



FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative

Cultivating Women's Empowerment

STORIES FROM FEED THE FUTURE
2011–2015



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Leveraging Economic
Opportunities

Cultivating Women's Empowerment

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2011–2015

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by Lindsey Jones-Renaud and Morgan Mercer of ACDI/VOCA with funding from USAID/E3's Leveraging Economic Opportunities (LEO) project in collaboration with USAID's Bureau for Food Security and Feed the Future.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS. The majority of information in this publication came from 20 submissions in response to the Call for Cases: Learning from Feed the Future about Gender Integration and Women's Empowerment. We greatly appreciate the contributions from the following organizations which submitted case studies and the individuals who responded to our multiple questions and requests as we integrated them into this report and prepared them for publication: Nirinjaka Ramasinjatovo, Adwoa Mensima Sey, Alex Pavlovic and Moses Musikanga from ACDI/VOCA; Marion Büttner from International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT); Kristy Cook and Vincent M. Akamandisa from Cultural Practice; Katie Hauser, Jo Anne Yeager, and Karis McGill from IRG, an Engility company; Jessica Joye from Fintrac; Carrie Hasselback from FHI360; Arinloye Ademonla Djalal and Antoine Kalinganire from World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF); Ataoulaye Bah from ICCO Cooperation; Michelle DeFreese from Innovative Agricultural Research Initiative (iAGRI); Elikana Manumbu from the Jane Goodall Institute; Samantha Clark and Sarah Titus from John Snow International; Trini Ariztia and Nikki Massie from Lutheran World Relief; Megan Kyles and Karl Rosenberg from USAID, on behalf of NCBA CLUSA; Jacqueline Mkindi from Tanzania Horticulture Association; Nick Rosen and Daniella De Franco from TechnoServe; Kelly Wilson from University of California Davis; Karen Kent from University of Rhode Island; and Thomas Archibald from Virginia Tech. Thank you also to Laura Romah from Winrock International for contributing information about the Bangladesh Women's Empowerment Activity.

In addition, we would like to recognize the many other individuals who reviewed and contributed to this report: Krista Jacobs, Jeannie Harvey, Farzana Ramzan, Kiersten Johnson, Jennifer Cupp and Zachary Baquet at USAID; Jenn Williamson, Maria Castro and Taylor Briggs from ACDI/VOCA; and Mary Laurie and Miya Su Rowe from the Knowledge-Driven Agriculture Development (KDAD) program, who led the vision for the design, graphics and layout of the publication.

August 2016.

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ACRONYMS

BAS	Business Advisory Services
CAD	Community Agro-Dealer
DHF	Demo Host Farmer
GIF	Gender Integration Framework
MSMEs	Micro, Small, and Medium-Sized Enterprises
PBG	Producer Business Group
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
WEAI	Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index



INTRODUCTION

Feed the Future and Women's Empowerment in Agriculture

Women contribute significantly to agriculture and food security around the globe, and gender equality and women's empowerment are critical to ensuring sustainable development. Yet women continue to face unequal access to training, resources, and opportunities to adopt new agricultural technologies, grow their businesses, and spend their earned income to improve the well-being of themselves and their families.

The U.S. Government's global hunger and food security initiative, Feed the Future, puts women's empowerment at the center of its approach to improving global food security, making it a core area of investment and a measure of whether Feed the Future has achieved its overall goal of reducing global hunger, poverty and malnutrition.

Through Feed the Future, women farmers have accessed training and resources that have enabled them to adopt new agricultural technologies that increase productivity, reduce their unpaid work and improve their families' nutritional status. In Feed the Future's first year, over 500,000 women applied improved technologies or practices in their agricultural work; by 2014 this number almost quintupled to nearly 2.5 million women.¹ In addition, between 2012–2014, Feed the Future programs extended over \$260 million in loans to over 640,000 women farmers and women-owned small enterprises.² These figures represent hundreds of thousands of individual stories, human faces, and the voices behind them.

FEED THE FUTURE: THE U.S. GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO GLOBAL HUNGER

Global food price spikes and resulting instability in 2007 and 2008 were a wake-up call to the world: More needed to be done to break the vicious cycle of hunger and poverty. The answer: Unlock the potential of agriculture as the key to reducing hunger, extreme poverty and malnutrition. At the 2009 G8 Summit in L'Aquila, Italy, President Obama called on global leaders to reverse a three-decade decline in agricultural investment. He also announced increased U.S. investment in global food security. Launched in 2010, Feed the Future is the U.S. Government's global hunger and food security initiative. Feed the Future is a whole-of-government approach led by USAID that includes 11 U.S. Government agencies. It prioritizes country leadership and engages partners from the private sector, international and national civil society organizations, and research institutions. Learn more about Feed the Future at www.feedthefuture.gov.

HOW FEED THE FUTURE CULTIVATES WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN AGRICULTURE

To help tell the stories behind these figures, this publication presents a collection of case studies and personal anecdotes that illustrate how Feed the Future programs are creating opportunities for women's empowerment in agriculture.

Each of the stories collected here demonstrates how Feed the Future partners are facilitating empowerment in multiple yet interconnected ways: from making agricultural markets more inclusive of women as part of value chain development; to creating opportunities for women to be leaders of change in their communities and economies; to facilitating supportive environments for women to exercise their voice and agency by challenging stereotypes about gender roles and power relations between men and women.

Many of these stories also illustrate how programs have focused on the domains of empowerment identified in the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI; see box on p. 5) as well as some of the themes that researchers identified through rigorous

The Synthesis of Evaluations Related to the Feed the Future Learning Agenda can be found here.



analysis of more than 190 program evaluations in the Synthesis of Evaluations Related to the Feed the Future Learning Agenda, released by USAID in March 2016.³ In particular, many of the featured interventions in this report focus on increasing access to productive resources and assets, leveraging the power of community-based groups, and promoting women's leadership—as entrepreneurs, group leaders, researchers, and advocates. The stories also illustrate some of the challenges identified in the Evaluation Synthesis, particularly related to closing gender gaps in access to and decision-making power over credit and land, and control over income.

METHODOLOGY

This publication provides insights into the ways Feed the Future partners have successfully promoted women's empowerment and what they have learned in the process. It is neither an evaluation of Feed the Future's impact on women's empowerment, nor a synthesis of what has been learned so far. As more data from the Feed the Future Monitoring System and the WEAI become available, partners will be able to conduct more rigorous analysis of results and impacts. This publication is intended to complement such higher-level assessments.

The case studies were solicited and selected from submissions by Feed the Future partners through a call for cases about the Feed the Future Learning on Gender Integration and Women's Empowerment.⁴ Selected submissions were compared with the cases and themes identified in the Feed the Future Evaluation Synthesis Report. The submissions were ranked and chosen according to the quality of the data, the compelling nature of the story, demonstration of learning, and diversity of representation in terms of geography and type of intervention. All original case studies submitted in response to the call for cases are available on USAID's Agrilinks website (<http://www.agrilinks.org>).



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WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN AGRICULTURE INDEX

To hold itself accountable for its commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment, Feed the Future and its partners launched the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) in 2012, creating baseline measures of women's empowerment in Feed the Future focus countries. The WEAI is the first comprehensive and standardized data collection tool for measuring women's empowerment and inclusion in the agriculture sector by looking at five domains of empowerment—decisions about agricultural production; access to and decision-making power over productive resources; control over use of income; group membership and leadership; and time use—as well as two cross-cutting domains: access to technology and social capital.

THE FIVE DOMAINS OF EMPOWERMENT IN THE WEAI

Domain	Indicators
Production	Input in productive decisions
	Autonomy in production
Resources	Ownership of assets
	Purchase, sale, or transfer of assets
	Access to and decisions on credit
Income	Control over use of income
Leadership	Group member
	Speaking in public
Time	Workload
	Leisure

Feed the Future is using the WEAI to inform programming and track the impact of its programs on women's empowerment in 19 Feed the Future focus countries. USAID partners collected baseline data in these countries between 2012 and 2013.⁵

A cross-country analysis of the WEAI baseline data from 13 of the 19 focus countries found that among the assessed domains, women were most likely to be disempowered in the areas of access to and decision making about credit, workload, and membership in groups. However, the analysis also found that constraints vary by region; for example, a lack of group membership is the primary constraint for women in Asia, while low access to and decision making about credit, as well as heavy workloads, are greater constraints for women in east and southern Africa. The WEAI analysis found that these are the same factors that contribute most to men's disempowerment as well. However, the magnitude of disempowerment is much greater for women.⁶

USAID is collecting a second round of data in 2016 and 2017 that will allow stakeholders to analyze comparable quantitative data on the WEAI's five domains of empowerment, rendering a fuller picture of Feed the Future's progress toward inclusive agriculture sector growth.

In the years since the WEAI was launched, Feed the Future has invested in research, improvements in tools and methods, and complementary resources to enhance the utility of the WEAI and for designing and evaluating programs. A list of WEAI resources, datasets and research can be found on Feed the Future's website.⁷

You can learn more about the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) here.





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ДОНҲАИ ИСЛОҲОТИ ЗАМИН

МАЪЛУМОТИ УМУМӢ ДАР БОРАИ ДОНҲА

ДОНҲАИ USAID «ИСЛОҲОТИ ЗАМИН ВА ТАРАҚҚИЁТИ БОЗОР», КИ БАРОИ СЕ СОЛ ПЕШБИНИШ ШУДААСТ, АЗ ТАРАФИ ТАШКИЛОТИ БАЙНАЛХАЛҚИИ КЕМОНИКС ИНТЕРНЕШНЛ АМАЛИ ГАРДОНИДА МЕШАВАД. ХАДАФИ АСОСИИ ДОНҲА - ИШ ТАҚВИЯТБАХШИИ ТАРАҚҚИЁТИ ИҚТИСОДИ БОЗОРГОНӢ МЕБОШАД. ДОНҲА МОҲИ ОКТЯБРИ СОЛИ 2005-УМ ҶАЪЛИЯТИ ХУДРО ДАР ДУ ҶУМҲУРИИ ҶУМҲУРИИ ТОҶИКИСТОН ВА ҚИРҒИЗИСТОН ШУРУЪ НАМУД. ДОНҲАИ МАЪЗУР ДАР ҶУМҲУРИИ ТОҶИКИСТОН АЗ СЕ ҚИСМИ АСОСӢ ИБОРАТ АСТ.

- ДОНҲА ДАСТГИРИИ ХУДРО БА ҲУКУМАТИ ТОҶИКИСТОН ДАР ТАҚМИЛДИҲИИ КОНУНГУЗОРИ ОИД БА ИСЛОҲОТИ ЗАМИН АМАЛИ МЕГАРДОНАД
- БАЛАНДБАРДОРИИ САТҲИ ДОНИШИ ДЕҲҚОНОН ОИ ҲУҚУҚҲОИ ОНҲО БА ЗАМИН БА ВОСИТАИ ГУЗАРОНИДАНИ ТРЕНИНГҲО, СЕМИНАРҲО, МАШВАРАТҲОИ ҲУҚУҚӢ ВА ИИЧУНИИ БА ВОСИТАИ ВОСИТИ АҲБОРИ УМУМ
- ДАСТГИРИИ ДЕҲҚОНОН БА ВОСИТАИ СИЛСИЛАИ МАРКАЗҲОИ ДАСТГИРИИ ҲУҚУҚӢ ВА СИЛСИЛАИ ТАШАББУСҚОРОНИ МАҲАЛИ



INCLUSIVE AGRICULTURE SECTOR GROWTH

Opening Doors for Women Farmers and Entrepreneurs

A market-driven approach is critical for achieving growth, and many Feed the Future partners are creating opportunities for women by working through the private sector and leveraging market demand.

The following stories demonstrate different ways Feed the Future programs have facilitated market-driven agriculture sector growth throughout the value chain while connecting women to increased income opportunities: from increasing productivity of food crops that can be sold on local and urban markets in Bangladesh, to connecting female producers to mango export markets in Haiti, to creating opportunities for women to be entrepreneurs in a growing community-based input supply sector in Zambia, to strengthening women's agro-processing businesses in Honduras.

Many of these interventions touch on multiple domains of the WEAI, including decisions about production, access to resources, access to income, leadership and social capital. The program in Haiti also addresses the fifth domain of the WEAI regarding women's time poverty. They also appear to support one of the main findings of the Feed the Future Evaluation Synthesis: that leveraging the collective action of community-based organizations—including producer organizations—can be a means to break down gender gaps in access to markets and social capital.⁸

I. Breaking the glass ceiling of the mango export sector in Haiti

As a Feed the Future program in Haiti began assessing how to connect mango farmers to lucrative and stable export markets, they identified a significant constraint for women in the mango value chain: *Although women controlled much of the sales in the informal domestic mango trade, they held just 9 percent of leadership roles in the farmer associations that supplied the formal export market.*

How could the program support women's leadership in a more formal, efficient mango export sector?

MAKING THE “BUSINESS CASE” FOR GENDER EQUALITY AT HOME AND AT WORK

Feed the Future partners in Haiti identified two underlying constraints to women's membership and leadership in farmer associations: (1) low rates of literacy, and (2) disproportionate lack of time due to their domestic responsibilities.

To address the literacy challenge, Feed the Future coordinated with a local microfinance institution, Fonkoze, to pilot literacy training for

women in the area. The women worked to establish literacy skills, thereby gaining further confidence in their leadership abilities.

To address women's time constraints, mango Producer Business Group (PBG) members and their partners participated in project trainings and discussions where they made a “business case” for how everyone in the family would benefit if men and women shared domestic responsibilities, freeing up more time for women's leadership in the Producer Business Groups. As a result, 38 percent of leadership roles are now held by women, which is more than four times the average in Haiti's farmer associations.

UNDERSTANDING AND ENGAGING INFORMAL MARKETS

In Haiti, women make up the majority of mango traders in the local and informal markets. To ensure the growing export market didn't marginalize these traders—called *Madan Saras*—the program worked with them to ensure that women outside formal market channels benefited from the commercialized mango market. Producer Business Groups worked with *Madan Saras* to sell lower quality and volumes of mangos on the local market. Over time, the program developed mango sales networks comprising farmers, Producer Business Groups, *Madan Saras* and packing houses to sell mangos on local and export markets. Ninety percent of the mangos that were deemed unsellable on the export market for aesthetic reasons were sold by women on the local market for a competitive price.

THE BUSINESS CASE FOR WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP

Trainers used a metaphor of a bird, which soars only when both of its wings are strong. If the Producer Business Group was the bird, women and men were its two wings. By making the business case for women's participation in leadership—how this would help the groups, strengthen the mango sector and boost household incomes—the staff encouraged households to develop strategies to provide women with the time needed to assume those roles.

“We’re working together and growing stronger. We’re not just selling mangos now. We are doing everything.”

– MARIE-CARME, MANGO FARMER AND TRAINER IN A PRODUCER BUSINESS GROUP

MARIE-CARME’S STORY

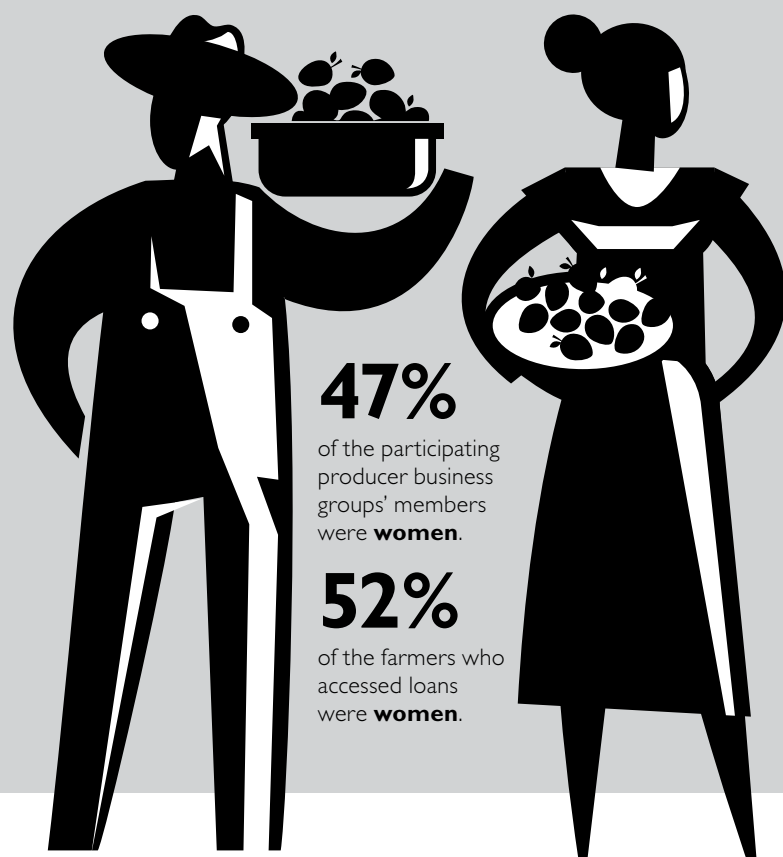
After joining a local Producer Business Group called *Leve Kanpay*, or “Rise Up,” in 2013, Marie-Carme Fils-Aime and her husband improved their mango production techniques to earn USDA Organic and Fair Trade certification. They are now exporting their fruit to the United States and have used the profits to plant a 76-tree mango orchard and to buy seeds for other crops, diversifying their income-generating opportunities.

Marie-Carme leveraged the opportunities offered through Feed the Future to become a recognized leader in the producer group and



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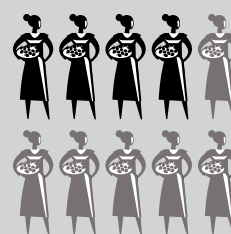
community. She is the producer group’s marketing agent, directly managing the sale of the group’s mangos to an exporter in the Haitian capital, and an agronomy trainer for other farmers. She has been part of decisions to invest some of the group’s profits in repairing the community’s water pump, and in farming tilapia to diversify the community’s source of income.



Cultivating Success: Data and Results

Male and female mango farmers and traders produced a range of impressive outcomes with the support of Feed the Future, which helped more than ...

19,000 farmers organize **262** producer business groups — **94%** of which were profitable



38%

of leadership roles were held by women, which is more than four times the average in Haiti’s farmer associations.

This example comes from the Haiti Hope Project, which was co-funded by USAID, The Coca-Cola Company, and the Inter-American Development Bank, and implemented by TechnoServe.

II. Community agri-input businesses foster women's entrepreneurship in Zambia

Nelia Banda is the owner of the Small Small Agro Store in Sinda County, Zambia. Within the Small Small Supply Store are four shelves with several types of seeds—okra, tomato, rape (kale)—herbicides and pesticides, and other basic farming inputs. She says about 150 people come to her shop every day during planting season, some as far as Mozambique. Nelia also serves as a community extension worker, visiting farms to answer questions about crop health and planting techniques. From 2012 to 2016, Nelia has worked with Feed the Future's flagship program in Zambia learning new technologies and business management. In addition, the program's gender training has been an important part of agricultural livelihood improvements of her rural community. "If people learn about how gender roles can change, they can learn to work together, they can both support the work they do," she said.

Nelia is an exception in Zambia, where women have less access to agricultural inputs than men, and are even less likely to have jobs or own businesses in the input supply and agricultural extension sector.⁹ Feed the Future is working to change this dynamic in Zambia. It has taken a community-based approach to commercialize the input supply sector, which will make seeds, fertilizers, and production services more widely available to both male and women farmers. Of equal importance, this approach also ensures that women are not just buying the inputs, but selling them too.

A COMMUNITY-BASED AND PERFORMANCE-BASED APPROACH TO RECRUITING WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

Two key elements to the program's approach enabled women to become successful input supply entrepreneurs. First, the approach was community-based, meaning that the project supported small, community-level enterprises to become a link between private sector service providers and rural communities. Called Community Agro-Dealers (CADs), they serve as input suppliers to neighboring farmers and teach improved production technologies on demonstration plots, such as conservation

farming methods to reduce labor and maintain soil fertility. Many of their clients are also women farmers who are part of community savings and lending groups. In fact, 76 percent of the 17,000 members of these groups are women and 79 percent of the leadership roles are occupied by women.

Second, it was a performance-based, graduation approach. This emphasis on graduated performance gave women with limited leadership or business experience the opportunity to start in a small leadership role and then grow into a larger one, learning along the way. For example, CADs began as demonstration host farmers, who provide extension services and information to other farmers. The program supports the best performing demonstration host farmers to become CADs, where they continue to provide extension services while also earning profits selling seeds, fertilizers and other inputs. Then, the program supports the best performing CADs to form producer companies, which are private sector trade enterprises that generate profits at a larger scale, making them even more attractive to potential private sector partners. In addition, as community-based wholesalers, they retain profits in the communities. Women comprise 24 percent of the members of newly formed Producer Companies.

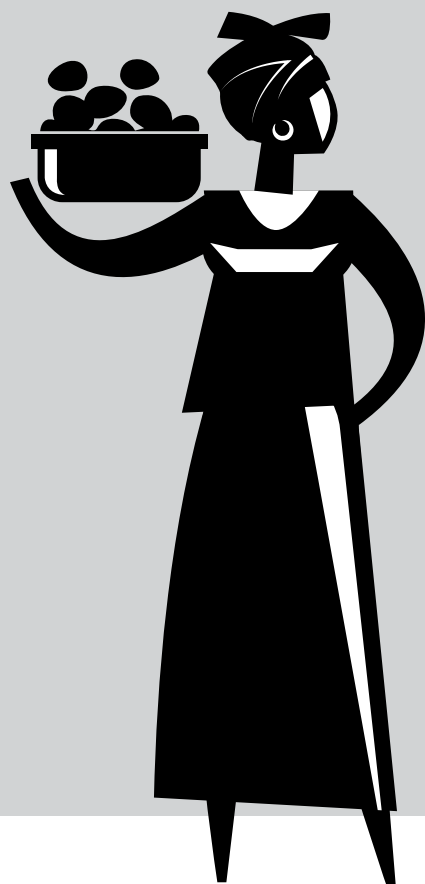
WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES IN COMMERCIALIZED VALUE CHAINS

One of the significant achievements of the Zambia program is the number of women involved in all activities. A third of the demonstration host farmers and CADs are women, as are about a fourth of producer company members. Even more significant is the fact that women are 76 percent of the leadership roles in the savings and lending groups; altogether this adds up to more than 11,400 new leadership positions held by women. Yet, it also illustrates a persistent challenge: women make up a smaller proportion of leadership positions in the more influential and profitable roles of demonstration host farmers, CADs, and producer company members. However, it is important to understand the context: these are traditional roles for men.



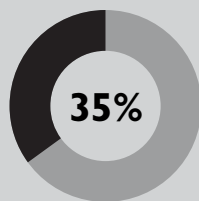
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While Feed the Future's programs in Zambia continue to fight this challenge, they have nonetheless been able to cultivate a significant presence of women in the input supply sector.

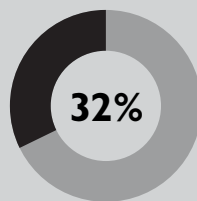


Cultivating Success: Data and Results

Women make up ...

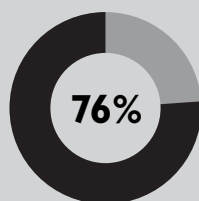


of community agrodealers and make up

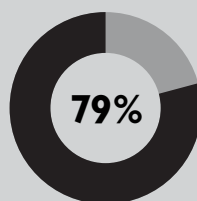


of demo host farmers.

CADs sell inputs and provide extension services to savings and lending groups, of which ...



of the 17,000 members are women, and



of the leadership roles are occupied by women.

Although there are fewer women than men CADs, women have performed better than men in general: **35% of women** DHFs became CADs, while only **26% of men** DHFs became CADs.

Female CADs make up **24%** of the Producer Companies' membership.

This example comes from the Profit Plus project, which is funded by USAID and implemented by ACIDI/VOCA. Another USAID program, Integrating Nutrition and Gender into Agriculture Extension Services (INGENAES) provides support to the community agro-dealers via Profit+.

III. Women lead in the way in increasing food production in Bangladesh



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“I was mesmerized to see such a robust maize crop in my fallow land ... it never came to my mind that such nice production of maize was even possible in this area.”

– WOMAN FARMER, BANGLADESH

FROM STRUGGLING FARMER TO ENTREPRENEUR

Monowara Begum and her family were struggling to make ends meet from growing only one rice crop per year. When a Feed the Future program introduced maize production in her community, she attended a training—together with her husband and

son—on intercropping maize with other crops. She became the first farmer in her region to cultivate hybrid maize, resulting in a profitable harvest.

Soon, Monowara Begum was chosen as leader of a women's farmers group, Golup Mohila Samity, which collectively grew maize intercropped with garden pea and bush bean. With their incomes, the group purchased a power tiller—a machine that eases the physical burden of preparing land for planting, while also improving the time efficiency—and a seeder machine, which they used to till and seed other farmers' lands for a fee. In 2013, Hunger Free World Bangladesh awarded Monowara Begum the prize of Best Entrepreneur.

A WHOLE-FAMILY TRAINING APPROACH TO CONNECTING MEN AND WOMEN FARMERS TO NEW AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGIES

Monowara and thousands of other farmers in Bangladesh availed themselves of Feed the Future trainings and demonstrations on agricultural techniques, cross-farm visits, and farm business management workshops. The program achieved its commitment to equal participation of women and men in these activities by applying a “whole family” training approach, where all family members attend trainings on seed production and storage, maize production for income generation and human consumption, cereal-based cropping systems, intercropping and business skills.

The program also focused on increasing women’s business and entrepreneurship capacities. For example, a workshop with women who had already initiated small businesses was held in collaboration with UN Women to identify women’s constraints in establishing and expanding a small business, and to link women-led small businesses with supermarkets, processors and enterprise associations.

WOMEN FARMERS’ GROUP MAKE THEIR INCOMES GROW

Overall, women farmers like Monowara comprised more than a third of the 56,000 farmers who took advantage of trainings offered through this Feed the Future-supported program in 2015 alone. Yet fewer—only around 12 percent in 2015—were able to apply the new skills they learned, representing an ongoing challenge and persistent gender gap.

Read more stories from women who were part of this Feed the Future Program here.



Cultivating Success: Data and Results

Women farmers like Monowara saw their incomes grow ...



\$439



Each woman of the Golup Mohila Samity group, led by Monowara, earned a return of **\$188 from garden pea and maize intercropping in 2014, with production costs being \$30.**

This nearly doubled the next year, with each of the 20 group members **earning \$439 from intercropping.**



They also earned additional income from selling preserved seeds to other farmers and could increase their land under cultivation.

This example comes from the Cereals Systems Initiative for South Asia in Bangladesh (CSISA-BD) project, which was funded by USAID and implemented jointly by International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center, CIMMYT, International Rice Research Institute, and WorldFish from October 2010–December 2015.

IV. Women's agribusinesses in Honduras add value and earn profits



Honduras differs from many low-income economies around the world in that women make up a minority of the workers in crop production. Yet with high poverty and unemployment levels, Honduran women need economic opportunities as much as men.

WOMEN'S ENTERPRISES ADD VALUE TO FRUIT, VEGETABLE AND COFFEE SUPPLY CHAINS

Feed the Future's partners in Honduras ensured that both women and men would benefit from new value chain opportunities by supporting post-production jobs and enterprises. This approach turned out to be an ideal opportunity for rural women. The majority—72 percent—of the woman-owned micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) supported by the program focused on processing and value addition. For example, women formed off-farm MSMEs to produce and sell processed products such as pickled vegetables, plantain chips, roasted coffee beans, fruit concentrates, dried fruits, and baked goods, opening up a variety of income-earning opportunities for themselves and their families. The program provided a comprehensive and integrated package of training and support to the MSMEs, including trainings on good manufacturing practices, marketing, and business skills to support company registration, credit access, and identifying new buyers.



PHOTOS, TOP: © FINTRAC, INC.; BOTTOM: © HECTOR SANTOS

WOMEN WORK IN COFFEE? THE CAFÉ ARIMEL PROCESSING COMPANY

On average, women-owned MSMEs that partnered with the Honduras Feed the Future program improved their sales by 50 percent above baseline, resulting in an increase in net incomes of 81 percent. One of these businesses is Café ARIMEL, a coffee processing company run by two sisters in Santa Rosa de Copan. In 2012, with help from Feed the Future technicians, they conducted a business diagnostic to identify opportunities for growth. Based on this diagnostic, project specialists provided a suite of trainings in market-driven production, improved productivity, and finance and administration. With these interventions, Café ARIMEL increased its total sales by 35 percent over two years. “We expect to grow by at least

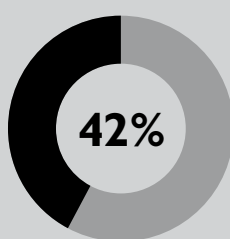
100 percent over the next five years,” Eunice Arita said. The sisters have invested in new equipment and are expanding their distribution network. Moreover, their success is proving to the larger community that women are capable of running efficient and profitable businesses—something long assumed to be the purview of men.

“In my country, when we talk of a coffee producer, people think of a man in a sombrero. They did not believe all our coffee processing work was done by women.”

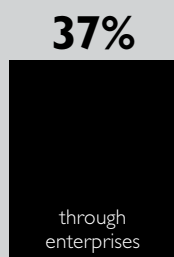
— KAREN ARITA, OWNER OF CAFÉ ARIMEL COFFEE PROCESSING COMPANY, HONDURAS

Cultivating Success: Data and Results

Nearly 2,000 woman-owned enterprises accessed new market opportunities through the project.

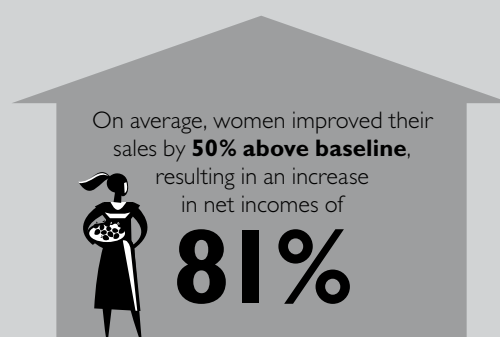


of enterprises supported by the program were made up of **women**.



15%

outside enterprises



Out of the total number of employment positions created through enterprises, **37% were for women**, compared to just **15% of positions** created outside of enterprises.

This example comes from the ACCESO project, which is funded by USAID and implemented by Fintrac.



VOICE AND AGENCY

Changing Norms, Amplifying Leadership

Feed the Future programs have worked to ensure that women are not just the beneficiaries of new opportunities in agriculture, as seen in the prior section, but are also leading the creation of new opportunities themselves. The following stories show how Feed the Future has enabled women to be leaders of change: as “gender champions” who lead the charge to increase women’s membership in producer groups in Senegal; as community organizers who advocate to their local government for more equitable infrastructure and distribution of resources in Honduras; and as academics in agriculture research who inform the research agendas with an eye to the needs and preferences of women farmers.

These stories reiterate how women’s leadership, membership in groups, social capital, and decision-making power are central elements of empowerment, as outlined in the Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI). They also illustrate the Feed the Future Evaluation Synthesis finding that programs are increasing women’s leadership roles in their communities by working through community-based organizations, changing gender norms and engaging men to support women’s empowerment initiatives.¹⁰

RETHINKING NORMS: GENDER WORKSHOPS IN FEED THE FUTURE PROGRAMS

While integrating gender into technical trainings and approaches is important to promoting women’s empowerment across Feed the Future programming, the Feed the Future Evaluation Synthesis also gives examples of dedicated gender trainings that have had multiple positive impacts. For example, a Feed the Future program in Liberia held a life skills training for couples who learned about joint decision making, conflict resolution, mutual respect and how to prevent gender-based violence.¹¹ Another program in Tanzania incorporated gender training into Farmer Field Schools, covering topics of human rights, gender equality, gender-based violence, family planning and HIV.¹² Both trainings appear to have led to more cohesion and shared decision making between male and female partners.

A common theme of effective gender trainings is to engage men to challenge harmful norms about masculinities and support women in new gender roles. In addition to the gender equity trainings in Honduras discussed next, other examples in this report are found in the Commercializing Mango Sector in Haiti (p. 8) and the Women’s Entrepreneurship in Input Supply in Zambia (p. 10).

I. The power of groups: amplifying women's voices in Senegal



© USAID / SENEGAL / ZACK TAYLOR

"I want to help other women advance, too. I simply can't gain this new knowledge and success and not share it with other women. In fact, I can't see a future where more women are not doing what I and other women leaders have done. I see that this is already happening in my community—women come to ask me what I have done to get where I am, and I share my experiences and inspire them to become leaders and develop themselves further."

— NIMNA DIAYTE, WOMAN FARMER IN SENEGAL

Many Feed the Future programs have found success through supporting women's leadership in groups at the community and national levels. Some programs focused on integrating women into leadership positions at existing, male-dominated associations, whereas others worked with women-majority groups. One program in Senegal did both.

A TURNAROUND STORY

In the early years of a Feed the Future program in Senegal, it became apparent that women were largely underrepresented in its agriculture value chain development activities: women comprised only 17 percent of participants in the training activities. Even a few years later, the program was only supporting two women's organizations, in rain-fed rice cultivation.

A new approach was clearly needed. The program began directly targeting women's groups for technical trainings and support services, particularly in irrigated rice, rain-fed rice (in the lowland zones) and maize. It did this by recruiting women as technical specialists

and "gender champions" to encourage women's involvement in trainings and demonstration sites on good agricultural practices. As a result, the program found that—in addition to increasing the capacity and leadership of women as lead farmers and trainers—the success of women-led and women-only producer groups had a significant impact on the role of these women as leaders in their respective communities.

WOMEN LEADERS: REDEFINING NORMS ABOUT WOMEN'S ROLES IN AGRICULTURE

Promoting "gender champions" through the economic empowerment of women in value chain activities has resulted in the emergence of female role models and leaders who are becoming known nationally and internationally through their staunch advocacy of women's economic empowerment.

Nimna Diayte is an example of one of these gender champions. During her participation with Feed the Future, she became the president

of the FEPROMAS maize producer's association, which has both male and female members. She attributes her newfound leadership both to capacity building provided by the project and the new opportunities that were created for women.

Nimna uses her leadership status to give voice to and advocate for women's economic empowerment. In addition to being president of the producers' association, she is on the municipal board and attends ministerial meetings in Dakar and meetings abroad, advocating alongside other women leaders to change policies that would improve women's access to land.

As the program took a more deliberate focus on targeting women's groups and recruiting women leaders like Nimna, it saw a dramatic increase in women's participation. Women's



© PEACE CORPS / LAUREN SEIBERT

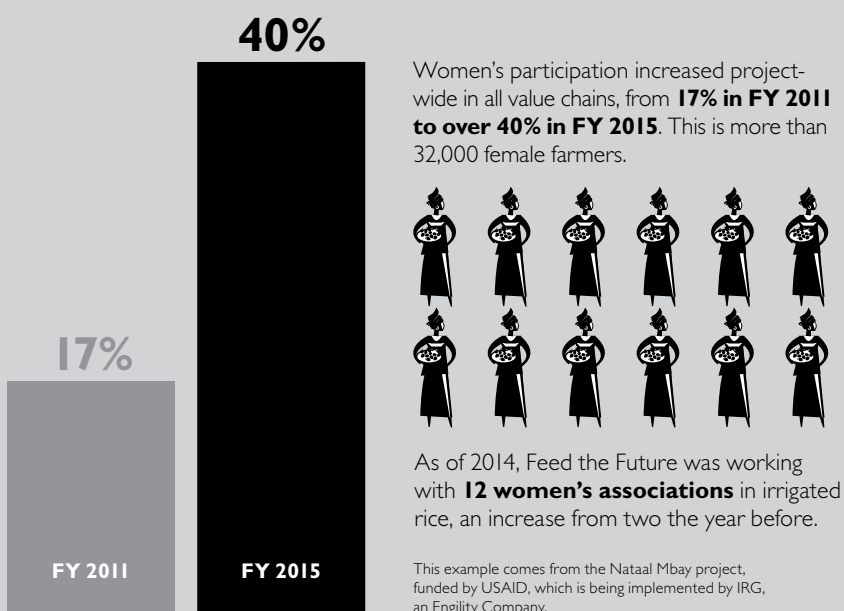
participation increased project-wide in all value chains, from 17 percent in 2011 to over 40 percent in 2015. This reflects the finding in the Evaluation Synthesis that higher numbers of female leaders in organizations can lead to greater participation of women as members.¹³ Overall, the program has supported more than 32,000 women farmers.

Use your mobile device to learn about Nimna's meeting with President Barack Obama here.



Cultivating Success: Data and Results

Gender champions in Senegal connected more women to resources and opportunities ...



II. Community advocates bring gender equity to local government and rural financial institutions



Session to plan training with management team. SOL Inter-municipal Council, Santa Rosa Copán.
© LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

ADVOCATING FROM THE GROUND-UP

As the president of the Azacualpa Women's Network, Maria Benilda Rodriguez has learned that civil society and local governments have a role to play in promoting women's empowerment in agriculture. She participated in a series of workshops and activities offered by a Feed the Future program in Honduras that mobilized women's municipal networks to advocate for more equitable policies and resources at the municipal level. The program held a series of workshops for 2,721 female members of 10 municipal women's networks

"I used to be afraid of participating in meetings. I am now encouraging other women in the community to get involved in the rural credit institutions and the women's municipal network, because there are many benefits to joining."

— MARIA BENILDA RODRIGUEZ,
PRESIDENT OF THE AZACUALPA
WOMEN'S NETWORK IN HONDURAS

to help them better understand gender equality and how to advocate for economic resources and higher quality infrastructure.

IGNITING INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE FROM THE TOP-DOWN

The program also matched this grassroots advocacy approach with activities to make rural credit institutions and municipal government councils receptive to women's economic leadership and political voice. The program held masculinity workshops for 429 men from the Honduran government and rural credit institutions, which helped them see how perceptions of masculinity can contribute to or impede the achievement of gender equity. As a result, 56 rural credit institutions in Western Honduras have adopted practices that make credit more accessible to women, such as by instituting flexible collateral requirements or offering reduced fees or payment plans to recruit female members. They also have reportedly seen increases in the proportion of women represented in their loan portfolios.



Radio program for disseminating information about the municipal policy of Candelaria with the OMM coordinator and the RMM president.

© LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

Maria explains how this approach has helped her network: "We have been able to influence our government to turn over a 2 manzana plot of land to the network, and we have already planted 2,000 coffee plants there, which we were able to secure from the Mennonite Social Action Commission (CASM). In addition to generating some income for us, it is providing employment to people in the community because we need their labor to maintain the farm."



Cultivating Success: Data and Results

The gender equity efforts are paying off in Honduras ...

As of May 2016, councils from six municipalities have awarded more than **12 grants** for the women's municipal networks' agricultural enterprises and infrastructure proposals with a value of nearly

\$25,000 USD

56

rural credit institutions in Western Honduras have adopted practices that make credit more accessible to **women**.

Women's proportion of rural credit institution loan portfolios has reportedly **increased**, although the exact amount is not yet known.

This example comes from the Gender in Agriculture: From Policy to Practice project, which is funded by USAID and implemented by Lutheran World Relief.

III. Connecting science to the soil: female leaders in agricultural research



A leader of one women's group leads a demonstration of improved techniques for making local cereal products. © USAID / ERA / YAYE FATOU SECK

Many Feed the Future programs focus on building women's leadership at the community level, whether through community-based organizations, in small or medium enterprises, or through informal leadership roles in the community. Yet women are also underrepresented as leaders in national agricultural fora, from national associations to researchers at universities. Women like Nyamizi Bundala, supported by Feed the Future programming, are working to change that.

INCREASING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

Despite being half of the agricultural labor force, women represent only a quarter of the

agricultural researchers in Tanzania.¹⁴ Feed the Future has partnered with Sokoine University in Tanzania to change this trend. The university launched a mentoring program to expand opportunities for female agricultural scientists while uncovering and challenging biases of university stakeholders about the capabilities of women in agricultural research. Feed the Future investments in another program at the University of Ghana and Sokoine University have focused on connecting female graduate students with advanced research in poultry farming and on how to apply that information when working with poor, women farmers who are miles away from the university.

FROM THE RESEARCH LAB TO THE FARM

Meanwhile, a Feed the Future program in Senegal focused on bridging the gap among research institutions, agricultural education institutions and small-scale food processors. The program created connections between female researchers and leaders at Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar (UCAD) and women's group enterprises in rural Senegal. While these women's groups often received support from development projects and non-governmental organizations, they often felt shut out from the national system of education, training and research.

Once this new partnership began, the women's organizations learned from other women about the latest research in value-added agro-processing, while the research institutions and universities learned about the unique needs of women smallholder farmers and subsequently made their instruction more experiential and

better connected to community development needs. For example, the project helped foster a research and training partnership between the national Institute for Food Technology (ITA), which supports food fortification research, and a large women's group enterprise, Toubia Darou Salam, which focuses on fortified instant flour production.

There was a big challenge from the start, however: Some university and research institute leaders did not consider collaboration with women's farmers' groups as being part of their mission. Eventually, however, they began to see the relationship as mutually beneficial: Universities and research institutes can contribute to women's empowerment and economic development while simultaneously enriching their own educational and research agendas. They began to value the practical wisdom of the group leaders, who in turn gained confidence in their own expertise and voice about advanced post-harvest handling and processing techniques and technologies.

As a result of this partnership, 56 different products from the women's group enterprises were certified for commercialization. Through the scaling up process, Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar has trained over 3,000 women in these new techniques. In addition, the female trainers are now sought-after consultants, creating a niche market not just for their high-quality local food products but also for their knowledge and leadership competencies.

These examples come from the The Innovative Agricultural Research Initiative (iAGRI) project in Tanzania and the USAID/Education and Research in Agriculture (ERA) project (see <http://www.oired.vt.edu/Senegal/welcome-era-senegal/>), funded by USAID and implemented by Virginia Tech's Office of International Research, Education, and Development (OIREd).

“Through the mentoring program, I managed to get a PhD scholarship,” said Nyamizi. “My supervisor taught me publication skills. I managed to co-author a manuscript and submitted to the Journal of Food, Agriculture and Nutrition Development ... She also gave me an opportunity to attend a workshop held in Addis Ababa to present on issues related to nutrition.”

– NYAMIZI BUNDALA, LECTURER IN NUTRITION AT SOKOINE UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE IN TANZANIA. SHE WAS PROMOTED FROM ASSISTANT LECTURER AFTER ATTENDING A MENTORING PROGRAM SPONSORED BY FEED THE FUTURE.



PHOTO, AT RIGHT: © AKDN / ZAHUR RAMJI



EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES

Technology, Finance and Land

The WEAI emphasizes that control over income and access to and decision-making power about resources and assets—such as credit and land—are critical elements for increasing agricultural productivity and women’s empowerment. Although WEAI data are not yet available to show the extent to which Feed the Future has impacted these domains, the Feed the Future Evaluation Synthesis Report shows that there is still a lot to learn about what works.¹⁵

Nonetheless, some promising Feed the Future interventions are worth further exploration and testing for their impacts on gender parity in control over income and land, and access to credit. A Feed the Future program in Malawi found mobile technology to be a potential avenue for women to have greater autonomy over their money; a pay-for-performance program in Ghana created incentives for financial institutions to invest in female borrowers; and women in Senegal who joined a bio-reclamation activity claimed ownership over biodegraded land and made it fertile and profitable.

I. Does mobile technology foster financial autonomy for women?



© FHI360

“I used to keep money in a handbag but very often I could find that the money is not there. My husband would take the money regardless of where I hid it. With a mobile money account ... the problem is over. He does not even know the PIN for my account.”

– MELINA CHIZIMU, A FARMER IN MALAWI

Both men and women in rural, low-income communities generally lack a secure place to save their money. A growing body of literature suggests that women in particular would have greater control over income and expenditures if they had a safe space to secure and save their money. This could be a bank account, a physical lock box or a mobile account accessed through a cell phone.¹⁶

The Feed the Future Evaluation Synthesis did not find any programs that have rigorously tested and evaluated the gendered impacts of mobile money on women, control over income and household relations.¹⁷ However, a Feed the Future-supported program in Malawi that piloted expansion of mobile money accounts stumbled on one woman's story of how this secure place to save and spend her money gave her greater financial autonomy. While this pilot did not intend to test how mobile money impacted men and women differently, her story highlights the need for mobile money programs piloted in future Feed the Future-supported programs to explore and test the effects—both positive and negative, if any—of mobile money on women's control over income and expenditures.

MOBILE MONEY OFFERS A SECURE WAY FOR WOMEN TO CONTROL THEIR MONEY

In Malawi, where only 28 percent of women and 37 percent of men are banked,¹⁸ Feed the Future partners piloted a program to help 186 men and women start mobile money accounts. They delivered training on financial literacy and how to use mobile money accounts; they also subsidized the initial cost of the mobile handset to and delivered microloans to 48 of the participants (43 of whom were women) through their mobile money account.



© CNFA

Melina Chizimu is a 39-year-old woman who earns a living through farming and small-scale paid work. She said she used to hear about mobile money on the radio, but didn't have the confidence and understanding of how it worked to open her own account. After learning about and opening an account with help from the Feed the Future-supported pilot program, Melina saved MWK 3,600 (\$8.60) in her account. In the next month, she saved an additional MWK 5,000 (\$12). In addition to using the mobile money account to save money securely, she has been using it for many other things—as a wallet, for buying airtime, and for sending money.

She now has greater control over her own income and a way to keep her earnings safe and secure: “Now I plan to keep more money in my account the same way we keep money with Village Savings and Loan groups. I plan to accumulate savings to buy fertilizer to use in my garden.”

This example comes from the Feed the Future Malawi Mobile Money program, which is funded by USAID and implemented by FHI360.

II. Paying lenders to lend to women: expanding access to finance in Ghana

Feed the Future launched its agricultural financing program in Ghana with the understanding that reaching women-owned businesses would be a challenge. Women are often deemed less credit-worthy than men due to a lack of assets that can be used as collateral and because their work is usually concentrated in upstream segments of the value chain—as producers, primary processors, and small-scale trader—that are riskier, less profitable, and in need of smaller-sized loans.

CREATING INCENTIVES FOR THE FINANCIAL SECTOR TO WORK FOR WOMEN

First, the Ghana program created incentives for financial institutions and business advisory service providers to provide financing for all members of the value chain, including women. On realizing those incentives were not reaching

women as well as expected, the project mapped the value chain to better understand how women's businesses—which were concentrated in production, processing and informal trade—were connected to other, higher value agribusinesses (e.g., processors, traders, aggregators) that might be financed through the program.

The program also created incentives for financial institutions and business advisory service providers to provide financing for women. Not only did the project hire women-led business advisory services (BAS) providers who specifically targeted women and bundled them into larger-sized loans for financial institutions, but the project also used a pay-for-performance mechanism, where institutions and providers would get paid against their targets for lending to women.

GOING BEYOND TARGETS: LINKING WOMEN'S BUSINESSES TO FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND BUSINESS ADVISORY SERVICE PROVIDERS

To support financial institutions and business service providers in reaching their targets, the program helped connect them with female clients through “mini-summits” in rural areas where upstream micro, small and medium enterprises—often managed by women—are located. This activity enabled service providers and financial institutions to identify new potential borrowers and clients, many of whom are women, while also expanding the businesswomen's understanding of the benefits of using such service providers.

A BANKING STORY: AGGREGATING FINANCING REQUESTS THROUGH BUSINESS ADVISORY SERVICES

One of the most successful strategies to ensure more women could access loans and other financial services was the aggregation of women's financing applications to banks and microfinance institutions into one larger application by business service providers. This strategy eased collateral requirements and reduced the transaction costs for the banks evaluating them, increasing the likelihood of loan approval. This model was widely used in Northern Ghana by the northern Bonzali Rural Bank, a financial institution in FinGAP's network. Leveraging a performance-based grant from USAID worth \$33,000, the bank has so far released \$140,000 in agribusiness loans to mostly female-dominated FBOs. Over 740 women from 91 different women's groups have expanded their agribusinesses because of these individual and group loans.



© USAID / GHANA

The program also sought out business advisory service providers that were owned or led by women to encourage greater on-lending to other women. At the start of the program, Feed the Future was working with BAS providers that were entirely owned by men. After a few years, they had brought five women-led BAS providers into their network, which in turn led to more female agribusinesses being served.

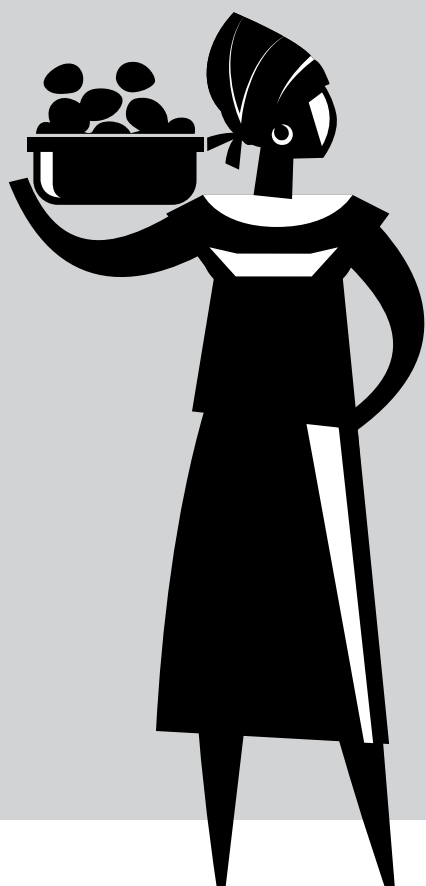
“Since joining the bank, I have been able to increase the number of bags I sell. I now operate from my own shop at Aboabo Market.”

– AYISHETU ADAMA, ENTREPRENEUR AND RECIPIENT OF CREDIT THROUGH FEED THE FUTURE-SUPPORTED PROGRAM

RESULTS: SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

The program results show progress as well as persistent challenges in financing women's enterprises. Feed the Future was able to reach significantly more female clients, albeit indirectly via on-lending from enterprises receiving direct project support to access finance and investment. However, few women business owners are direct project beneficiaries, and, given their location upstream in the value chain, the overall value of loans made to women is lower than those made to male-owned agribusiness enterprises.

Top Business Advisory Services and Financial Institution performers can be found on FinGAP's Agribusiness portal.



Cultivating Success: Data and Results

The financing model in Ghana produced impressive results ...

Through on-lent financing, **Feed the Future partners** reached



63,000

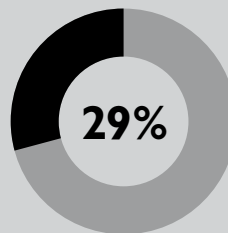
smallholder farmers and small traders,
40% of whom were women.



\$90.1 million USD

facilitated in financing and investment directly to small, medium and large enterprises.

While women-owned enterprises supported directly by the project made up 29% of the 861 clients, the value of the loans to female clients is only 2% of the total financing/investment facilitated.



of the 861 clients
were **women-owned enterprises.**

This example comes from the USAID Financing Ghanaian Agriculture Project (USAID-FinGAP), which is funded by USAID and is being implemented by CARANA Corporation, recently acquired by Palladium.

III. Climate-savvy landless women create opportunity out of barren terrain in Senegal

“My first reaction when I saw this site was that these people just wanted to make us tired. I thought that not even weeds could ever grow here. At first some of the other women were saying that we were working for nothing, but when we started harvesting okra and hibiscus, many came asking for parcels of land to do the same.”

– FATY SOW, MEMBER OF DAHARATOU WOMEN'S GROUP IN SENEGAL

Similar to women in other areas of Sub-Saharan Africa, Senegalese women are less likely to own and inherit land. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that Senegal is experiencing a loss in arable land as a result of years of intensive production and climate change.¹⁹ However, one Feed the Future program was able to use climate-smart agricultural practices to transform these challenges into an opportunity for landless women.

ACCESS TO LAND THROUGH BIO-RECLAMATION OF DEGRADED LAND

To increase women's access to land, Feed the Future partners worked with village leaders to secure new, long-term leases of at least 25 years or more to marginal, degraded land

for more than 300 women. The program helped another 800 women to access new plots of biodegraded land through their families or community groups. By applying conservation agriculture practices to reclaim the barren land, these farmers have been able to increase food production, maintain ownership over their newly restored land, and improve their resilience to climate-related shocks.

Overall, the program trained 15,000 farmers—75 percent of whom were women—on how to restore and manage biodegraded land using conservation agriculture techniques like water catchments, composting, and starting with hardy crops like okra and hibiscus. In several seasons, the reclaimed soil has become rich enough to produce even more nutritious and lucrative crops.

These conservation practices, combined with efforts to increase women's access to and control over land, have improved women's equitable access to resources while also increasing the availability of nutritious foods. Though it reached a relatively small number of women, the intervention indicates a potential merging of objectives: reclaiming biodegraded land and connecting women to opportunities for land ownership.



PHOTOS, AT LEFT: © HEIFER INTERNATIONAL; AT RIGHT: © OLIVIER ASSELIN



Cultivating Success: Data and Results

This climate-smart agriculture approach led to more women having control over their own land

75%

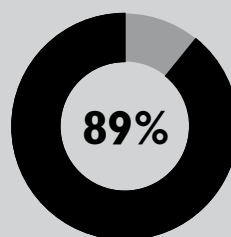
of the total 15,000 farmers trained on restoring and managing biodegraded land were **women**.



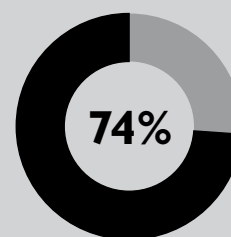
1,100 women gained access to nearly **240 hectares** of arable land through bio-reclamation of degraded land



Once they owned their own land, women could access credit; out of the **254 credit applications** submitted in 2013, a total of **225 were funded**.



of the 254 credit applications were funded



of the credit recipients were **women**.

This example comes from the Yaajeende Project, funded by USAID and implemented by NCBA/CLUSA.



What's Next for Women's Empowerment through Feed the Future

“Given the successes Feed the Future has seen over the last five years, there are things that we have to continue doing ... we know that we have to continue investing in women. Women still receive lower levels of agricultural assistance when compared to men, and yet we know they are more likely to reinvest their money in food and family—driving organic growth in agriculture and addressing challenges of undernutrition.”

– BETH DUNFORD, ASSISTANT TO THE USAID ADMINISTRATOR AND DEPUTY COORDINATOR FOR DEVELOPMENT FOR FEED THE FUTURE, SPEAKING AT “A FOOD-SECURE FUTURE” EVENT, MAY 20, 2016, WASHINGTON, DC.

STORIES OF SUCCESS AND PROGRESS

Guided by the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index, Feed the Future programs are using a range of interventions to create opportunities for women in agriculture. As a result, many rural and impoverished women have been able to take advantage of new income opportunities through production and non-production enterprises. They have been able to leverage the collective agency of producer organizations and civil society groups to access productive resources and inputs and advocate for government resources to build their asset base. Women have taken on leadership positions throughout the agriculture sector: as leaders of community groups, entrepreneurs in a growing input supply sector and researchers at academic institutions.

STORIES OF CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

While these stories show many successes, they also reveal gaps and persistent challenges that

need ongoing and deliberate attention. For example, experiences in Zambia and Ghana show that deliberate gender strategies can increase women's leadership in groups, entrepreneurial leadership and access to finance. However, parity in women and men's leadership in higher value enterprises may take many years of deliberate, systemic change to achieve.

In addition, there is still not enough known about how to increase women's control over income. While the story from Malawi reflects findings from the broader literature that mobile money can have this effect, more deliberate studies are needed to better understand the impacts of such interventions—both positive and negative—on tensions within the household. Workshops that call for both women and men to reflect and rethink gender norms and power relations appear to be common in Feed the Future programs, but they also appear to be limited to a small scale of only a few thousand farmers, bankers, government officials, and businessmen and -women. Meanwhile, data and research for tracking and evaluating the extent to which these efforts contribute to empowerment are lacking.

Use your mobile device to learn about a national-level women's network in the agriculture sector by watching a video about the **Women in Agribusiness Leadership Network** in Ethiopia, launched through Feed the Future.



PUTTING TOGETHER THE PIECES OF THE FEED THE FUTURE STORY

The stories in this report comprise a small part of Feed the Future's broader story about women's empowerment in agriculture. To help Feed the Future agencies and partners use the evidence from the WEAI to create a holistic narrative about what they are doing to advance women's empowerment, USAID launched the Feed the Future Gender Integration Framework (GIF) in 2014. The GIF enables Missions and partners to organize their women's empowerment interventions and fill in the missing pieces.

They can use the GIF by applying data and information from their programs, the WEAI, and other sources to design, implement and track interventions that advance women's empowerment in agriculture. The GIF provides a structure for organizing information from various monitoring and evaluation and learning efforts, such as Feed the Future's monitoring

system, evaluations, gender analyses and national surveys. Across a country's Feed the Future efforts, the GIF facilitates a conversation about what aspects of women's empowerment in agriculture are most critical and relevant, how existing activities are addressing these priorities, and how to adjust programming and measure progress going forward to create a cohesive Feed the Future approach for the country to meaningfully and measurably advance priority aspects of women's empowerment. The release of the next round of WEAI data, expected in late 2016 and throughout 2017, will be an opportune time to apply the GIF to ensure all Feed the Future programs are collectively addressing the barriers identified in the WEAI.

Women's empowerment in agriculture will continue to be critical to global food security for years to come. By pioneering new tools and approaches to analyze, measure and track women's empowerment in agriculture, Feed the Future is helping build a food-secure future around the globe.



A COUNTRY-WIDE APPROACH TO WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN AGRICULTURE: USAID IN BANGLADESH

USAID's Mission in Bangladesh exemplifies a country-wide approach to addressing the gender gaps and empowerment barriers revealed in the WEAI. When the Mission received the results from the baseline WEAI survey, they were surprised at how wide the empowerment gaps were between men and women.²⁰ Only about 25 percent of women in Bangladesh had achieved adequate levels of empowerment.²¹ The findings were a "wake up call and an incentive for the team to focus on women's empowerment in agriculture," said Mark Tegenfeldt, Deputy Director and Feed the Future Team Lead, USAID Bangladesh.



The Bangladesh Mission used a GIF process to analyze the results of the WEAI together with other data sources and research.²² They identified which of their programs were addressing the empowerment barriers revealed in the WEAI and where programming gaps existed. Some of the modifications they made to their programs included:

- encouraging women's participation in farmers' groups that include men in addition to targeting women-only farmers' groups;
- providing start-up grants for women-owned retailers of agricultural inputs and certifying women input retailers;
- building extension agents' capacity to engage with women producers and on topics relevant to them; and
- linking women-only producer groups with extension agents whose capacities are being built (as described above).

In addition, they introduced a new Feed the Future project, the Women's Empowerment Activity, to work in collaboration with the other programs to address these barriers. While still in its nascent stages, the Feed the Future Bangladesh Women's Empowerment Activity is based on market-driven, community-led interventions that specifically address the constraints to empowerment identified in the WEAI. Grounded in an enabling environment that engages men, families and communities, the Women's Empowerment Activity overlays Feed the Future's entire portfolio.

The Women's Empowerment Activity is building the skills, resources and social capital of women farmers and entrepreneurs by developing and supporting the organizational development and sustainability of women's groups and connecting them to microfinance institutions, input suppliers, local markets and service providers. The project also facilitates entrepreneurial literacy and agricultural technical training for both women and men. Activities promoting acceptance of women's empowerment target men's training groups and the broader community, and Local Advisory Committees comprising local male and female leaders support women's groups and facilitate community mobilization activities. In addition, the project connects women to other Feed the Future programs that offer additional opportunities and that match their skills and interests. For example, they are connecting participants to another Feed the Future program that trains and provides matching grants to women to become input retailers. Finally, the Women's Empowerment Activity serves as a resource for other Feed the Future programs in Bangladesh. It will be coordinating a Feed the Future Gender Working Group, composed of representatives from all Feed the Future programs in Bangladesh, to ensure coordination of their women's empowerment approaches for maximum impact.

The Bangladesh Mission continues to use the GIF in its program design.

ENDNOTES

- 1 This statement is based on numbers in the 2015 progress report.
- 2 This statement is based on numbers in the 2015 progress report.
- 3 Synthesis of Evaluations Related to the Feed the Future Learning Agenda. USAID. March 2016. <https://agrilinks.org/library/synthesis-evaluations-related-feed-future-learning-agenda>.
- 4 See the Call for Cases here: <https://agrilinks.org/blog/call-cases-feed-future-programs-learning-gender-integration-and-women%E2%80%99s-empowerment>.
- 5 Not all 19 Feed the Future focus countries had baseline data ready in time to include in the report. An abbreviated WEAI is being used to collect data in 2015–2016, but data won't be available until 2016–2017. The full WEAs will be collected again in 2017. This means that the interim collection in 2015–16 only allows for domain- or indicator-level comparison, and not WEAI (index)-level comparison over time, due to the abbreviated version that is being used at interim.
- 6 Read more about these findings in the report, Measuring Progress Toward Women's Empowerment: Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index: Baseline Report by Malapit, Hazel Jean; Sproule Kathryn; Kovarik, Chiara; Meinzen-Dick, Ruth; Quisumbing, Agnes; Ramzan, Farzana; Hogue, Emily; Alkire, Sabina. USAID, IFPRI, OPHI. 2014. https://www.feedthefuture.gov/sites/default/files/resource/files/ftf_progress_weai_baselinereport_may2014.pdf.
- 7 For a list of Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Resources: <https://feedthefuture.gov/lp/womens-empowerment-agriculture-index>.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Nicholas J. Sitko, Antony Chapoto, Steven Kabwe, Solomon Tembo, Munguzwe Hichaambwa, Rebecca Lubinda, Harrison Chiwawa, Mebelo Mataa, Simon Heck, and Dorothy Nthani. Technical Compendium: Descriptive Agricultural Statistics and Analysis for Zambia in Support of the USAID Mission's Feed the Future Strategic Review. Food Security Research Project Working Paper No. 52. Lusaka, Zambia. April 2011. <http://fsg.afre.msu.edu/zambia/wp52.pdf>.
- 10 Ibid., p. 49.
- 11 Final Evaluation for the Integrated Agriculture for Women's Empowerment project, Samaritan's Purse, 2016. http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00JZH.pdf.
- 12 "Field to Families: Women Transforming Agriculture Farmer Field School Training Report," Canadian Physicians for Aid and Relief, September 2014, pp. 5, 12–14.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Agriculture Research and Development Indicators Factsheet, Agriculture Science and Technology Indicators, led by the International Food Policy Research Institute. Accessed May 31, 2016.
- 15 The Feed the Future Evaluation Synthesis found no evaluations that reported data for decision making over and access to credit. There were only two references to decision making over income, and data for those were also limited. See pp. 53 and 54 of the report.
- 16 The Intervention Guide for the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (Michelle Stern, Lindsey Jones-Renaud, Marya Hillesland, 2016, p. 56) discusses the literature about links between having a secure place to save money—including mobile technology—and control over income. See also the Roadmap for Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment, by Mayra Buvinic, Rebecca Furst-Nichols and Emily Courey Pryor, p. 31. http://www.womeneconroadmap.org/sites/default/files/WEE_Roadmap_Report_Final.pdf.
- 17 The Evaluation Synthesis reviewed mobile money initiatives, but did not mention any gendered impacts. Outside of Feed the Future, there is a growing amount of research and literature on the gendered reach, usability, and impacts of mobile money. For example, Financial Inclusion Insights, by InterMedia (www.finclusion.org); "Promoting Women's Financial Inclusion: A Toolkit" from GIZ and DFID (2013); and the Grameen Foundation (see: <http://www.grameenfoundation.org/resource/use-mobile-financial-services-among-poor-women>).
- 18 FinScope Consumer Survey Malawi. FinMark Trust. 2014. Accessed July 15, 2016. http://finmark.org.za/dedi517.jnb2.host-h.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Broch_Consumer_Malawi_2014-1.pdf.
- 19 "Senegal: Expanding access to environmental finance—Reversing the decline in forest ecosystem service," Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund website, accessed May 31, 2017. <http://www.mdgfund.org/program/expandingaccessenvironmentalfinancereversingdeclineforestecosystems-services>.
- 20 Interview with Mark Tegenfeldt, Feed the Future Team Lead, USAID/Bangladesh <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cMb3l6jwIP4&feature=youtu.be>.
- 21 Measuring Progress Toward Women's Empowerment: Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index Baseline Report, 2014. (https://www.feedthefuture.gov/sites/default/files/resource/files/ftf_progress_weai_baselinereport_may2014.pdf).
- 22 Learn about the process the mission took in applying the Gender Integration Framework in this webinar: <https://agrilinks.org/events/increasing-feed-future-impacts-through-targeted-gender-integration>.



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