



# Gender-Transformative Change in Practice

*6 Case Studies*

Agricultural Technical Vocational Education and Training for Women (ATVET4W)



Without a focus on women, the potential of Africa's agricultural sector for food security, poverty eradication and job creation will not be realised. Structural inequalities and socio-cultural barriers persist limiting women in accessing technical and vocational training, formal employment and entrepreneurial activities. According to the African Union (AU) and the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), women's wages in rural areas are up to 60% lower than men's<sup>1</sup>.

Since 2017, the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) has implemented Agricultural Technical Vocational Education and Training for Women (ATVET4W) in six partner countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi and Togo. The ATVET4W project is technically and financially supported by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of the German government. In six partner countries, the project aims to not only increase women's access to skills development offers, but also to benefit and empower women.

To achieve this, gender-transformative pilot initiatives have been set up in all six countries. Being gender-transformative means that interventions focus on actively questioning established norms and gender stereotypes and on dismantling existing structural inequalities. The aim of this booklet is to showcase what gender-transformative approaches in ATVET look like in practice. Six examples from the partner countries outline how meaningful and transformative change for women's empowerment can be achieved in the agricultural sector. The six different pilot initiatives set out to:



<sup>1</sup> Leaving No One Behind: Empowering Africa's Rural Women for Zero Hunger and Shared Prosperity (2018)– FAO & African Union

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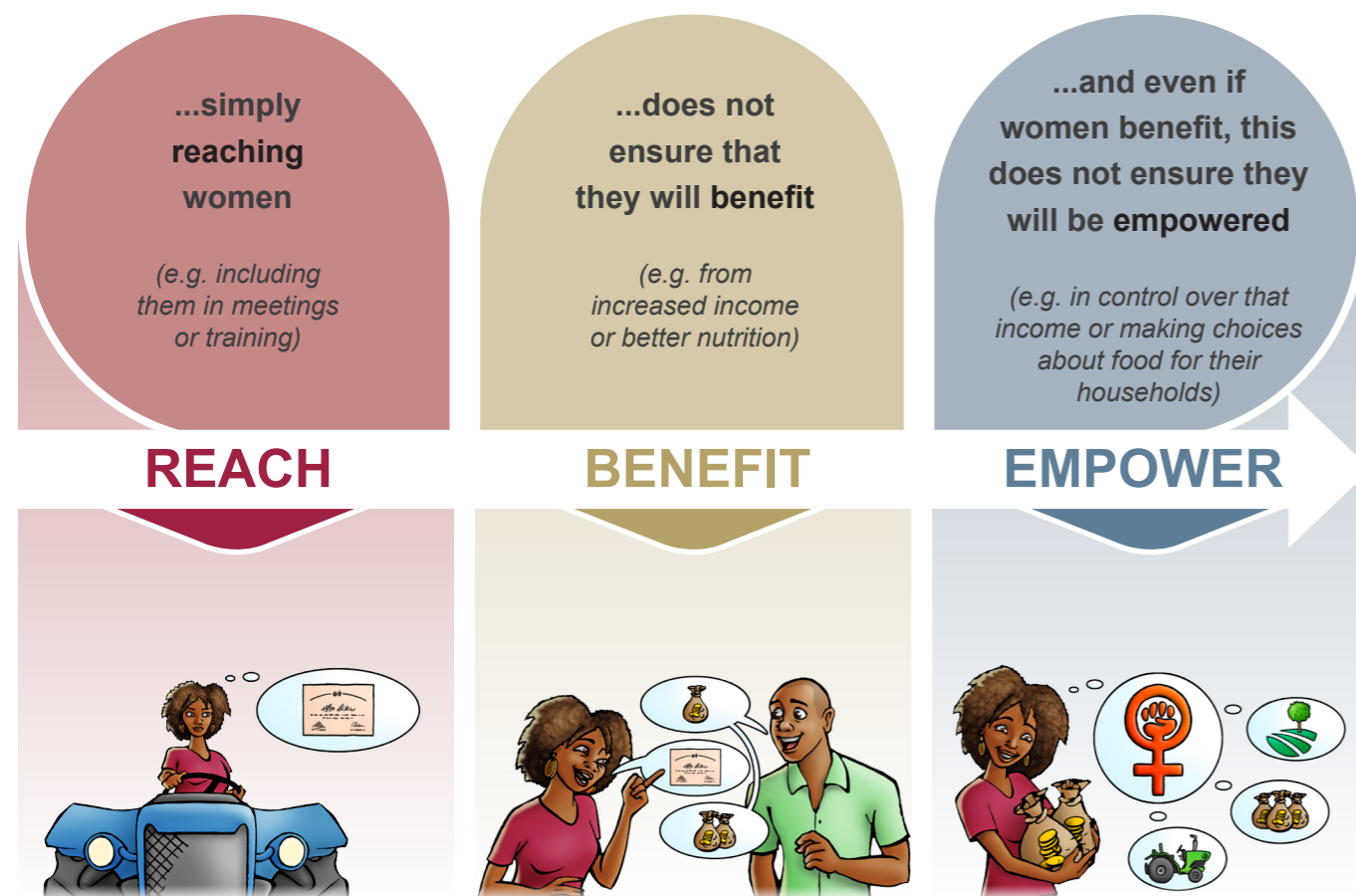
## GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE

One of ATVET4W's objectives is to increase women's access to ATVET systems through formal, non-formal and informal competency-based training along selected agricultural value chains. However, the project takes it a step further. For women to be truly empowered, it is not enough to increase women's access to skills development. Women need to benefit from and be empowered by the training. This gender-transformative approach is defined by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) Gender Action Plan (GAP II) as "actively questioning and critically analysing established norms and gender stereotypes and focusing on dismantling existing structural inequalities".

Provision of training and skills development alone may not have the desired impact. It is not enough to increase women's access to skills development. There might be a scenario where women have equal access to training (gender equality). However, what is vital is that after completing the training, women also have the agency (empowerment) to make use of their capabilities and opportunities. It means that we take into account gender-based power relations, grow women's choices, and promote joint decision-making and control over resources. This building of self-confidence, expansion of choices and transformation of unequal structures are what we label gender-transformative change.

To conceptualise this gender-transformative approach, ATVET4W draws on the Reach-Benefit-Empower principle:

The distinctions between **reach**, **benefit**, and **empower** point out that...

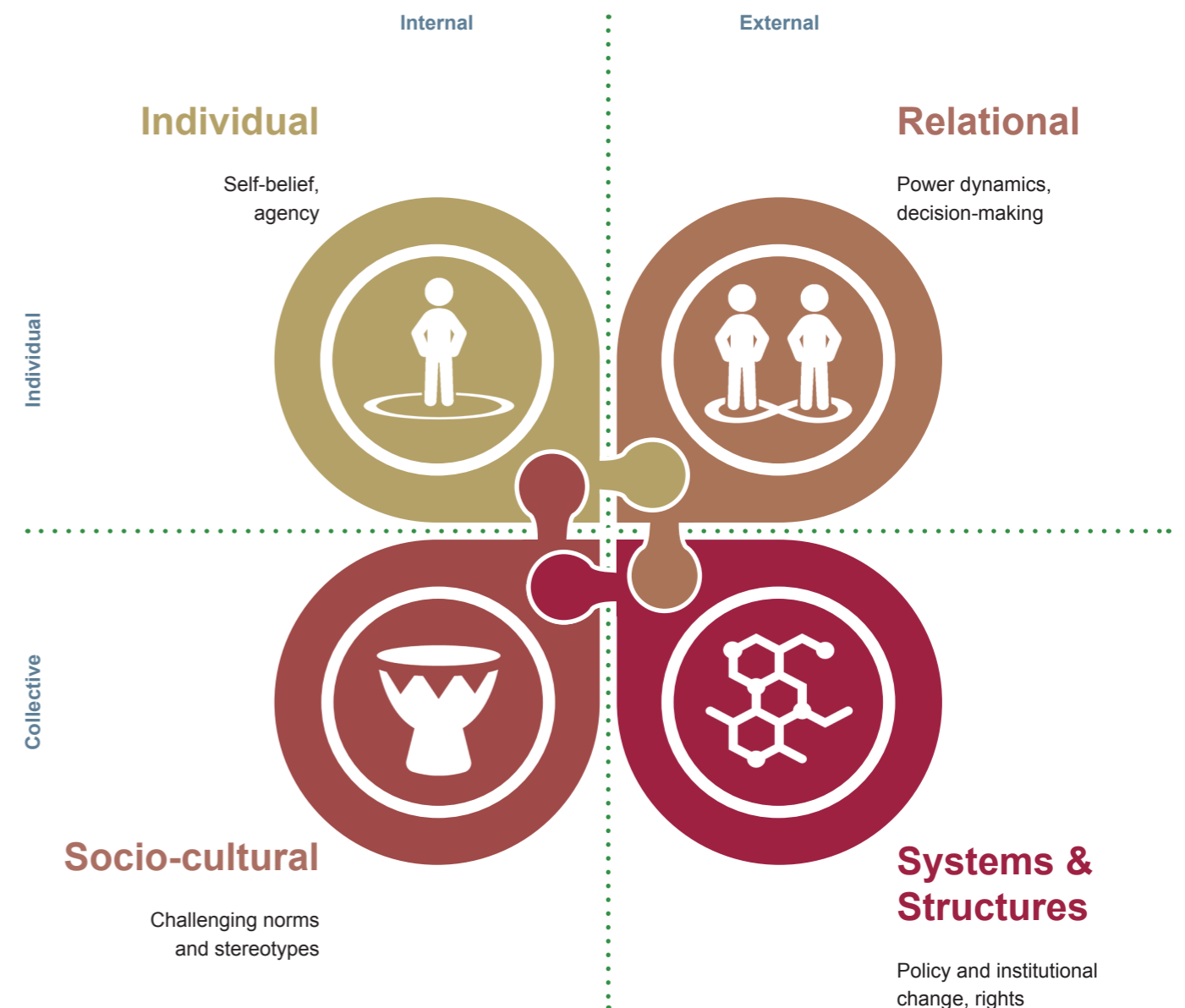


UN Woman, IFAD, FAO, WFP, IFPRI (2017), "Do agricultural development projects reach, benefit, or empower women?"

## EMPOWERMENT: QUADRANTS OF CHANGE

Empowerment is complex. To shed light on this complexity, ATVET4W applies an adapted version of Ken Wilber's four quadrants of change for empowerment: individual, relational, cultural and systemic. For each activity, project staff use the four quadrants to analyse if there is need for improvement. The aim is to cover all quadrants to ensure gender-transformative change for the end beneficiaries.

The four quadrants are one way to conceptualise empowerment. Within the ATVET4W project context, this particular concept has proven extremely useful to address empowerment at different levels. There are other empowerment frameworks that also work in different development settings. One example is Longwe's five-level Women's Empowerment Framework. Another example is the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). The latter has been used as a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) tool by ATVET4W to measure impact in two partner countries.



# AT A GLANCE

Since 2017, the ATVET4W project has piloted gender-transformative initiatives in six countries. Three key criteria were determined. All initiatives strive to be gender-transformative, to reach-benefit-empower women and to cover the four quadrants of empowerment. In addition, all six pilots contribute to the African Union's Agenda 2063 to achieve "The Africa we Want".



**Aspiration 1** | **A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development**

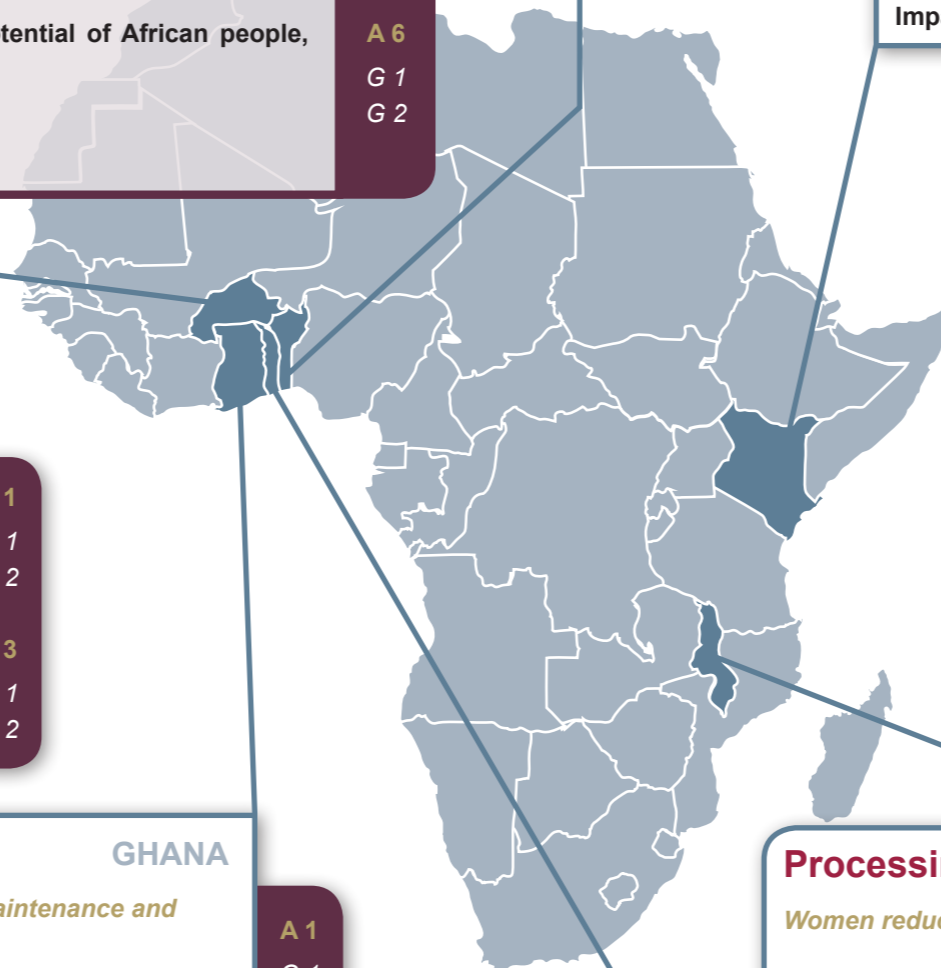
- Goal 1: A high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all
- Goal 2: Well educated citizens and skills revolutions underpinned by science, technology and innovation
- Goal 5: Modern agriculture for increased proactivity and production
- Goal 7: Environmentally sustainable climate and resilient economies and communities

**Aspiration 3** | **An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law**

- Goal 1: Democratic values, practices, universal principles for human rights, justice and rule of law entrenched
- Goal 2: Capable institutions and transformed leadership in place at all levels

**Aspiration 6** | **An Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children**

- Goal 1: Full gender equality in all spheres of life
- Goal 2: Engaged and empowered youth and children



**Going Green in Benin** BENIN

*Training women in organic fertiliser production*

**Main partner** Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (MAEP)

**Target group** 4 women's associations and groups

**Impact** 208 women trained  
10 men reached  
2 ATCs involved

**Train, Transform, Thrive** KENYA

*Empowering women-owned agribusinesses through training, coaching, mentorship and incubation*

**Main partners** Ministry of Agriculture  
Women Farmers Association of Kenya (WoFaAK)  
Association of Women in Agriculture Kenya (AWAK)

**Target group** Women agripreneurs

**Impact** 16 agripreneurs trained, coached, mentored and incubated

**It Takes Two!** MALAWI

*A successful wife and husband duo championing joint decision-making and paving the way for women as vegetable producers*

**Main partners** Ministry of Labour, Skills and Innovation

**Target group** Wives and husbands (aspiring households)  
Rural and peri-urban women  
Lead farmers with ambition to grow and mentor  
Youth wanting to attend training  
Opinion leaders as custodians of culture

**Impact** 142 husbands and wives trained as out-growers  
285 rural women and men trained  
52 SMEDI and Stephanos Foundation trained youths  
5 private sector enterprises reached as mentors  
11 ATCs involved in curriculum development  
4 policy institutions influenced

**Women Leading Change** BURKINA FASO

*Co-creating messages about agricultural resources with rural women*

**Main partner** Ministry of Agriculture and Hydraulic Installations  
Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Gender  
Ministry of Youth, Professional Training, and Employment  
4 Agricultural Training Centres (ATCs)

**Target group** 7 women's associations  
Rural women active in agriculture  
Male family members and community leaders

**Impact** Over 1 800 women expected to benefit

**Women in the Driving Seat** GHANA

*Driving women's empowerment through tractor operation, maintenance and management*

**Main partner** Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA)  
Agriculture Engineering Services Directorate  
Women in Agriculture Development Directorate (WIAD)

**Target group** Prospective female agricultural machinery operators and female farmers

**Impact** 182 women trained and certified as tractor operators

**Processing for Change** TOGO

*Women reducing post-harvest losses through processing and contract farming*

**Main partners** Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Production and Fisheries  
Ministry of Technical Education, Training and Professional Integration

**Target group** 2 women's organisations  
Rural women

**Impact** 60 women trained in high-quality processing  
1 ATC involved

## Going Green in Benin

### Training women in organic fertiliser production

#### Country Context

Agriculture in Benin accounts for more than 82% of the labour force and contributes 36.2% to gross domestic product, according to the FAO (2012). The Benin Land Act No. 2017-15 of 10 August 2017 stipulates that all descendants, whether male or female, can inherit land. However, putting the law into practice has proven challenging, especially concerning women's inheritance of land. Although some men favor the application of this law, most of the land granted to women is of poor quality.

The use of chemical fertiliser is harmful to the environment and affects soil quality. It also has an impact on health, which is why there is high demand for organic fertilisers and products - including compost. This reality is a business opportunity for women who want to be trained in the production, use and marketing of this type of fertiliser, which promotes the restoration of soil fertility. The inputs used to produce organic fertiliser help to better manage solid, household and agricultural waste. The women collect ingredients that would normally be considered waste and use these as valuable inputs for organic compost production.

This opportunity allows for sustainable improvement of agricultural land, which could lead to:

- Increased capital gains for women through the creation of an income-generating activity;
- The reduction of water hyacinths that invade streams in swampy areas by using these herbs in the composting process;
- Women serving as role models to change the perceptions and social norms of other women and men.



#### Pilot Summary

In Benin, ATVET4W piloted a compost production and marketing activity in partnership with two ministries: the Ministry of Vocational Training and the Ministry of Agriculture. The intervention started in 2018 and has since included a total of six training sessions (three in 2018 and three in 2019) in two training centres – the public LAMS and the private BOUGE ONG – as well as a fishing centre. A total of 218 people (208 women and 10 men) benefited from the training.

The selection criteria for the training targeted women aged 18 and over, who demonstrated the will and commitment to attend the training and to host monitoring and evaluation missions, and to produce compost, use it or market it. In addition, some men were admitted to the training, including participants' spouses and teachers from training centres. This meant that some of the activities could be replicated in real contexts while learning was happening.



Training activities covered all segments in the compost-making value chain. Participants had to carry out the following:

- Waste supply techniques;
- Sorting raw materials: in this section they learned to identify decomposable waste;
- Swathing or pitting of raw materials: after sorting, the participants moved on to the techniques of superimposing the different layers of raw materials in swathes and in pits;
- Fermentation of heaps: fermentation of a compost heap is nothing more than the decomposition of raw materials;
- Heap maturation process: manual testing, use of ph-meter and thermometer, and more;
- Compost sifting: involves removing undecomposed raw materials in order to have the finished product;
- Packaging/storage and marketing of compost;
- Economic management.

#### Impact

Several women have seen their incomes increase after the training. Before, the women of the NGO RAPA collected four bags of chilli on the same land surface which currently allows them to collect eight to 12 bags. This constitutes a remarkable increase of up to 200%. Other women have found that their products rot less quickly and now sell at higher prices.

Water hyacinth can have negative effects on the flow of water, which can lead to flooding and problems for irrigation schemes. Women using water hyacinth for compost production are playing an important part in alleviating the problems caused by the plant. The use of water hyacinth for compost production in marshy areas has led to a resurgence of fishing activities as streams are cleared of the plant. This has led to more men including their wives in clearing the waterways. As a result, family income increases, and women see their social role becoming more important. Compost production is a new income-generating activity for women and can help to reduce socio-economic and cultural inequalities. Women serve as innovators and entrepreneurs through the business they build from waste transformation. The women are also championed as role models, showing men that they can improve the soil health of their land.

Despite having inherited poor land, women have managed to increase soil fertility through the manufacture of compost. They feel more self-reliant and useful to their community. Moreover, the resurgence of organic farming after the degradation of land by chemical fertilisers is an asset for them. At different fairs and in shopping malls, it is possible to find packaged compost ready to be used in urban centres; this was not the case a few years ago.

## Women Leading Change

### Co-creating messages on agricultural resources with rural women

#### Country Context

Although about 80% of women actively participate in the agricultural sector, women's economic empowerment is compromised by structural inequalities and socio-cultural barriers. Women are largely involved in agricultural production and product processing. Thus their role is essential to achieve food security. However, women rarely enjoy the same rights as men, particularly regarding land ownership or access to training and financing. This is mainly because most women have limited access to and little or no knowledge of legal provisions and rights regarding productive resources, training and financing. Moreover, even though non-discriminatory legal provisions exist, they are not well known to women who continue to suffer all forms of discrimination in the agricultural sector.

Burkina Faso's population was estimated at 15 730 977 inhabitants in 2010 (INSD, RGPH 2006). Its main characteristics are female, young and rural: women make up 52% of the population, young people under the age 15 account for 42%, and 77% of the population live in rural areas. Agriculture occupies more than 80% of the country's population. Women, who carry out 80% of agricultural work, should not be excluded from actions aimed at the development of this sector.

The lack of education and opportunities, the low literacy rates of women (18.7%) and the prevalence of socio-cultural norms limit women's access to information. An informed woman can make better decisions and better exercise her rights and thus challenge existing power relations.

#### Pilot Summary

In Burkina Faso, ATVET4W has championed women's empowerment and rights in agriculture, including access to and control over land, finance and training. More specifically, the intervention aims to find innovative ways to inform and empower women in relation to their rights in agriculture.

The pilot has included the following:

1. A study analysing the factors that prevent women from exercising their rights in the agricultural sector. This study focused on (i) identifying women's existing rights in agricultural and agrifood development laws and policies related to access to training, financing and land; (ii) the barriers to women's access to training, finance and land; and (iii) identifying a group of women who have no knowledge of their existing rights and a group of women who know their rights and exercise them.
2. Design research which included observation, mapping activities, interviews and the organisation of an Exploration Lab which



allowed the programme designers to get a better understanding of the social fabric, customs and cultures, challenges, opportunities and needs of the target groups.

3. Co-creation and design-thinking processes through a workshop to develop a Toolbox as a modular solution to (i) inform women of their rights; and (ii) empower women to exercise these rights, especially by engaging and advocating with male family and community leaders.
4. Establishment of a mentoring programme where women who know their rights accompany those who do not.
5. Video production.

The following participants were engaged:

- Women from Mooré and Dioula communities who know their rights (e.g. association leaders);
- Women from Mooré and Dioula communities who do not know their rights;
- Men from Mooré and Dioula communities (e.g. husbands, sons, community leaders);
- Experts on land, finance and training in agriculture;
- Government representatives;
- Creatives (e.g. journalists, illustrators, writers).

#### Impact

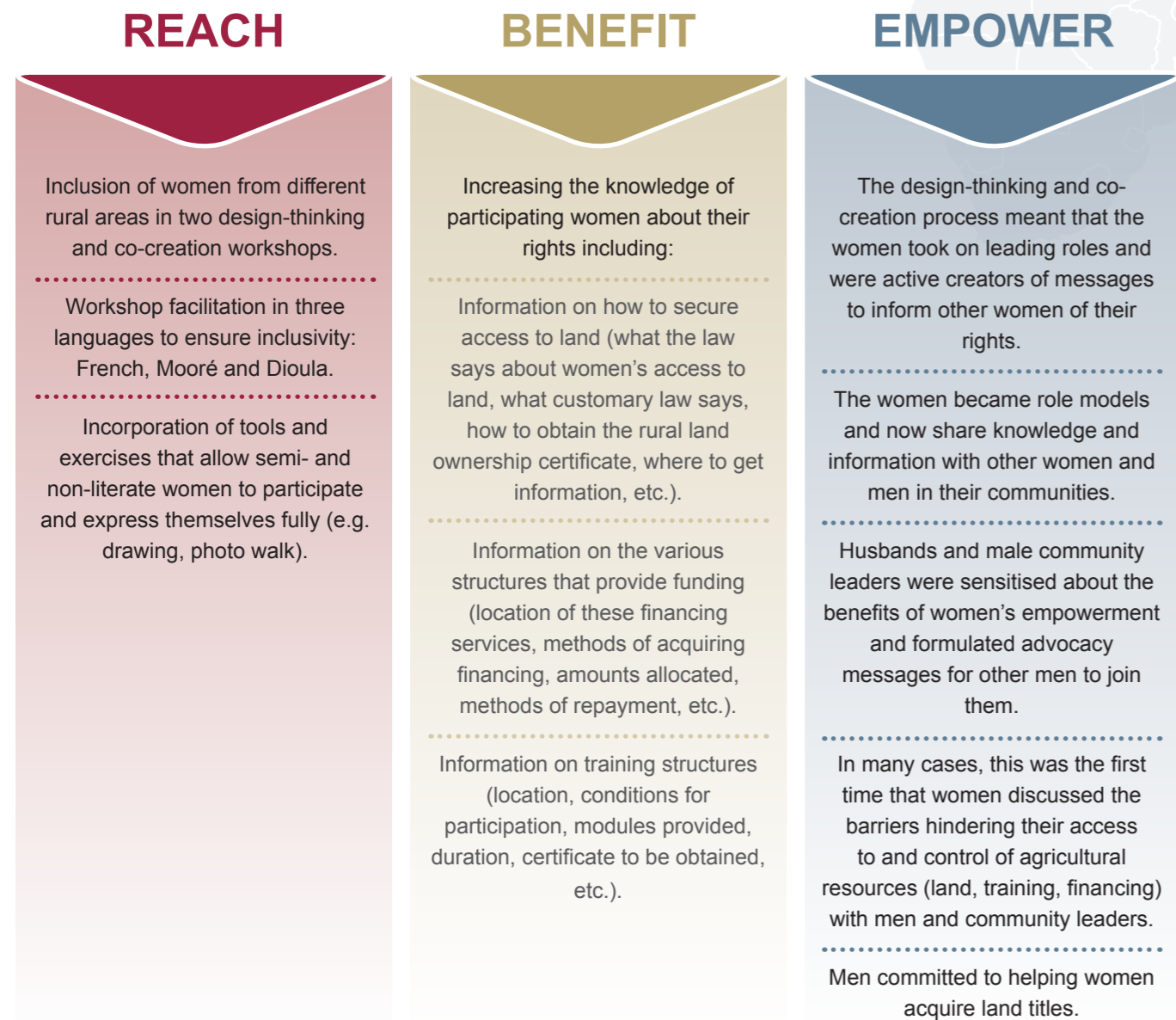
The main impact concerns the personal development of the women beneficiaries. Semi-literate and illiterate women from rural areas were able to express themselves and define their needs. They were able to actively participate in the co-creation of and reflection on the design of the tool to be used to make known and apply their rights in the agricultural sector. The activity was gender-transformative by involving husbands and other male members of the rural communities.

At the family level, there is an improvement in the relationship between women and their husbands. Men have understood that women have rights, that they must take their opinions into account, and help women access and use these rights. Men now allow their wives to take part in training courses.

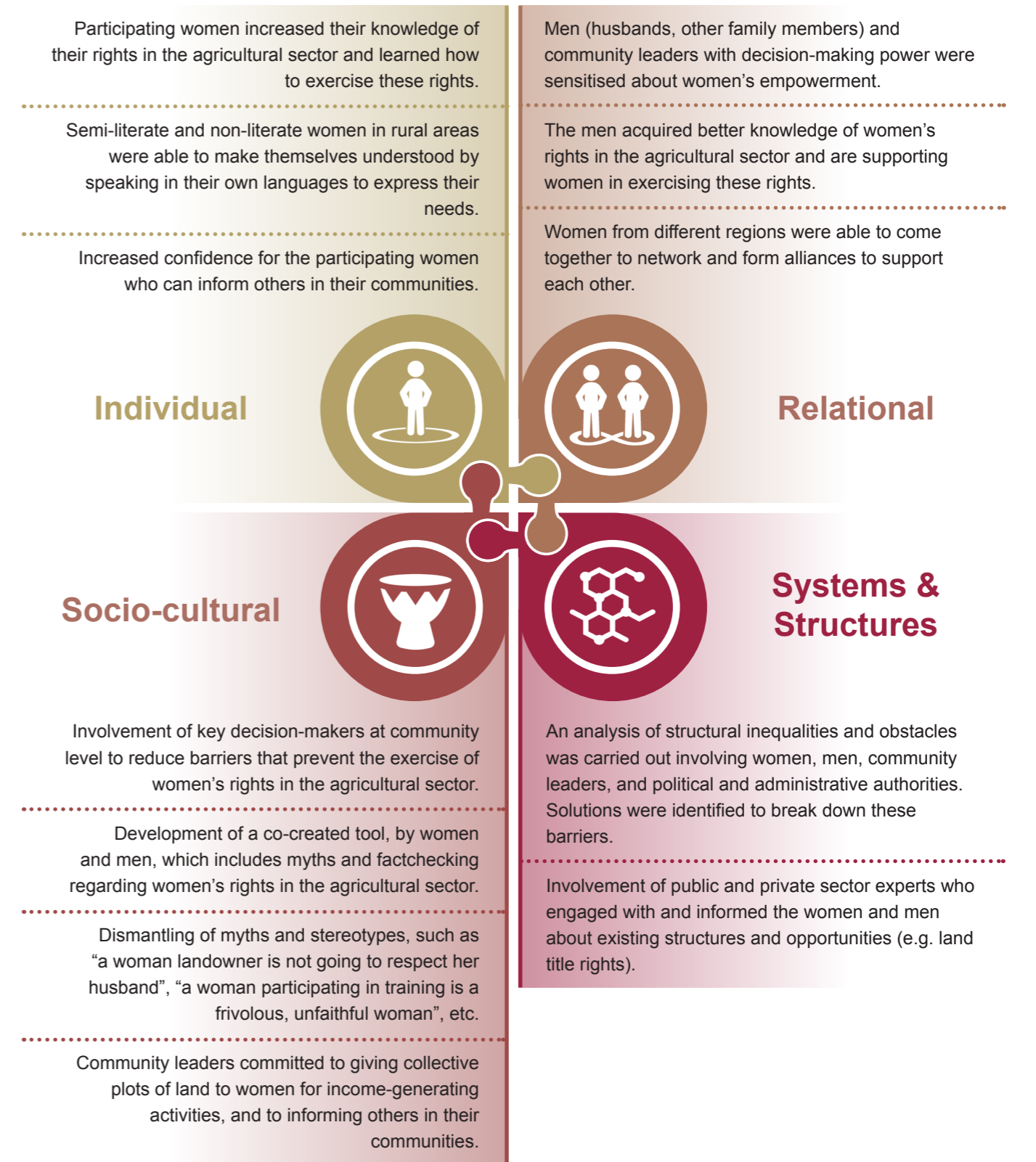
## Women Leading Change

*Co-creating messages on agricultural resources with rural women*

### How did the intervention Reach – Benefit – Empower women?



### What change did the intervention trigger in the four empowerment quadrants?



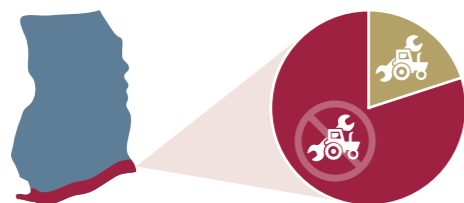
## Women in the Driving Seat

### *Driving women's empowerment through tractor operation, maintenance and management*

#### Country Context

The significance of women in agricultural development cannot be over-emphasised. Despite their considerable contribution, women are systematically marginalised, and their efforts are undervalued in the use of farm machines and implements to improve agricultural productivity. Men are usually the ones who conduct commercial transactions for agricultural mechanisation services at the farm level. Consequently, men are the ones to make decisions and to control the resources required to invest in mechanisation (especially capital).

With the ongoing trend of male migration to urban areas, coupled with the advancement of climate change, women have an increasing role to play in agricultural production and commercialisation. Nevertheless, they still have little access to farm machines and implements. This directly affects their productivity. Traditional gender roles have restricted women's agricultural participation mostly to manual labour. The lack of role models who operate and manage farm machinery has discouraged young women from taking up related occupations. Women are unable to take advantage of job positions that require skills in farm operation and management.



**78.6%** of female farmers in the Coastal zone lack access to tractor services.

- Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA)

If women improved their knowledge, skills and attitude through training in the use of farm machines and implements, they could increase their individual yields in crop production. This can have a variety of positive knock-on effects: new job prospects, higher incomes, access to machinery, increased food quantity for families, more role models and, ultimately, gender equality.

#### Pilot Summary

The “Women in the Driving Seat” tractor operation training aims to break barriers for women in agricultural mechanisation, a traditionally male-dominated area. The training programme's objective is to sustainably drive women's participation and leadership in the operation of agricultural machinery in Ghana.

The Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA), through the Agricultural Engineering Services Directorate (AESD) and Women in Agriculture Directorate (WiAD), launched the “Women in the Driving Seat” training programme in September 2018 as the first of its kind to focus on gender-sensitive training delivery in Ghana. Training modules include operation, maintenance, business opportunities and bookkeeping. Private sector players in agribusiness supported the curriculum development process and offered workplace learning opportunities. The objectives for the selected trainees include improved skills, better access to information, strategies to ensure gender equity relating to machinery, strengthened local support networks, diversification of income, and improved financial and economic status.

Since 2018, there have been two rounds of the “Women in the Driving Seat” training. For each round, 62 women were selected to undergo training – half at Wenchi Farm Institute in the Bono Region in middle belt of Ghana, and the other half at



Adidome Farm Institute in the Volta Region. Both training rounds have had a 100% completion rate. Successful graduates were presented with the certified operators' licence E by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA). As part of their training, the women were deployed at commercial farms for a minimum of three months of industrial workplace experience learning. The aim of the workplace experience learning was to develop the trainees' planning and organisational abilities, interpersonal and problem-solving skills, self-awareness, and technical competencies in real-world situations.

#### Impact

As a result of the training, 182 women tractor operators have been trained and certified. The successful training completion rate of 100% showcased that women can excel in tractor operation and maintenance. For some of the male trainers, it was the first time in 40 years that they had instructed female trainees in tractor operation and maintenance. In addition, graduates of the training established the “Women in Tractor Operation Association” as a way to organise and support themselves.

In the past, MoFA interventions have been challenged by the frequent breakdowns of agricultural machinery resulting from mishandling and improper use due to lack of skills by operators, mechanics and technicians. A MoFA survey revealed that almost all Agricultural Mechanisation Service Enterprise Centres (AMSECs) were operated by male tractor operators who lacked knowledge about the safety and handling of agricultural machinery and equipment. The “Women in the Driving Seat” training provided a window of opportunity for the inclusion of women and the development of the sector in terms of quality of skills.

The involvement of women in mechanisation, normally a male-dominated field, has helped to create a mind-shift not only for women, but also for practitioners, employers and the wider society. Many of the trained women, especially those who were previously unemployed, were able to develop a new dual self-identity as both professional and homemakers. These newly employed women now contribute to the security of a stable home environment and make critical decisions in the household about resources and income. This promotes gender equality at home and in the workplace.

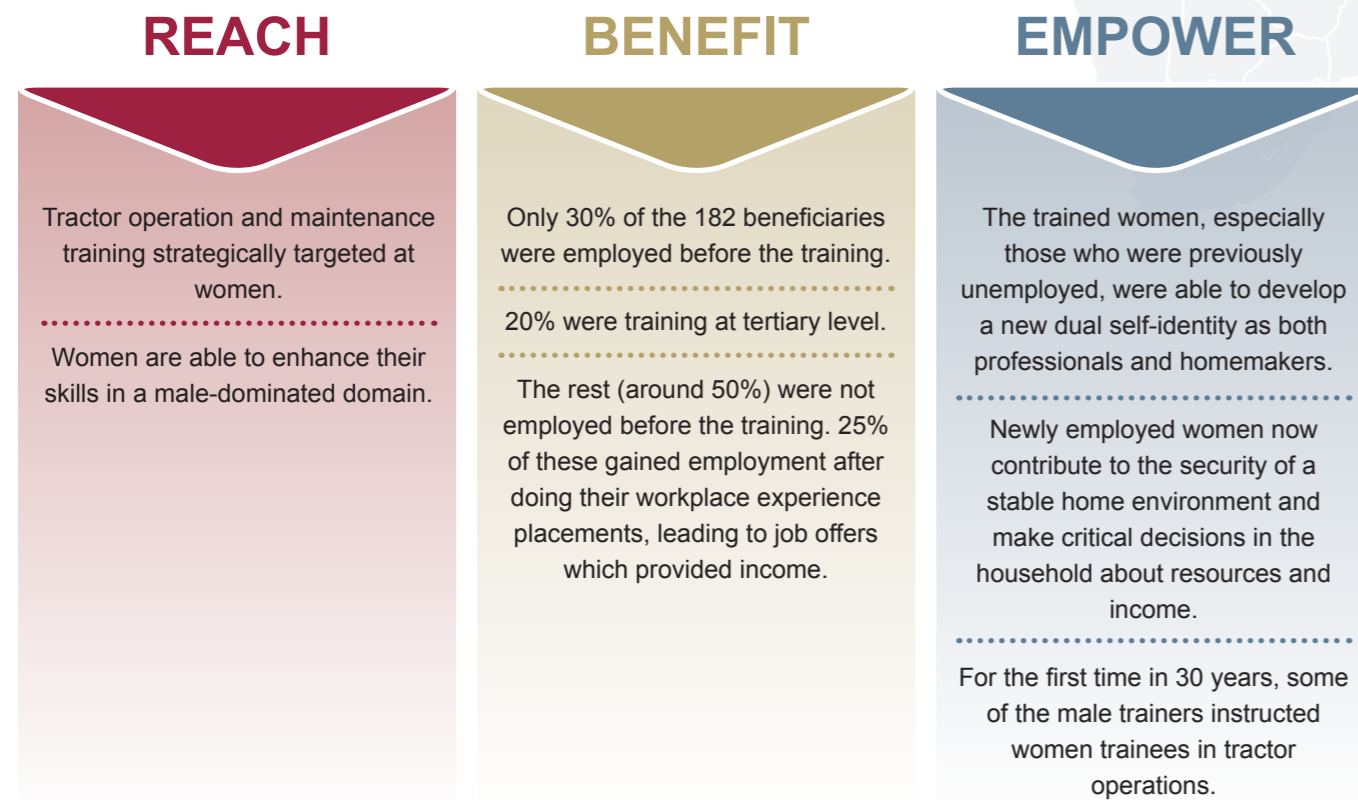
Developing women empowerment projects means that practitioners are challenged to think with, instead of for, the people they are trying to reach. This requires looking at the challenges that women face beyond the training and helping them deal with issues like cultural beliefs, gender stereotypes and how to position themselves confidently in male-dominated areas. The initiative also changed employers' perceptions and operations to becoming more inclusive of women in the workplace. Society is challenged to reimagine and demystify women's roles at home, in the workplace and in society. As a result, the younger generation is inspired to pursue opportunities that were once closed off, in agricultural mechanisation and beyond.



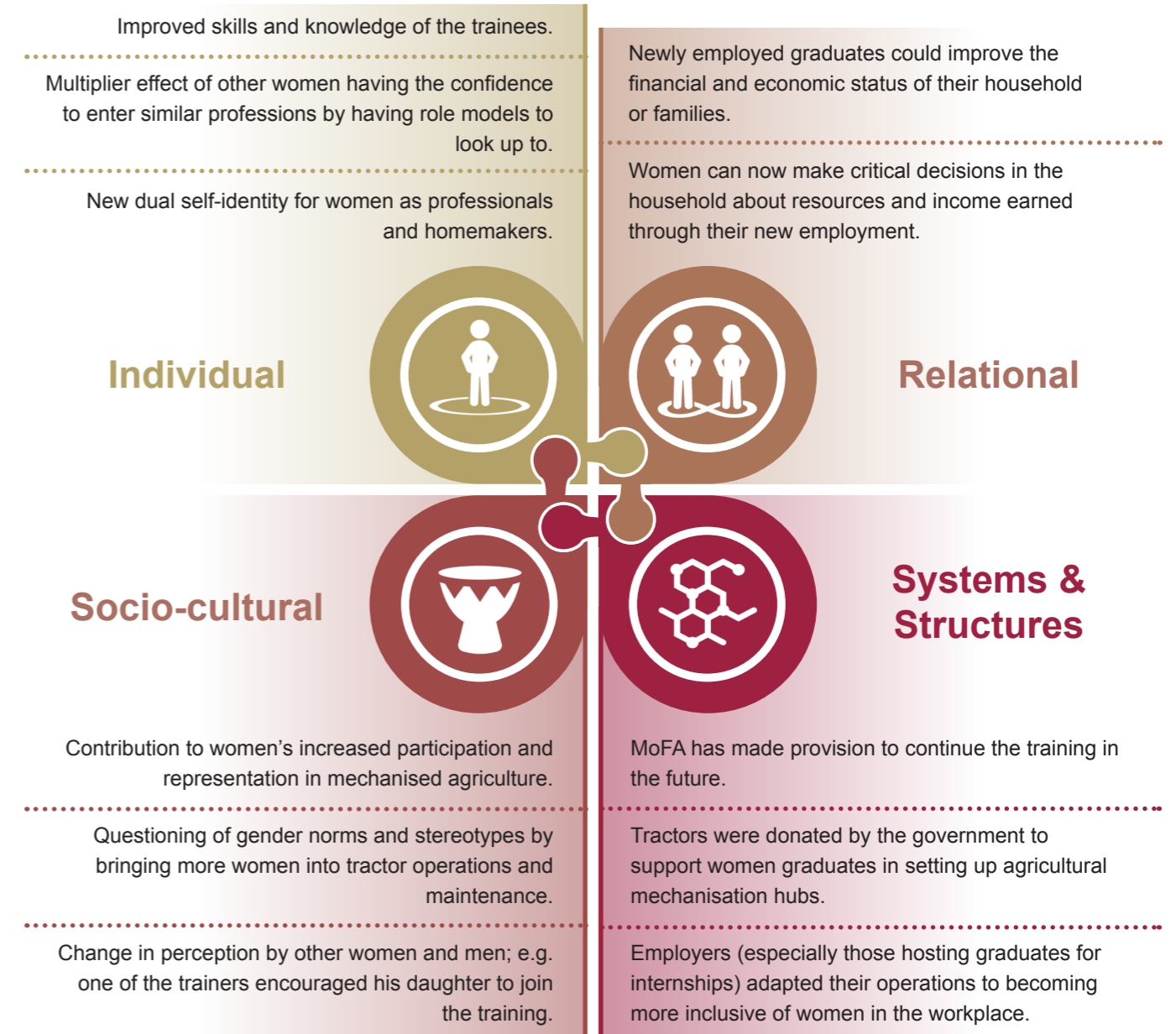
## Women in the Driving Seat

*Driving women's empowerment through tractor operation, maintenance and management*

How did the intervention Reach – Benefit – Empower women?



## What change did the intervention trigger in the four empowerment quadrants?



## Train, Transform, Thrive

*Empowering women-owned agribusinesses through training, coaching, mentorship and incubation*

### Country Context

Women-owned enterprises are a pillar of Kenya's economy, accounting for 20% of GDP. This is notably higher than that of men's entrepreneurial activities. However, women entrepreneurs tend to face higher obstacles in accessing credit, training, networks and information, in addition to legal and policy-based barriers. When it comes to agribusiness, the situation is similar. Women agripreneurs face problems like inadequate knowledge and skills, lack of managerial expertise, lack of credit, technological change, poor infrastructure and insufficient information about markets. As a result, women-owned agri-enterprises have a low success rate. When they do grow and prosper, male counterparts often want to take over.

Women suffer the impact of gender dynamics which often place them firmly in a disadvantaged position of 'economic subordination'. The "Train, Transform, Thrive" intervention seeks to address this by championing the economic and social empowerment of agripreneurs.



### Pilot Summary

"Train, Transform, Thrive" sets out to improve the current performance and productivity of 16 selected women-owned agribusinesses. This is done through in-depth problem analysis and skills development to improve and transform the businesses and their owners. The goals are enhanced products, incomes, skills, knowledge and productivity, as well as increased self-confidence and quality of life for the women agripreneur. The approach is two-fold. Through reflection and an internal analysis of the business and its leadership, challenges and bottlenecks are identified. Based on this, a better external performance is envisaged, both on the business and personal level, through training, mentorship, coaching and incubation.

As part of the intervention, 16 mentees and three mentors from three main regional zones were selected. A baseline was determined through a profiling of the agri-enterprises at the beginning of the intervention. Capacity-building needs were identified both for the group and the individual. Changes were monitored and evaluated over time after several activities.

Training focused on business planning, food safety and hygiene, soft skills, financial management,



planning, record-keeping and bookkeeping. The mentoring and coaching activities included peer-to-peer learning through educational trips to the various agribusinesses, as well as individualised and targeted coaching for specific enterprise needs, such as beekeeping, cultivation of button mushrooms and yoghurt-making.

The agripreneurs created a virtual network to share information and opportunities among themselves. In addition, some mentees were supported to attend national and international learning and exchange fora in Senegal, Germany, Malawi, Rwanda, South Africa, Eldoret, Bungoma and Nakuru.

### Impact

The "Train, Transform, Thrive" intervention empowered the agripreneurs both personally and in business. Through extensive training, they have implemented their newly acquired technical skills to improve their business and leadership skills, including teamwork, ethical business behaviour and communication. Business planning helped the agripreneurs to develop a roadmap for long-term growth, to improve food safety and hygiene, and to enhance their financial management and record-keeping. In addition, they improved their abilities to form partnerships. The mentoring and coaching enabled the women to make decisions more confidently and based on better knowledge.

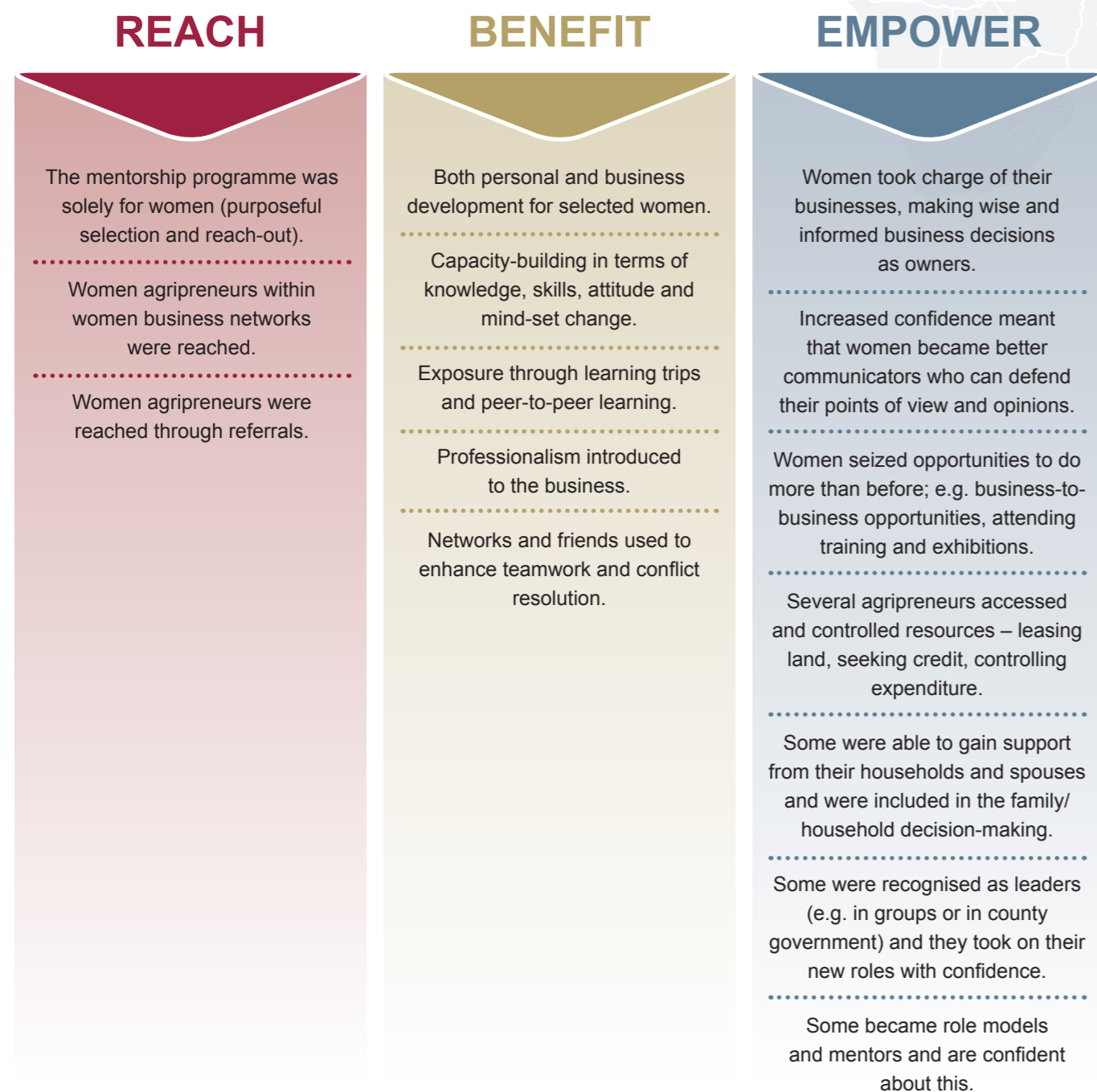
The women self-organised by creating a digital space for networking opportunities, where some were linked to markets or other opportunities like conferences and fairs. In addition, women obtained support from family members, mainly spouses. After seeing and understanding positive changes, they were happy to assist with activities such as signing for leased land, setting up of hives, keeping records, looking out for market developments and taking care of the family when the women were away on learning trips or training workshops. Some agripreneurs also engaged the community by training others to become outgrowers to supply raw materials.



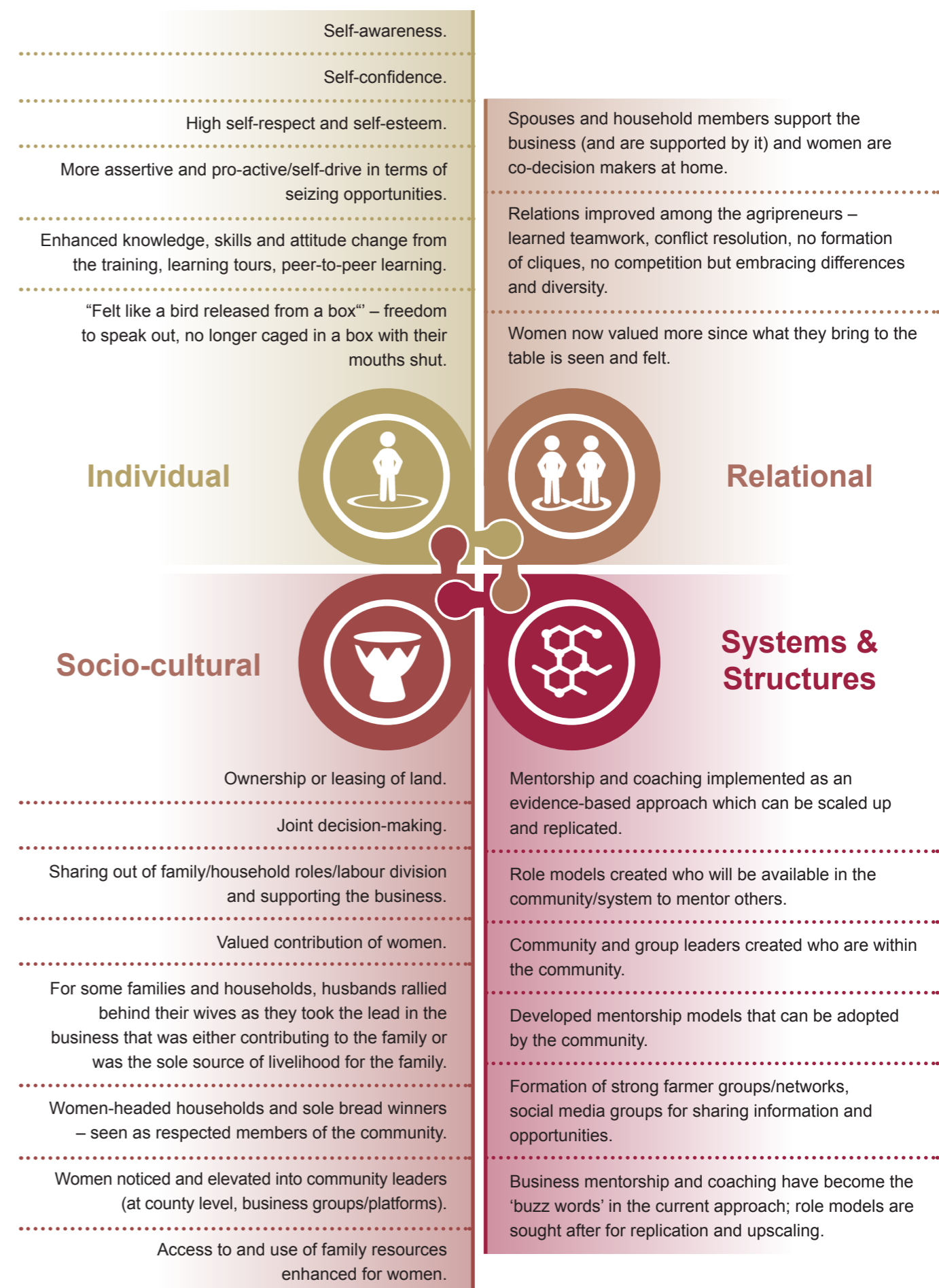
## Train, Transform, Thrive

*Empowering women-owned agribusinesses through training, coaching, mentorship and incubation*

### How did the intervention Reach – Benefit – Empower women?



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## It Takes Two!

### *A successful wife and husband duo championing joint decision-making and paving the way for women as vegetable producers*

#### Country Context

Realising that gender awareness makes business sense and that no one should be left behind, the special initiative in Malawi addresses the socio-cultural realities in Malawi that hinder the access and uptake of agrifood skills among women. The idea is to empower women through a gender-transformative approach by tackling the power relations and social norms that exist in agricultural communities. Improving women's skills and opportunities in the sector will contribute to economic growth and sustainable development.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development through the Department of Agriculture Extension Services has been implementing the Household Approach since 2009 with support from the Irrigation Rural Livelihoods and Agricultural Development Project. This is an extension approach that facilitates better gender and power relations among household members to achieve equitable access to and control over resources, assets and benefits. This leads to improved livelihoods for all household members.

Gender disparities are among the major constraints affecting agriculture production, income, food and nutrition security in Malawi. Innovative approaches are required to address gender at household level for sustainable and equitable socio-economic development. The Household Approach is one of the innovative extension approaches which uses the community as an entry point for addressing development issues (including gender) in terms of the needs of all household members.

This approach aims to promote more equitable management of resources, assets and benefits at the level of households and families, and household farming businesses. It does this through involving male and female household members (including youth) in planning and implementation of the household farming business. Resource-mobilisation, inclusive decision-making and the use of benefits are among the skills developed.

#### Pilot Summary

In Malawi, ATVET4W offers mentorship and skills training to vulnerable households and budding farmers using a household approach to champion joint decision-making for farm and home-related management decisions.

Thanthwe Farms is collaborating with ATVET4W through role modelling. The owners are married couple, Mr Dziko Chatata and Mrs Ngabaghila Chatata, lead horticulturalists who coach, mentor and train an outgrowers' network of rural women and youth using a non-formal approach.

The rural women and youth are also mobilised as a pair of either husband and wife or two relatives that both have user rights to land and productive resources. Thanthwe Farms offers hands-on training, coaching and mentoring in covered vegetable cultivation and production. It also collects the vegetables and delivers to lucrative markets identified in Lilongwe.

Thanthwe Farms' vision is to mature into an established agribusiness Centre of Excellence (CoE) focusing on horticulture and agro-processing that will be a hub of knowledge, competencies and skills transfer to incubate rural women and youth who wish to become agriprenuers. This will be achieved through building a pool of horticulture and agro-processing specialists who can train and improve the competencies of women and youth in high value vegetable production for supermarkets, hotels, restaurants, and other institutions like schools in Malawi.

Pilot activities included:

- The community was mobilised with the help of Ministry of Agriculture Extension agents;
- Thanthwe Farms organised a beneficiary assessment to have an updated situation analysis and decide on which vegetables to promote;
- 200 outgrowers were selected and agronomy classes conducted;
- The farm owners (Dziko and Ngaba) have grown their own institutional understanding, and can link up to potential investors, trainers and financial institutions as resources;
- Steps have been set in motion to make Thanthwe Farms a CoE for providing non-formal learning to women, couples, urban and peri-urban youth in the agribusiness and agro-processing value chains;
- A study and documentation was commissioned to investigate the links in the working modality between a female-led private farm, a research station (Chitedze) and an institution of higher learning (University of LUANAR/NRC) to deliver value chain, formal and non-formal, competence-based training.

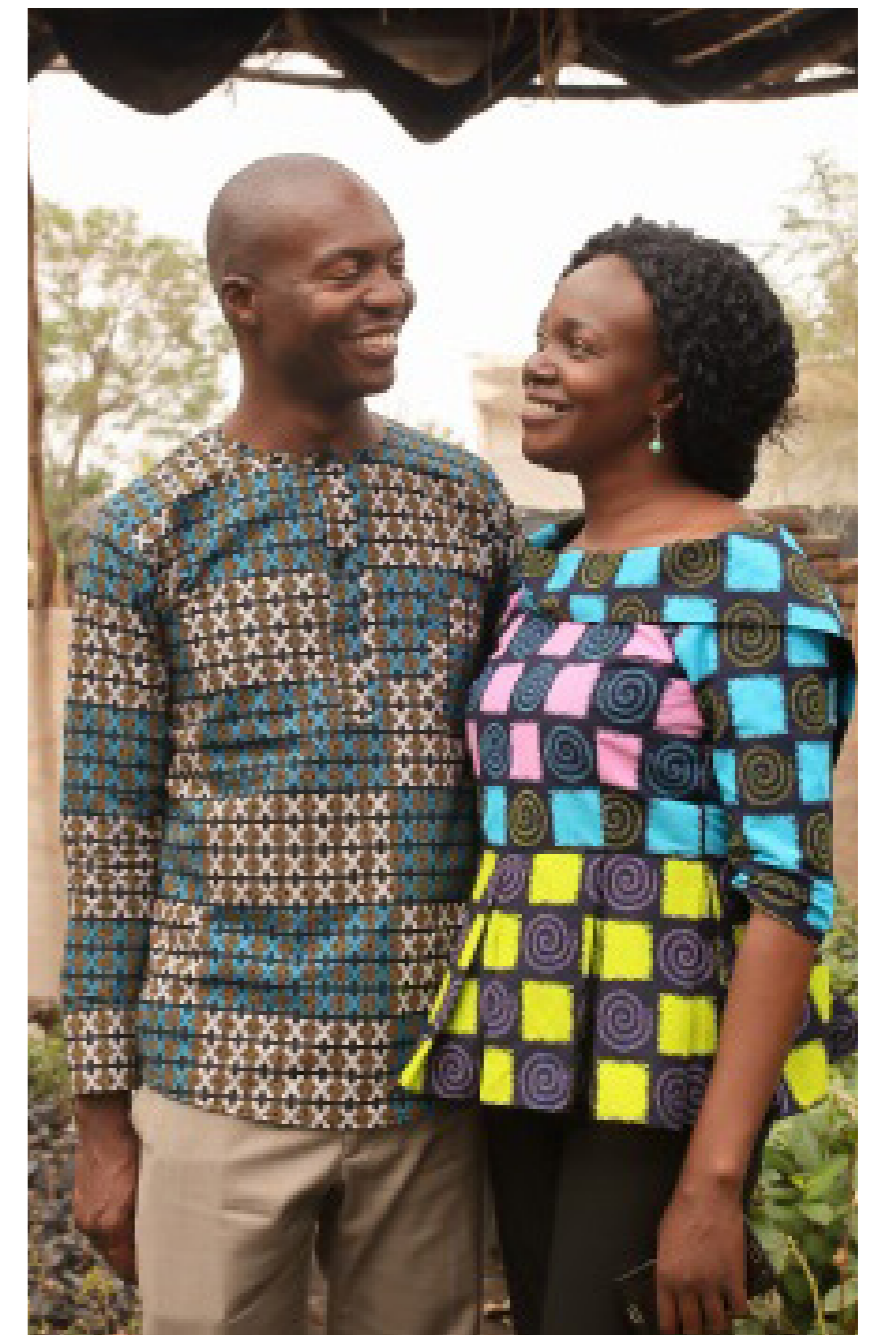
#### Impact

The special initiative is bringing about social change in the context of agriculture to promote an enabling environment in which women agriprenuers can thrive.

Approximately 110 beneficiaries are still active as small business owners, with 24 of these showing potential to increase in size, and 10 having achieved medium-scale business status. The project will continue with the 34 remaining beneficiaries and support them through the residential School of Agriculture for Family Independence (SAFI) and enrol them in the Small, Medium and Enterprise Development Institute (SMEDI) so that they become role models in their locality just like Dziko and Ngaba Chatata.

Other achievements by the "It Takes Two!" pilot:

- Adaptation of the ATVET system to the specific needs and diverse circumstances of women;
- Development of qualifications that increase women's choice, voice, and income in the agrifood sector;
- Stimulation of gender-responsive innovation in value chains.



## Processing for Change

### *Women reduce post-harvest losses through processing and contract farming*

#### Country Context

According to Togo's national agriculture census (RNA), 60% of the population lives in rural areas. Out of those involved in agriculture, around 53.3% are women (RNA, 2012). Fruit and vegetables are produced in all regions of Togo to varying degrees. However, there is very little statistical data available.

In 1995, 45 000 tons of vegetables were produced, and fruit production was estimated at 345 000 tons. Despite this, there is very little processing of fruit and vegetables. The processed products are usually of poor quality or the processing is not complete. Moreover, the limited number of processors face difficulties in achieving uniform product colour and finding appropriate packaging.

In Togo, ATVET4W piloted an initiative to train rural women in fruit and vegetable processing to improve their skills and knowledge and to address some of the following:

- Improved hygiene standards, since raw materials are commonly treated without proper cleansing or use of protective equipment;
- Appropriate packaging for the processed products;
- Drying the products directly in the sun and sometimes on roadsides.

#### Pilot Summary

“Processing for Change” was initiated to improve the level of fruit and vegetable processing in Togo. In 2018, activities were initiated in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Production and Fisheries and the Ministry of Technical Education, Training and Professional Integration – as well as the respective gender units – to develop the profession as ‘fruit and vegetable processor’, specifically with rural women in mind.

To effectively reach the target group, women's agricultural organisations were identified and ATCs were selected. A field visit enabled discussions with these partners and potential beneficiaries to better guide the implementation. Following this field visit, one private ATC (SOLAGNON) was selected as a suitable partner and nearly 100 women were identified to benefit from the intervention. So far, three women's groups have been trained in the villages of Yibouè-Kopé, Bourkou and Tidonte. Each village is known to specialise in different products; residents of Yibouè-Kopé produce and process okra,



those in Tidonte focus on dried tomato, tomato purée and chilli powder and women in Bourkou expressed the desire to develop a new income-generating activity to have an additional source of income.

The pilot was set up in stages, including:

- Identification of the most produced and perishable fruits and vegetables in Togo, which are okra, tomato and chilli;
- Design of three different solar dryers for drying fruit and vegetables;
- Development of training material on the drying of okra, chilli and tomato; this was done simultaneously with the experimentation with solar dryers by two interns;
- Training women in the best processing methods, hygiene measures and packaging.

#### Impact

The pilot project created space for peer-learning and exchange between women processors. During the training material development workshop, established fruit and vegetable processors even learned about new methods and packaging options for products.

To improve the uptake of processing skills by the beneficiaries, the training was updated to include three local languages: Nawda for women in Bourkou, Ewé for women in Yibou-Kopé and Moba for women in Tidonti. Following the training, the beneficiaries organised themselves to build a processing unit and to order the equipment needed for packaging. After seeing the quality products produced by women in Yibou-Kopé, men from the same community also expressed interest in the training. The products sold by women are increasingly appreciated by buyers. This is because revised processing methods mean they keep their colour; in addition, they are free from stones which were sometimes ingrained due to methods of drying on the roadside.

In general, women processors now do things differently namely,

- Making decisions by verbal contract with the mainly male producers to meet quality standards in order to supply certain varieties of products;
- Processing other products based on raw materials (e.g.: dried whitening okra, cut dried chilli which is well appreciated by certain consumers, etc.);
- Mastering processing technologies;
- Finding a new income-generating activity.

In terms of overall impact, this initiative will lead to the reduction of post-harvest losses and enhance nutrition and food security all year round as well as supply valuable vitamins which are lacking in normal Togolese diets.

## Going Green in Benin

### Training women in organic fertiliser production

#### Why did you take the compost training?

*"I had poor yields on my farm and also the fact that my products treated with chemical fertiliser were rotting very quickly."*

#### What are the difficulties encountered in carrying out this activity?

*"There is no shortage of difficulties, but we discussed possible challenges during the training, so we are trying our best. Often employees are the problem. Young people no longer want to work. We also encounter difficulties in funding our activities."*

#### How do you think the activity empowered you?

*All my plants are green with very little investment. I now sell at a higher cost, my production has doubled and buyers are happy with my products. My products rot less quickly at home and customers prefer them over those treated with chemical fertilisers."*



- Christiane Badet  
Director of Djidjoho Farming School

#### Why did you take the compost training?

*"To add a new activity."*

#### What are the difficulties encountered in carrying out this activity?

*"In all things there are difficulties. Previously I was a teacher and I encountered difficulties. The difficulties are at the beginning of all activities but with perseverance everything ends up working out well."*

#### How do you think the activity empowered you?

*"I have brought together several women in groups who carry out several agricultural activities, including the production of compost. We manage to sell our products even outside of Benin, in Togo. The women now manage to send their children to school and to support the household alongside the men."*



- Salatou Orou Adohi  
ZARA Compost Manager

## Women Leading Change

### Co-creating messages on agricultural resources with rural women

#### Beneficiary Story

*"The activities were exciting. Women who didn't go to school were able to express themselves. Women who had never been to school... could use a pen or pencil to visually portray their lives and daily needs. The women took pictures to represent what they want to decide, helping us to choose what information we want to give to other women and men. Honestly, it gave us confidence. We now know what the government has planned for us to get the land and the funding. We also know where to go to get access."*



- Maïssata Soura/Kara  
Departmental Union of Rice Steamers in Douna

#### Partner Story

*"The activities are very interesting and focus on ways to promote the development of women in agriculture. They have (i) given women the opportunity to express themselves on their life situation, (ii) to see what they can do to change this situation and what others (husbands, children, community leaders, government, etc.) can do to change this situation. The implementation process has provided a framework for women to better understand the environment in which they live and to identify their influences on their lives. This includes their husbands, children, community leaders, professional collaborators, etc. The process also identified all stakeholders (government, other development agencies) who can advocate for change in the implementation of women's rights in agriculture."*



- Nathalie Zoundi  
Ministry of Agriculture and Hydraulic Installations

## Women in the Driving Seat

*Driving women's empowerment through tractor operation, maintenance and management*

**Addai Agnes** completed the "Women in the Driving Seat" training with flying colours. When she started her work placement, Addai encountered some obstacles. Some of her male colleagues did not trust her with using a tractor. During the initial stages of her placement, she was not allowed to drive a tractor. Eventually Addai was allowed to operate an old tractor. Once her superiors witnessed her impressive skills, Addai was offered a job by the farm. After a few weeks with the farm, she applied for another job with a different company and after a competitive interview she was offered a job as tractor operator. Rather than being an employee, her goal is to run her own farm and use the skills she has acquired from the training to produce food. Training as a mother was not difficult for Addai because her child is in boarding school. However, she does believe that having childcare facilities would attract more mothers to participate in the training. Her message for young mothers who want to join the training is that they should always remember that babies should not hinder them from pursuing their dreams.



- **Addai Agnes**  
Tractor Operator

**Balawo Mohammed** is a mother of two, who grew up in Ghana's Ejura rural area. In her previous job, Balawo worked as a secretary for her local municipality and managed her friend's farm part-time. This is when she developed a passion for working with tractors and decided to pursue a career in tractor operations. She is currently a farm manager and tractor operator with her company. Balawo believes that women should not be limited to staying at home or being housewives, but instead contribute to economic development. After the training, Balawo plans to continue assisting her friend at the farm as a way of generating income. Balawo has an important message for other women who want to join tractor operations: "Women should join male-dominated fields, especially if training is provided for free. It is a good way of not staying at home and not being dependent on one's husband".



- **Balawo Mohammed**  
Tractor Operator

## Train, Transform, Thrive

*Empowering women-owned agribusinesses through training, coaching, mentorship and incubation*

**Valentine** has a youth mentorship programme called "Fast Track Mentors" which supports teenage mothers. When she joined the programme, she was introduced to agriculture and she borrowed land from her mother to use it as a training plot for her youth farmers. The proceeds are used mainly to buy seeds to distribute to her youth members as well as buy sanitary towels for girls in school. The farm has since transformed into three acres of commercial vegetable production under drip irrigation. "I never knew I could be a farmer and make a living out of agribusiness. This project has been my life game changer", said Valentine.



- **Valentine Simei**  
Farmer & Mentor

Before the training, **Lily** lived with her mother and produced local vegetables. The business planning training enabled her to shift to higher value produce to increase her income. Lily now focuses on high value crops and herbs as well as high value trees. She adds value to the herbs and tree byproducts using shea butter to make natural hair products. For the first time, Lily has moved into her own place. Her successful business is attracting potential shareholders who are willing to put in money. The coaching and mentorship initiative empowered Lily with the skills, knowledge and confidence to make the right decisions to change her life and business for the better.



- **Lily Okeyo**  
Agripreneur

## It Takes Two!

*A successful wife and husband duo championing joint decision-making and paving the way for women as vegetable producers*

**Ngaba and Dziko Chatata** are a successful wife and husband duo. Together they are paving the way as leading vegetable producers in Malawi. Seven years ago, the Chatatas established and now co-own Thanthwe Farms, an innovative agribusiness venture that specialises in horticulture, livestock and community outreach. With support from the ATVET4W project, Ngaba and Dziko offer mentorship and skills training to budding farmers and vulnerable households surrounding their farm in Likuni. This outgrower scheme uses a household approach to champion joint decision-making for farm and home-related management decisions. This approach has proven successful for Ngaba and Dziko as equal and empowered partners, both in marriage and their agribusiness. As a husband and business owner, Dziko understands that joint ownership and management of Thanthwe Farms gives the couple higher chances of success. If women are empowered both socially and economically, prospects for the future look brighter. The Chatatas now serve as role models for other households and agribusiness partnerships in Likuni, Malawi and beyond.



- **Ngaba & Dziko Chatata**  
*Agribusiness Owners*

**Menia's** dream is to become a successful commercial farmer. She lives in the vicinity of Likuni in Malawi and already has a small plot of land. One of the things separating Menia from her dream is the necessary information and skills training on how to utilise her land. The ATVET4W project supports Menia to attend skills and mentorship training at Thanthwe Farms. Menia and a group of other women regularly use bicycles to reach the farm – often with babies in tow, like Menia's son Brighton. Thanthwe Farms is an innovative agribusiness venture that is run by Ngaba and Dziko Chatata. Serving as a female role model to Menia and other outgrower farmers, Ngaba passes on her knowledge and skills in vegetable farming. The aim is to champion more women to become successful vegetable farmers in Malawi. Perhaps one day, Menia will be the one teaching other women on her own farm.



- **Menia Lestala**  
*Farmer*

## Processing for Change

*Women reduce post-harvest losses through processing and contract farming*

My name is **Finame**. I am part of the group of women from the Tidonti village and have followed the training on drying fruit and vegetables in Togo. The training improved my knowledge in tomato drying and allowed me to learn the use of certain measuring instruments (thermometer, humidity meter, pH meter, hygrometer) which are used to determine the products' level of drying. The possibilities of drying fruit like mango and pineapple using solar dryers were shared with the members of the group from Tidonti. At the end of this training, our group was able to sell our dried products at a higher price and therefore increase our income. Profits obtained from sales were saved at a local financial institution.

- **Finame Tanjome**  
*Fruit and Vegetable Processor*



The different stages of okra processing involve sorting, washing, cutting and drying. This allows us to improve the quality of the processed products - they keep their green colour, stay fresher longer than usual and are free of stones. This increases consumer demand. The "Processing for Change" training is of great importance as it gives us the possibility of reaching other local and national export markets. Packaging with precise measurements allows you to earn more than selling in a bowl. An idea is being born for the construction of a processing unit that is accessible to all the women who have undergone the training. This would allow them to process products in a group to better control the market.

- **Yawa Odah**  
*Okra Processor*





## LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>AESD</b>	Agricultural Engineering Services Directorate (Ghana)
<b>AMSEC</b>	Agricultural Mechanisation Service Enterprise Centres (Ghana)
<b>ATC</b>	Agricultural Training Centre
<b>ATVET4W</b>	Agricultural Technical Vocational Education and Training for Women
<b>AUDA-NEPAD</b>	African Union Development Agency - New Partnership for Africa's Development
<b>AWAK</b>	Association of Women in Agriculture (Kenya)
<b>CoE</b>	Centre of Excellence
<b>GAP II</b>	Gender Action Plan (BMZ)
<b>GIMPA</b>	Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration
<b>GIZ</b>	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
<b>IFAD</b>	International Fund for Agricultural Development
<b>IFPRI</b>	International Food Policy Research Institute
<b>INSD</b>	Institut national de la statistique et de la Démographie (Benin)
<b>MAEP</b>	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (Benin)
<b>MoFA</b>	Ministry of Food and Agriculture (Ghana)
<b>RGPH</b>	Recensement général de la population et de l'habitation (Benin)
<b>SAFI</b>	School of Agriculture for Family Independence (Malawi)
<b>SMEDI</b>	Small, Medium and Enterprise Development Institute (Malawi)
<b>WEAI</b>	Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programme (United Nations)
<b>WiAD</b>	Women in Agriculture Directorate (Ghana)
<b>WoFaAk</b>	Women Farmers Association of Kenya



