

A meta-analysis of social, economic, and institutional bottlenecks, barriers, and opportunities to more inclusive small and medium agribusiness in the ESA region: A Synthesis Report



INITIATIVE ON
Diversification in East
and Southern Africa

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December 2023



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Acronyms

| | |
|----------|---|
| ATI | Agricultural Transformation Institute |
| CADS | Cluster Agricultural Development Services |
| CIMMYT | International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center |
| COMESA | Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa |
| CTDO | Community Technology Development Organization |
| FGDs | Focus Group Discussions |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GESI | Gender Equality and Social Inclusion |
| GSEA | Gender and Social Exclusion Analysis |
| GTA | Gender Transformative Approach |
| ICARDA | International Center for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas |
| IFPRI | International Food Policy Research Institute |
| ILRI | International Livestock Research Institute |
| IITA | International Institute of Tropical Agriculture |
| NGOs | Non-Governmental Organizations |
| PLWDs | People Living with Disabilities |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |
| UU | Ukama Ustawi |
| WorldVeg | World Vegetable Center |
| WP | Work Package |

Executive Summary

This report summarizes the meta-analysis findings on the social, economic, and institutional bottlenecks, barriers, and opportunities to more inclusive small and medium agribusiness in the ESA region. It serves as a link between the visible integration of GESI focus in WP1 and its interventions. The GESI framework¹ brings about inclusive and scalable agribusiness innovations through targeted GESI support to UU ESA work packages 1-6. This framework will ensure that planned interventions under UU are designed and implemented to empower more women and youth as farmers, agribusiness owners, and actors with voice and visibility across agribusiness value chains (Nortje et al. 2023). The CGIAR Initiative on Diversification in East and Southern Africa (Ukama Ustawi- meaning “wellbeing”) is focused on diversification for resilient agribusiness ecosystems in Eastern and Southern Africa, also known as Ukama Ustawi (UU).

Work package 5 of UU focuses on empowering and engaging marginalized social groups in agribusiness through capacity strengthening and influencing an enabling policy and institutional context. Focal countries in 2022 include Ethiopia, Kenya, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. In each country, Work Package 5 engaged in dialogues with partners and key stakeholders as part of a meta-analysis of social, economic, and institutional bottlenecks, barriers, and opportunities for more inclusive agribusiness. The aim is to ensure that planned interventions under UU are designed and implemented to empower more women and youth as farmers, agribusiness owners, and actors with voice and visibility across agribusiness value chains.

The problem context

The global market over the years has witnessed trade liberalization, technological advancement, and other progress that continue to leave its mark in the agricultural and food systems (FAO, 2016). While some of these shifts have brought about new markets and linked farmers to buyers but have also introduced challenges for agricultural actors in rural communities. These challenges are often unique for women who traditionally experience difficulties in accessing productive resources and benefit less compared to men within the agrifood value chains (Nortje et al. 2023). Therefore, the quest to reduce marginalization and disadvantages faced by targeted groups within value chain development has resulted in mainstreaming gender and social equality as a sustainable strategy for pro-poor development.

Research methods

We used a participatory research approach conducted through workshops and dialogues (virtual and in person) that brought stakeholders from diverse sectors to discuss very specific topics on agribusiness. The focus was for them to (a) identify key stakeholders in agribusiness; (b) discuss bottlenecks and opportunities to more inclusive agribusiness; and (c) discuss the next steps for work package 5 activities in the different countries of work (Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe). The analysis included key challenges for women and men at nested levels as well as practical steps to GESI integration in agribusiness and agrifood value chains. There were, however, slight variations in the questions and methodological approach used for the different dialogues and workshops.

Synthesis of findings

The findings reveal that socio-economic and institutional bottlenecks have significantly affected the implementation of well-meaning gender strategies and programs within countries in ESA. Some traditional norms and practices inhibit the full participation of women at the household level and reduce control and ownership of productive assets by women and youth. It is good when traditional leaders such as head persons and chiefs actively participate in changing harmful cultural norms and practices as it continues to reduce their benefits in the most profitable value chains. Moreso, women tend to be concentrated in particular segments of the value chain. For instance, in the fish value chain, they are concentrated in retail, in production for tea, and often produced for household consumption. Practical

¹ The GESI framework was designed for WPs to integrate GESI within their activities <https://hdl.handle.net/10568/130852>

GESI steps for action highlight the need to have affirmative actions and policies led by the government across the different countries.

Introduction

Ukama Ustawi: Diversification for Resilient Agribusiness Ecosystems in East and Southern Africa. UU Initiative supports climate-resilient agriculture and livelihoods in 12 countries in East and Southern Africa by helping millions of smallholders intensify, diversify, and reduce risks in maize-based farming through improved extension services, small and medium enterprise development, supporting governance frameworks and increased investment with a gender and social inclusion lens. Targeted to address seven key SDG goals, the focus of this initiative is improving public and private extension and delivery channels enabled by the agribusiness ecosystem, enterprise development, and private investment. The region's agribusiness ecosystem has been identified as a critical engine for agricultural and economic development, climate change adaptation, and gender and youth empowerment with multiple benefits cutting across all 5 CGIAR Impact Areas:

1. Nutrition, Health, and Food Security;
2. Poverty Reduction, Livelihoods, and Jobs;
3. Environmental Health and Biodiversity;
4. Gender Equality, Youth, and Social Inclusion and;
5. Climate Adaptation and Mitigation;

This report focuses on Work Package 5 objective of empowering and engaging marginalized social groups in agribusiness through a meta-analysis of social, economic, and institutional bottlenecks, barriers, and opportunities for more inclusive agribusiness. This information remains a key input to capacity strengthening and influencing an enabling policy and institutional context in Ethiopia, Kenya, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Agriculture and Food Security - Providing context for agribusiness in East and Southern Africa

East and Southern Africa is a climate-crisis hotspot, putting agricultural production worth more than 45 billion United States dollars (USD) at risk from higher temperatures, shorter growing seasons, more extreme and frequent droughts and floods, and increased water scarcity². Maize production is particularly vulnerable. Maize is projected to face not only 15% climate-related declines in yield without adaptation but also challenges from diminished cropland suitability and poor agronomic inputs and management, degraded environmental bases with declining soil fertility, and degraded water systems (Jacobs-Mata and Girvetz, 2021). These vulnerabilities are already apparent. Given that maize-mixed systems account for more than three-quarters (75%) of cropland in many places, it is vital to build climate resilience and de-risk through diversification. Production is low due to, among others, poor-quality seeds, suboptimal input use, poor agronomic management, and pest and disease outbreaks (Mulungu and Ng'ombe, 2020).

In Ethiopia alone, agriculture contributes to 36% of the GDP and employs more than two-thirds of the population. Ethiopian women are important stakeholders in the agribusiness value chain constituting more than 60% of the agricultural labor force (Anbacha et al. 2023). Despite their contribution, women face unique challenges such as poor access to resources and farm inputs, credit, technologies, markets, and poor decision-making power (Monterroso et al. 2022). Moreover, the high domestic and care responsibilities of women add to their workload and limit the time available for agribusiness. These barriers hamper women's capacity for productive agriculture, which in turn impedes the country's agriculture potential. There is a gender gap in the productivity of land between female- and male-managed farms of the same size is 24 percent. Women earn 18.4% less than men in agriculture. Despite the high potential of agriculture in absorbing rural youth, those engaged in the sector experience challenges similar to those experienced by women: limited access to land, farm inputs, technologies, and lack of information and credit (Anbacha et al. 2023).

² [CGIAR Initiative on Diversification in East and Southern Africa - CIMMYT](#)

In the Republic of Zambia like in most East and Southern African countries, there exists a deep-rooted concept of an unequal gender relationship in which men are considered to be superior to women. This biased view regarding gender equality originates from not only traditional cultural and social norms but also from the dual structure of statutory law and customary law in Zambia (IITA, 2022). Rights, which are supposed to be protected under statutory law, are not necessarily observed and women endure unfair treatment in terms of child marriage, unequal distribution of property, control and ownership of productive resources and benefits derived from the work of household members, etc. Women, youth, and other vulnerable groups such as people living with disabilities who engage in agrifood systems experience barriers unique to them. The barriers include low access to agricultural system inputs; low uptake of farm best practices and technologies; low market integration; limited access to finance; and Unequal household and community power balance. Additionally, people living with disabilities experience the barrier of Technologies often not being adapted to their needs (IITA, 2022).

The agribusiness ecosystem is a critical engine for agricultural and economic development for climate change adaptation and for achieving strategic gender gains and youth engagement in agriculture. Developments that transform the ESA agri-food system should infuse sustainable intensification in maize-mixed systems, and crop diversification to de-risk other systems (Jacobs-Mata and Girvetz, 2021). The developments should also empower more women and young farmers, agribusiness owners, and value-chain actors; promote healthier diets; and protect the natural environment from further degradation. Agribusiness in Kenya has been growing tremendously as more people continue to realize its benefits. It is mainly driven by the abundant natural resources readily available in Kenya. Agribusiness has created employment opportunities for women and youth who are locked outside formal employment (Adam et al. 2022). This leads to the question: are agribusiness opportunities equitably distributed in terms of gender and social inclusion? Kenya's agribusiness ecosystem is replete with challenges and opportunities regarding gender equality and social inclusion (GESI).

Developments that transform the ESA agri-food system should infuse sustainable intensification in maize-mixed systems, and crop diversification to de-risk other systems. The developments should also empower more women and young farmers, agribusiness owners, and value-chain actors; promote healthier diets; and protect the natural environment from further degradation. To achieve the core goals of sustainable development in low and middle-income countries, agricultural policy, research, and interventions must be more inclusive so that the needs and priorities of women and youth are more intentionally addressed. This underscores the objectives of the different stakeholder workshops conducted by the Ukama Ustawi WP5 between July 2022 and January 2023.

Relevant stakeholder dialogues conducted for meta-analysis of social, economic, and institutional bottlenecks, barriers, and opportunities to more inclusive small and medium agribusiness in the ESA region

- July 2022: A stakeholder workshop on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) in agribusiness ecosystems for multidimensional mapping of opportunities and challenges was convened in July 2022, at the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya by WorldFish³. The goal was to better understand GESI opportunities and challenges, and how to tap and address them. The workshop was convened under the auspices of the One CGIAR partnership strategy of integrated research that aims to achieve a food-secure future through the Ukama Ustawi Initiative. The workshop objectives were: (i) to identify the challenges or barriers that inhibit the inclusion of women, youth, and people living with disabilities (PLWDs) from participating in the agribusiness ecosystem and benefitting from available opportunities; (ii) to understand how social networks and digital platforms can catalyze GESI; and (iii) to inform the development of a pan-ESA digital network.

³ WorldFish is a research center under One CGIAR organization partnering with WP5 in the Ukama Ustawi Initiative to implement work on gender and social inclusion.

- September 2022: A stakeholder workshop on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) in agribusiness ecosystems on multidimensional mapping of opportunities and challenges under the CGIAR Initiative on Diversification in East and Southern Africa held in September 2022 in Lusaka, Zambia by IITA⁴. The objectives of the workshop included: i) conceptualizing gender equality and social inclusion mapping of multidimensional opportunities and challenges in agribusiness ecosystems in Zambia; ii) identifying successful agribusiness projects implemented in Zambia; iii) creating an agribusiness network and developing collaborative tactics to overcome barriers based on gender that prevent women, young people, and people with disabilities from actively participating in Zambia's agribusiness ecosystem.
- November 2022: A stakeholder dialogue workshop on gender and social inclusion held in Harare, Zimbabwe in November 2022 by IFPRI⁵ to i) examine social, economic, and institutional bottlenecks, barriers, and opportunities for more inclusive agribusiness and ii) finalize actionable gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) framework.
- November 2022 - January 2023: Voice amplification dialogue workshops and baseline studies in Kenya and Zambia by Solidaridad to learn about inclusive value chain opportunities across the cotton and fruits and vegetables sectors, constraints and experiences related to programming of interventions aimed at advocacy, voice amplification and acceleration of farmer voices, particularly women and youth. This includes promoting gender and social inclusion, policy, advocacy, and innovations as well as addressing identified issues across the supported sectors.
- January 2023: A stakeholder consultation workshop by IWMI and partners under the CGIAR Initiatives on Diversification in East and Southern Africa (Ukama Ustawi) in January 2023 at the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The workshop aimed to investigate existing opportunities and recommend possible integrated solutions for more equitable and inclusive value chain development. The specific objectives of the workshop were as follows: i) Identifying major challenges in agricultural value chains concerning gender equality and social inclusion ii) Identifying socio-technical innovation bundles that can build resilience and empower farmers across the vegetable value chain iii) Mapping possible opportunities for women and youth participation in agricultural value chains and iv) Networking with key public, private and civil society stakeholders, and providing an opportunity for experience sharing by women and youth agri-entrepreneurs.

Approaches and Methodology

A suit of methodological approaches was used for data collection, although all methods were qualitative through dialogues and workshops with diverse stakeholders. In Zimbabwe, the stakeholder dialogue workshop was conducted to establish a gender equality and social inclusion agribusiness network in the region; strengthen the capacity of marginalized women and youth as successful entrepreneurs; and inform policies and strategies for more inclusive agribusiness (Davis et al. 2023). In collaboration with the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) under WP1, a total of 22 stakeholders (including two virtual) from businesses, networks, governments, academia, and research came together for a half-day dialogue. In Kenya, two separate workshops were organized by IWMI and WorldFish respectively to understand GESI opportunities and challenges in agribusiness, and how to tap and address them (Gatonye and Adam, 2022). The workshop organized by WorldFish took the form of gender-disaggregated focus group discussions (FGDs) with 49 participants (29 women and 20 men). Participants were drawn from business associations, agribusiness value chains, research institutions and universities, relevant government ministries, bureaus of standards, youth groups, banks, media houses, and funding organizations. Selection of the

⁴ IITA is a research center under One CGIAR organization focusing on partnering with WP5 in the Ukama Ustawi Initiative to implement work on gender and social inclusion

⁵ IFPRI is a research center under One CGIAR organization partnering with WP5 in the Ukama Ustawi Initiative to implement work on gender and social inclusion

participants was particularly focused on achieving a gender balance; disciplinary diversity and inclusion of key actors in agribusiness.

The workshop in Ethiopia focused on policy interventions needed to address women's and youth's participation within the vegetable value chains. Participants who attended the workshop were women and youth farmers, government employees (Ministry of Agriculture, Addis Ababa City Administration, Ethiopian agricultural research centre, Agricultural Transformation Institute (ATI), Nifas Silk Lafto urban agriculture office, Wolmera, Woliso and Ejere woredas of agriculture offices), NGO (SNV), donor (global affairs Canada), World Vegetable Center (WorldVeg) and CGIAR centers (International Water Management Institute (IWMI), International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), Alliance Bioversity-CIAT (ABC), International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) and International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI). Most of the participants work at the interface of agricultural value chain development and gender equality and social inclusion. For Zambia, the workshop followed a similar approach to that of Kenya bringing together 31 participants (14 women, 17 men) comprising government agencies, NGOs, traditional leaders, female and youth farmer groups, and individual farmers. The discussions built on their shared experiences on GESI in agribusiness for sustainable livelihood as explored in the sex-disaggregated focus groups (Akamandisa et al. 2023). Dialogue workshops had also been led by WP5 external partners, Solidaridad in Kenya and Zambia for their collaborative work Reclaim Sustainability! Program in Eastern (Uganda and Kenya) and Southern (Zambia) Africa. Reports from Solidaridad were reviewed for the meta-analysis on GESI challenges and opportunities for women and youth in agribusiness. While their study targeted clients-farmers, miners, and workers of coffee, tea, food products, and gold value chains, our analysis was limited to only food products. The research design followed a gender and intersectional lens integrating different tools across three levels (micro, meso, and macro). Table 1 summarizes the methodological approaches and objectives for the studies and workshops described in this report in addition to the literature reviewed.

Objectives and methodological approaches used for workshops and dialogues

| Dialogues/workshops | Objectives | Methodology and approaches used |
|---|---|--|
| Solidaridad: Reclaim Sustainability! (RS!) Program - Eastern (Uganda & Kenya) and Southern Africa | <p>To examine inequalities resulting from multiple identities of RS! target clients-farmers, miners, and workers of coffee, tea, food products, and gold value chains.</p> <p>Identify opportunities, challenges, and gender-specific indicators, outcomes, and potential activities that can be adopted to inform gender and social inclusion activities across the commodity areas and impact pathways.</p> <p>Generate information on gender relations, gender issues, constraints, opportunities, and inequalities in the sectors at the micro, meso, and macro level</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Used an intersectional and gender lens applied through the ABC strategy - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Analyse and address barriers to participation ● Balance power relations ● Create togetherness based on shared interests and values - Used the Harvard and Moser gender analysis frameworks, the gender analysis matrix, and tools. <p>The framework combined the USAID Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) and Gender and Social Exclusion Analysis (GSEA) models.</p> |
| IITA - Workshop Report on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) in Agribusiness Ecosystems in Zambia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To conceptualize GESI in Agribusiness Ecosystems. - Identify and collect data on successful agribusiness projects in Zambia. - Address gender-based constraints for women, youth, and persons with disabilities active participation in the agribusiness | <p>Used a workshop approach with stakeholders comprising government agencies, NGOs, traditional leaders, female and youth farmer groups, and individual farmers were brought together to discuss</p> |

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| | ecosystem in Zambia; and establish a pan ESA GESI agribusiness network | and share experiences on various aspects of GESI in Agribusiness for sustainable livelihoods |
| WorldFish – Workshop Report on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in Agribusiness Ecosystems for Multidimensional Mapping of Opportunities and Challenges - Kenya | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To identify the challenges or barriers that inhibit the inclusion of women, youth, and people living with disabilities (PLWDs) from participating in the agribusiness ecosystem and from benefitting from available opportunities. - To understand how social networks and digital platforms can catalyze GESI. | Followed a gender-disaggregated (men-only/women-only) focus group discussions (FGDs) workshop approach with diverse stakeholders. |
| IFPRI– Workshop Report on Inclusive Agribusiness - Zimbabwe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To identify key stakeholders in agribusiness - To discuss bottlenecks and opportunities for more inclusive agribusiness. | Followed a participatory approach with mixed groups of stakeholders (businesses, networks, governments, academia, and research) responding to specific questions. |
| IWMI – Workshop Report on Inclusive policy interventions for women and youth in the vegetable value chains | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identifying major challenges in agricultural value chains for gender equality and social inclusion - Identify socio-technical innovation bundles that can build resilience and empower farmers across the vegetable value chain - Mapping possible opportunities for women and youth participation in agricultural value chains and - Networking with key public, private, and civil society stakeholders, and providing an opportunity for experience sharing by women and youth agri-entrepreneurs. | Followed a participatory approach with mixed groups of stakeholders (businesses, networks, governments, academia, and research) responding to specific questions. |

Key drivers and enablers for GESI integration - what is emerging within UU Agribusiness and Partners' activities in the ESA region

Our data provides insight into the bottlenecks and enablers encountered in each of the agri-business value chain phases experienced by women, youth, men, and other social categories. The different dialogues and workshops allowed the WP to:

- Pinpoint where people can self-identify bottlenecks (across the value chain; see Fig 1) – for agency building, for self-identifying training needs etc
- Provides insight in terms of which phases are currently dominated by activity, and which are not – links to identifying bottlenecks and solutions to moving through value chain phases
- Provides insight into where certain types of bottlenecks are clustering thus preventing movement through the value chain
- Helps to identify where acceleration activities will find early traction, and where more work will be required to accelerate particular solutions
- Helps us to see what kind of stakeholders and partnerships could help with specific bottlenecks and provide solutions within the value chains.

The specific bottlenecks affecting women and youths within the agricultural value chain can be grouped as internal and external. These challenges and opportunities emerging from across the UU and partners' activities are presented in Table 2. The contention is that needs and bottlenecks are not necessarily the same for women and youth, even though they may be considered both as 'vulnerable' groups. Even within these groupings, there is limited homogeneity as unmarried and married women may face different challenges.

Table 2: Barriers and opportunities for women and youth in agribusiness

| Workshops/Dialogues Reports | Emerging key challenges, barriers in agribusiness for women, youths, and other marginalized groups | Opportunities for women and youth in agribusiness |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Solidaridad: Reclaim Sustainability! Program - Eastern (Uganda & Kenya) and Southern Africa</p> | <p>Food products</p> <p>Micro Level (Individual/household)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited access and control of land affects women and youth’s establishment of horticultural nurseries and large crop acreage. - Disparities in terms of access to farm equipment and capital (lack of collateral too) limit the participation of women, youth, and people living with disabilities (PWDs) - Limited knowledge and skills of production, supply, and market access for produce results in low income. - The challenge for women to balance domestic work and activities within the value chains constrains them from exploring opportunities in training and capacity building for growth in the sector. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote peer-to-peer mobilization of women and youth participation in the value chain. - Enhance awareness-training programs as well as access to information that specifically looks at gender roles/responsibilities within the value chains. To better understand the dynamics and constraints to decision-making at the household and communal level. |
| | <p>Meso level: (community/Informal/formal CBO organizations)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Farmer groups and associations are often dominated by men with most occupying leadership positions and making decisions that favor them. - Inability to afford membership fees by women, youth, and PWDs often restricts them from joining farming and other associations. - The lack of proper bylaws and guidelines established by associations/cooperatives fails to address issues on sexual harassment, gender, and social inclusion. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage the formation of women and youth groups to provide windows of opportunities related to credit, farming inputs, and capacity development. - Support women and youth groups to take up leadership positions across the value chains through mentorship training programs. - Support inclusive and gender-responsive budgeting at all levels. |
| | <p>Macro Level (Formal public-policy institutions and structures)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existing policies on gender mainstreaming are implemented on a limited scale especially policy frameworks for gender mainstreaming in food products. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lobby through advocacy programs for private and public institutions to share information on gender inclusion. To also implement and enforce policies that are gender-sensitive within the value chains. |

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| IITA - Workshop Report on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) in Agribusiness Ecosystems in Zambia | Youths group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bad road networks and high cost of transportation discourage youth from engaging in agribusiness. - Poor access to the mobile phone network is a challenge for young people who want to run online businesses for agricultural products and services. - High cost of inputs and poor storage facilities for perishables. - Lack of knowledge and skills/equipment/financial services affect farmers to create value addition of products. - Climate change impact on agriculture discourages young farmers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Skills and knowledge of good planning to run agribusinesses. - Technical knowledge and networking - Access to machinery and equipment for value addition. |
| | Women: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of financial support and collateral for securing loans affects agribusiness. - Male dominance in leadership positions within farming associations. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building on already existing establishments for support - Build on large labour force (80%) being women in farming. - Strengthening networking and getting recognition from governments, donors, and royal establishments. Enhance women's participation as most projects require at least 40% of women's participation. |
| | Men: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Location/position of projects are hard to reach - Access to market and product information on what/where to produce is limited. - Lack of technical support to build skills as agripreneurs. - Poor connectivity to better markets of inputs and products - Poor coordination. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial support available, likewise the knowledge about agribusiness |
| WorldFish – Workshop Report on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in Agribusiness Ecosystems for Multidimensional | Women: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overburdened by domestic chores and agricultural labor which is often undervalued or not paid. - Limited capacity to act (lack of agency) and low education leaves women at low-paying activities and crops such as beans. Compared to men in high-value crops like coffee and tea. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adequate representation of women in policy formulations to promote GESI - Sensitization of women on their self-worth and the importance of their voice to build their confidence by raising their awareness of their value |

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| Mapping of Opportunities and Challenges - Kenya | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inability for women to make decisions on income from the sale of products. - Inability to control high-nutrient produce needed for household consumption. | |
| | Youth: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difficulty in getting young people to see the opportunities that lie in agriculture. - Low level of education and engaging in low-wage labor-intensive work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Availability of training/mentorship opportunities for youth (in and out of college) to improve their skills (in agriculture) and other areas. - Build on agricultural value chains that provide diversification opportunities for the youth. - Creation of awareness of gender relations and associated inequalities. - Financial inclusion of women and youth, especially those in groups that enable collective bargaining. |
| | Men: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sociocultural factors and lack of will to implement policies. - Limited ownership of land and other productive resources for women and youth widens the GESI gap. - Lack of appropriate role models and negative attitudes by youths about agriculture makes it hard for them to engage in the sector. - Technologies are generally not gender-responsive. | |
| IFPRI– Workshop Report on Inclusive Agribusiness - Zimbabwe | Youth: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Issues of entitlement where young people are not allowed to open accounts before 18 years. - The mentality that young people are mobile and hard to plan with them or lack the necessary skills limits their survival in the agri-business sector. - People living with a disability still face stigmatization. Women: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inability for women to inherit land and other basic resources due to cultural norms. - Lack of collateral to access credit impedes women’s growth in agribusiness. - Time to manage triple roles, coupled with the lack of technology that supports women in managing their time. | |
| IWMI- Workshop Report on challenges and opportunities for women | Women and youth: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of improved seed and organic fertilizers - Market problem & poor linkage, | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government-focused existing projects on supporting women and youth in agriculture, the ability to provide |

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| <p>and youth within the agricultural/ vegetable/ value chain⁶</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pest & diseases - Women's work burden - Knowledge & skill gap in production of seed preparation, nursery management - Limited autonomy: women who manage small businesses lose control to men when the business grows and becomes profitable cultural norms- patriarchy - negative stereotypes that cause power and workload imbalance. - Lack of interest in agriculture - Migration - Water shortage impacting vegetable cultivation - Resource access and information gap(access to land, credit/finance, information) - Lack of attention by researchers on local vegetable varieties - Gender norms and unequal gender relations (limits women's participation in decision-making) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> extension services, and the current favorable policies toward agriculture - Organised self-help groups for capacity building - Interest of donors in gender and social inclusion specifically supporting youth in agriculture - NGOs are collaborating with partners in implementing work on agriculture and showing interest in working with women and youth. - Leverage government initiatives to empower women and youth, providing solar pumps and training on compost preparation. - Political willingness e.g. Land certification program to support women and households own land. - Suitable Agro-ecology to grow vegetables as well as the demand for vegetables - Diversification and intensification – explore different and more profitable crops using similar sizes of land, for instance |
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⁶ For the workshop in Ethiopia, challenges and opportunities for women and youth were discussed by 4 groups. Each of these groups comprised of Researchers, farmers, NGOs/Donors, and government departments February 24 | A meta-analysis of social, economic and institutional bottlenecks, barriers and opportunities to more inclusive small and medium agribusiness in ESA region

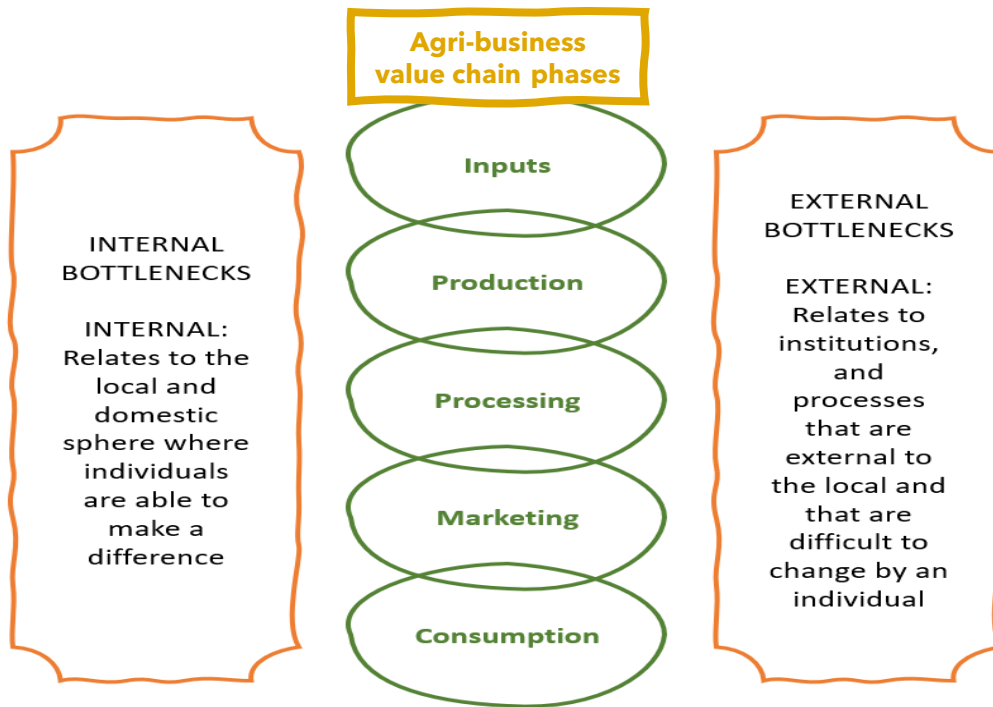


Fig1: Internal and external bottlenecks within the agricultural value chains

Practical steps for GESI integration in agribusiness

The different workshops and dialogues that were conducted provided insights into the challenges experienced within UU countries in East and Southern Africa. This report further acknowledges that the bottlenecks are not necessarily separate from one another and that they feed into one another and are integrated on many levels. However, by unpacking the issues into these two spheres for women and youth one may gain better insight into 1) where specific attention needs to be given to creating a knock-on solutions effect and 2) target areas for acceleration of identified solutions. Key insights have been presented separately by gender (men and women) and youths as we argue that grouping youths (young men and women) into the gender category does not allow the guide to explore specific challenges and practical steps for young people. Moreover, by disaggregating the data into youth and gender, we can develop solutions or pathways that speak directly to these needs and bottlenecks and suggest practical steps for GESI integration. This report also asks the question so what are we learning from the challenges and opportunities for women and youth in agribusiness in ESA? Drawing from the reports, some practical steps for GESI integration in agribusiness were identified and key actors as entry points for UU WPs. Table 3 presents practical steps suggested for GESI integration for WPs and identifies key actors for the uptake of relevant activities.

Table 3: Practical steps for GESI integration in agribusiness

| Practical steps to integrate GESI in agribusiness and agrifood value chains within ESA (UU Initiative) – Specifically for women and youth | Key Actors identified | |
|---|---|---|
| IITA - Workshop on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) in Agribusiness Ecosystems in Zambia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhance digital marketing and networking opportunities for women and youth - Expansion and diversification from maize to other crops in the value chain - Linkages to financial services - Support and implement policies that support land ownership and fight against harmful norms and customs against Women - Clear implementation strategies with good monitoring and evaluation frameworks - Consistency value chain-specific government policies - Provide internship and incubation programs for out-of-school youth in agriculture | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agro-Dealers - Horticulture - Farmers specifically cultivating rabbits, poultry & goats, fish, maize, soya beans, cassava - Beekeeping & Pineapples - Food processors - Agro inputs service providers - NGOs - Private sectors |
| IWMI – Workshop on Inclusive policy interventions for women and youth in the vegetable value chains in Ethiopia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve resource allocation and capacity building to enhance women and youth in leadership - Use Gender transformative approaches in agriculture – Support gender-sensitive credit modalities for financing agriculture - Increase market orientation to empower women as individuals and in groups - Ensure land and vegetable policy strategies are inclusive - Technology bundles should follow socially inclusive approaches that meet the needs of users - Engage and network with private actors for experience sharing and opportunities - Formalise brokers at the local level to create accountability and linkages with consumer associations owned by women and youth - Improve infrastructure (transportation, storage facility) - Continuous gender analysis and gendered information systems for inclusion. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NGOs - Farmers (youths and women) - Farmer cooperatives, unions, and associations - Relevant government sector offices (at ministries and local level) including women and social affairs, agriculture, water, labor, and cooperatives, - Research organizations - Donors - Community-based organizations - Financial Institutions, investors - Trade organisations - Agro dealers |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Networks: e.g. Ethiopia Network for Gender Equality in Agriculture - Horticulture department - Communication department |
| WorldFish – Workshop on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in Agribusiness Ecosystems for Multidimensional Mapping of Opportunities and Challenges in Kenya | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sensitize, inform, and educate agribusiness ecosystem stakeholders on market dynamics through increased and continuous training opportunities for agripreneurs, and keeping proper records. - Leadership training and support for women, for example in lobbying and advocacy. - Increase digital credit amounts for women in agribusiness, including poor women, and vulnerable and marginal groups. - Creating networks and unstintingly sharing information and using technology to change cultural norms. - Promote activities that can change youth mindsets and encourage them to get involved in agripreneurship, e.g. through youth employment in agribusiness projects. - GESI affirmative action, especially on financial management and literacy; lowering the cost of certification for women seeking market access in value addition; sensitization of youth and women on financial-support opportunities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NGOs - Farmers (youths and women) - Relevant government departments - Research institutions - Financial Institutions, investors - Networks |
| IFPRI– Workshop on Inclusive Agribusiness – Zimbabwe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of secondary markets to include what women are currently producing e.g., sweet potatoes. - Value addition promotion for crops women are currently growing e.g., sweet potatoes. - Inclusion of relevant partners for information on market access, Ministry of Trade, and Ministry of Transport. - Policy development for encouraging uptake of produce from local women and youth. - Sharing of success stories on radio & social media encourages participation of women and youth in addressing challenges. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Donors - United Nations network - European Union; World Bank; United States Agency for International Development (USAID) - Southern African Development Community - Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) - Food & Nutrition Council Zimbabwe – Co-ordinating Food Security Initiatives (fnc.org.zw) - Farmers organizations – Zimbabwe Farmers Union(ZFU), women farmer groups - Local NGOs, Community Technology Development Organization (CTDO), Cluster Agricultural Development Services (CADS) - Local traditional leadership - Universities such as Chinhoyi University of Technology CUT - Vocational centers |

| | | |
|-----------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| | | - People living with disability |
| Solidaridad dialogues | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advisory agents to extend services nearer to the women. - Extension workers should use local language to enable the illiterate farmers, particularly the women understand and internalize the agronomic practices and their application. - Linking women producer groups to larger supermarkets and high value chain stores | |

The table highlights practical GESI steps that emerged from the different workshops and dialogues that were organized to understand how women and youth in agribusiness can be better supported. A number of the high-level discussions as noted in the table were centered on the following:

- *Government-centered/focus*: Supportive gender affirmative policies should be formulated, designed, and implemented for women and youth following inclusive interventions such as organizing them in cooperatives and providing them with land, linking them with financial institutions, and providing them with opportunities for capacity development on proposal development, technical training, financial management, and life skill.
- *Land as a resource*: Providing land to women and youth groups organized in cooperatives that want to engage in agri-business. As land becomes scarce, in densely populated rural and semi-urban areas, government can encourage young men and women to organize themselves into cooperatives, to enhance their engagement in agri-business.
- *Access to Finance*: In addition to collateral, high interest rates, lack of tailored financial services for diverse social groups, short loan periods, and small loan size are also issues of concern. A practical approach will be to support women and youth to access tailored financial services for improving agribusiness activities.
- *Empower women and youths*: Particularly focusing on capacity development such as technical training and in some cases through the provision of other agricultural input.
- *Gender Transformative Approaches*: We can consider changing them to gender-responsive approaches. GTA is not a common practice across all levels. Rather, it is practiced only by a few institutions that commit to addressing gender issues and allocating sufficient resources.
- *Sex disaggregated Data*: In addition, limited availability of gendered data, information, and research are also issues. Establishing and strengthening gender-related information management systems is also important.

Conclusion

The synthesis review looks at high-level findings from across a meta-analysis of social, economic, and institutional bottlenecks, barriers, and opportunities for women and youth in agribusiness and across the different countries in ESA. In **Ethiopia**, documenting gendered (socio-technical) bundling options in Climate Smart Agriculture Innovations – CSA solutions tends to be overly technical. Focusing on smallholder productive agriculture (vegetable value chain work with Gender Equality and WorldVeg), the initiative (UU WP5) will undertake quantitative and qualitative studies to document how the technical need to be bundled with social innovations and outreach that address key barriers experienced by marginalized women in transitioning from high-risk, high-burden subsistence farming to inclusive CSA innovations. The WP also outlined the need to follow a Feminist Approach to Agri-enterprise Public and private sector interventions as a way of recognizing and addressing the plurality of challenges faced by marginalized women. A feminist approach to agri-enterprise will include attention to the following issues:- the increasing demand and need (male outmigration, climate impacts) for women’s engagement in productive agriculture in the face of persisting gendered domestic care work, the lack of agency and voice amongst marginalized women.

In **Zambia**, the findings echoed the need to establish a GESI agribusiness network of public, private, and grassroots stakeholders. The information will be documented in a database for use by many stakeholders. The aim is to ensure actors and partners can network with agribusiness experts, practitioners, and other professionals from related disciplines. There was a high interest in learning more about gender mainstreaming and social inclusion in agriculture value chains for the social and economic empowerment of women, youth, and other marginalized citizens in Zambia.

Recommendations resonated with the need to have traditional rulers and other key actors be mobilized during such workshops to leverage support where they implement projects. Partners' reports (Solidaridad) in Zambia also noted the following key takeaways:

To achieve systemic and transformative change, all the RS! Programme interventions, gender strategies, and related interventions must be designed on a gender-responsive inclusive market system approach, with an added focus on social and behavioral change aspects. In addition, interventions across all three commodity sectors and related value chains need to:

- Strengthen advocacy targeting government and private companies for more focused investment in female small-scale farmers, and for marginalized workers to improve agriculture-based incomes.
- Support youth, disabled farmers, and women at the community level to increase access to village and community funds; train women and marginalized people on literacy, numeracy, and entrepreneurship as part of a Finance and Business Literacy Program.
- Facilitate increased agricultural productivity and access to markets by providing government-approved seeds, fertilizers, and small-scale technologies.
- Facilitate relief for small-scale farmers of their household duties to be fully involved in all aspects of the value chain.
- Support the building of strong networks and strengthen organizations supporting social inclusion integration into the value chain on the ground.

In **Kenya**, sociocultural challenges such as historical injustices of denying women land ownership and devaluing their work require strategies that will change gender power dynamics such as having women beneficiaries from credit programs. The findings also indicated the need for men and couples from the same locality to be sensitized on how to collectively resist domestic violence against women over household credit and resources by questioning the violence, and stating that it is immoral. Hence, push strategies that complement such as training on power dynamics that engender entrenched injustices, rather than training on roles and responsibilities.

In **Zimbabwe**, women and youth play a significant role in agricultural value chains although they encounter a myriad of challenges as highlighted in the findings. With issues around access to productive resources, including livestock, land, information, technology, credit, and education there is a need to have interventions that reduce such challenges. Major highlights from the reports noted the creation of secondary markets to consider the produce from women and youth such as sweet potatoes, and beans as well as promote value addition for crops grown by women and youth.

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Citation

Enokenwa Baa, O.; Nortje, K. 2023. *A meta-analysis of social, economic, and institutional bottlenecks, barriers, and opportunities to more inclusive small and medium agribusiness in the ESA Region: a synthesis report*. Colombo, Sri Lanka: International Water Management Institute (IWMI). CGIAR Initiative on Diversification in East and Southern Africa. 23p.

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Acknowledgments

This work was carried out under the CGIAR Initiative on Diversification in East and Southern Africa, which is grateful for the support of CGIAR Trust Fund contributors (www.cgiar.org/funders).

CGIAR Initiative on Diversification in East and Southern Africa

The CGIAR Initiative on Diversification in East and Southern Africa aims to help smallholders transition to sustainably intensified, diversified, and de-risked agri-food systems based on maize in 12 ESA countries. Specifically, it seeks to enable 50,000 value chain actors, including farmers (at least 40% women, 40% youth), to adopt climate-smart maize-based intensification and diversification practices and one million to access digital agro-advisory services. Emphasizing the role of the private sector in driving such transformation, UU targets to support at least 30 start-ups and SMEs.

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