men in terms of access to education and employment (income, job security). The programme focuses on sectors offering the greatest possible employment impacts for women while contributing to a climate-friendly economy:

- Increasing training opportunities for women and for businesses that contribute to the green transformation
- Creating conditions to improve transitioning to the labour market
- Increasing employment opportunities for women in value chains and/or green supply chains in sectors such as renewable energy, the circular economy and waste management, sustainable agriculture, aquaculture and ecotourism, as well as in sectors such as transport and construction in which businesses are adopting more environmentally friendly business models
- Enhancing the competitiveness of start-ups and micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, especially women-led enterprises contributing to an environmental transformation
- Implementing and extending successful approaches in other sectors of the economy and in other regions and countries.

Gender transformative aspects:

- improving employment outcomes for women, including to support a green transformation in five sub-Saharan economies.
- closing existing gender gaps in the labour markets, especially in terms of quality of jobs.
- women who become successful professionals and entrepreneurs serve as

role models in their societies and encourage other women and girls to pursue their choice of career.

3. Using Peer-to-Peer learning to promote gender transformative changes

For example: The Global Project on Food Security and Resilience Building in Malawi has developed an approach of using Father-to-Father (F2F) Groups.

As women and girls are more often affected by all forms of malnutrition, food security interventions need to focus primarily on empowering this target group. The inclusion of men and additional household members (e.g. grandparents, mothers-in-law, etc.) is an essential prerequisite for sustainable change in dietary diversity and hygiene behaviour in the household. The programme created Father-to-Father (F2F) Groups as a possibility to answering this challenge.

Gender transformative aspects:

- Community volunteers are empowered to facilitate gender dialogues for men and women to challenge beliefs, norms and practices regarding roles, responsibilities and decision-making powers in the household

4. Using role models as a tool for gender transformative changes allows for new representations and expectations. Women and Men can imagine themselves in new roles.

An example for this is the project Promotion of female entrepreneurs and business start-ups by women in India (her&now3). Women are still disadvantaged in India's economy: the female labour force participation rate of women is currently only 19 per cent. Less than 20 per cent of all Indian companies are run by women. Gender-specific challenges, such as traditional social norms, lack of access to resources and networks, limited mobility, or lack of role models make it difficult for Indian women entrepreneurs to start or develop their own businesses. Entrepreneurship offers an important opportunity when it comes to increasing women's participation in the economy, creating jobs and harnessing India's growth potential, for example, just bridging the financial gap for women entrepreneurship could add an estimated \$770 million to the Indian GDP by 2025, as per estimates from McKinsey.

The programme addresses these challenges through:

- Direct support measures for women-led enterprises
- Improving the ecosystem for companies run by women
- Mindset change through film and media campaign

Gender-transformative aspects

- the women portrayed function as role models. They go against gender stereotypes and act for social change and promote relatable role models for women;
- moderated discussions after short film screenings encourage the audience to reflect on gender-specific expectations, roles, discrimination as well as an open exchange on their own experiences and ambitions;
- mass media, such as radio, television, or local newspapers, reach a broad target group which is necessary for social transformation processes.

Maximise your impact by including GTAs in your project!

The agricultural sector remains essential to the growth and development of the economies of OEACP member states, and women make up almost half of the agricultural workforce. That is why integrating GTAs in development project is critical to address the challenges faced by society from reducing poverty and successful implementation of a climate-smart agriculture to sustainable economic growth, promoting education and the well-being of girls and boys, men and women.

To reach an inclusive growth as well as allowing you to maximise the impact of your intervention the incorporation of GTAs practices is essential!

Sources:

¹ The status of women in agrifood systems | Gender | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (fao.org), <https://www.fao.org/gender/the-status-of-women-in-agrifood-systems/en>

² For more information on GTA linked to climate smart agriculture you can check this link: CSA Practice Brief Gender.pdf (cgiar.org)

³ [Her&Now | GIZ Gender](#)

OECD (2022), Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls: Guidance for Development Partners.

FAO. 2023. The status of women in agrifood systems. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc5343en>

For more information on the WE4D Programme: [Employment promotion for women for the green transformation in Africa \(WE4D\) - giz.de](#)

For more information on the Global Project on Food Security and Resilience Building in Malawi Programme: [giz2022-en-malawi-food-nutrition-fnsp.docx \(live.com\)](#)
[GIZ InDesign-Vorlage für Publikationen – Factsheets DIN A4](#)

For more information on the Her&Now Programme: [Empowering women to become entrepreneurs - giz.de](#)
[giz2023-en-her-and-now-project-documentation.pdf](#)

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