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INITIATIVE ON
Diversification in East
and Southern Africa

Strategies for promoting Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI) in the agribusiness sector in Kenya: Experiences from the field

Technical Report by Solidaridad (East and Central Africa)



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About the 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 derisked 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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SUMMARY

This report aims to explore the intersection of gender and social inclusion, with a focus on the challenges and opportunities faced by women and youth in the agribusiness sector. It examines the ways in which gender norms and stereotypes shape social inclusion, and how exclusionary practices can perpetuate gender-based inequalities. The report draws on the gender analysis studies, baseline surveys and positive case study examples from diverse settings to highlight the key issues and strategies for promoting Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI) in the agribusiness sector. It also offers recommendations for policymakers, practitioners, and civil society actors to enhance gender-responsive approaches to social inclusion, and to ensure that marginalized groups are included in decision-making processes and benefit from development interventions and underscores the importance of addressing gender-based discrimination and promoting social inclusion as a means of advancing human rights and achieving sustainable development.

These include measures such as inclusive disruptive innovation, equal involvement in policy making processes, inclusive market and production systems and representation in decision making. The report emphasizes that promoting GESI is not only a matter of social justice, but also essential for achieving sustainable development goals and building more resilient societies.

INTRODUCTION

Solidaridad is an international solution-oriented civil society organization with over 50 years of experience in developing solutions to make communities more resilient and create more sustainable supply chains. Solidaridad is currently implementing the Reclaim Sustainability! (RS) Programme which is a five-year program (2021-2025) supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kingdom of Netherlands. The program is implemented through a consortium and aims to invoke the actual meaning of sustainability in both theory and practice in global commodity supply chains. The strategic objective of the Reclaim Sustainability program is to contribute to inclusive sustainable value chains and trade in an innovative way, in which the interest, voices and rights of farmers, workers and citizens (both male and female) are represented and heard in decision making for sustainable use of natural resources, decent work, fair value distribution, and sustainable consumption.

The RS! Project takes a Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI) approach in all the program interventions. Through a lens of intersectionality, we examine different forms of inequality resulting from gender and social differences, and power imbalances, and then tailor interventions.

In this regard the Reclaim Sustainability! African Fruits and Vegetables Kenya Programme in partnership with the CGIAR Initiative on Diversification in East and Southern Africa (Ukama Ustawi) through International Water Management Institute (IWMI) work package 5 facilitated voice amplification and capacity building workshops; for both women and youth and documentation of positive case study stories that portray evidence on the benefits of diversification. The workshops were conducted through a facilitated approach that involved the use of PowerPoint presentations of key topics, discussions with and among participants, a practicum through Focused Group Discussions, presentations, and a plenary. The challenges, that women and youth face, that were highlighted included reproductive roles, gender inequality, climate change, lack of access to markets, high cost of inputs and production, exclusion in decision-making, barriers to access and control of critical productive resources and technology.

The outputs of the GESI dialogues included: networking amongst the participants, knowledge and experiences sharing on women and youth engagement in agricultural enterprise development, governance and policy-making, and climate action; identification and prioritization of key relevant lobby and advocacy issues to be articulated at the county level; visualization and development of action plans for the engagement and mobilization of women and youth for enhanced lobby and advocacy at the county level; identified capacity building needs for enhancing women empowerment for effective mainstreaming into the drive for a sustainable Agri-food system.

These activities then resulted in the development of the GESI framework and approach that can guide and inform public, private, entrepreneurial agri-business initiatives and actionable pathways to GESI-informed agri-business ecosystem policies, investments and strategies for policy interventions presented to policy actors.

1. OBJECTIVES

The general objective of Ukama Ustawi (UU) was to enable the RECLAIM Sustainability! team to organize, coordinate and implement in-depth dialogues between women and youth agri-entrepreneurs, public and private sector actors in Kenya, to discuss opportunities, constraints and experiences related to gender equality and social inclusion in food systems agri-businesses. This partnership consultancy will allow identifying:

1. What combinations of targeted technical, financial, and social capacity strengthening will enhance the agri-business capacity of marginalized women and youth, and through what interventions and approaches?
2. Actionable interventions and incentives to strengthen an enabling policy environment, incentivize a responsible private sector, and inform and empower civil society and grassroots actors to demand more inclusive and transformative agri-business.

1.1. Specific Objectives

1. Voice Amplification-a) Stakeholder mobilization and training: b) Conduct GESI dialogues with women farmers, public, private, and grassroots stakeholders.
2. Capacity Building-Capacity strengthening of women and youth engaged in agribusiness.
3. GESI Roadmap/Framework-Develop a GESI framework and approach that can guide and inform public, private, entrepreneurial agri-business initiatives.
4. Technical Frameworks-Develop local (two) and national level (one) discussion reports in Zambia and Kenya.
5. Publication-Produce "Case study evidence of positive "Stories of Change".
6. Theory of Change-Develop actionable pathways to GESI-informed agri-business ecosystem policies, investments and strategies for policy interventions presented to policy actors in Zambia & Kenya.

2. METHODOLOGY

The Reclaim Sustainability! team facilitated two GESI dialogues with focus on voice amplification and capacity building. The dialogues aimed to provide a platform for the women and youth in the Food Agribusiness ecosystems to discuss the systemic and social gender barriers, issues, and inequalities that they face in their day-to-day basis. The challenges that surfaced are intersectional and as a result of the social, economic, and political structures and systems that are exclusive and patriarchal.

The dialogues employed a participatory method through a facilitated approach that involved the use of PowerPoint presentations of key topics, discussions with and among participants, a practicum through Focused Group Discussions and presentations, and a plenary topical group discussion. Through active involvement of the youth and women farmers, there were real life situations and experiences that allowed peer to peer learning among the participants. The case studies documentation and publication were as a result of key informant interviews with open ended questions that enabled the capture of the uniqueness and authenticity of the different experiences of Solidaridad beneficiaries. The dialogues focused on the thematic areas of climate change, policy

processes, agricultural enterprises and the gender issues like unequal power relations and lack of access to productive resources and decision making for women and youth in Kenya.

3. PROJECT ACTIVITIES

3.1. Voice Amplification

In Kenya, as in many other regions of the developing world, women constitute more than 80% of the agricultural producers. While women in Kenya produce more than 70% of the food consumed in the country, they face severe constraints than men in accessing productive resources including markets, credit, education and training, and support services such as agricultural extension services. Even though the agriculture sector is increasingly becoming more technologically sophisticated, commercially oriented and globally integrated, women have little or almost no access to agricultural information provided by agricultural extension officers. Closing the gender gap in agriculture would produce significant gains by increasing agricultural productivity, reducing poverty and hunger, and promoting sustainable rural development. In this regard, one of the GESI Dialogues focused on voice amplification of women sector actors in the Agribusiness ecosystem.

The Reclaim Sustainability Programme partnered with the Kenya National Federation of Farmers to bring together women in food agribusiness. The summit was a one-day workshop with 42 participants brought together from various parts of the country to discuss the issues facing them, share experiences on the progress of the previous goals, and enhance their capacity on topical issues that shall propel them to better provide mentorship, in order to amplify their voices and make them active sector players. The summit also aimed to emphasize on the importance of women involvement in climate action (adaptation and resilience building strategies to climate change shocks and emergencies) for enhanced food and nutrition security, owing to their susceptibility to hunger and malnutrition.

The voice amplification activity provided a platform for networking, exchange of ideas, and experiences and enhanced peer learning amongst the women farmers from across the country. Further, the convention convened different key actors like SNV and Agriterro to strengthen their focus on revitalizing their efforts towards strengthening the participation of women in;

- (a) agricultural enterprise and development,
- (b) governance and policymaking processes and
- (c) climate-action for a sustainable agri-food system in Kenya.

In the long run, the KENAFF Women Summit envisioned to progressively champion for vibrant women participation, in the fore in policymaking, contribute to the reduction of the factors that hinder women from fully harnessing their potential in agriculture, overcome restrictive sociocultural barriers to access to resources and build a formidable force of women's voice in agriculture.

3.2. Capacity Building

Agriculture remains the backbone of Kenya's economy, directly contributing 30% of the annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and another 27% indirect contribution (Economic Survey, 2016). The sector is therefore critical in creating employment and uplifting the living standards of the Kenyan people. It's against this background that Agriculture has been identified as one of the key sectors to deliver the 10 per cent annual economic growth rate envisaged in the economic pillar of the Kenya Vision 2030. This growth will be achieved through transforming small-scale agriculture from subsistence to innovative, commercially oriented, and modern agriculture. Considering the high rate of youth unemployment and underemployment, the agricultural sector offers multiple livelihood and employment opportunities.

The consultancy partnership through UU's work package 5 enabled Solidaridad's Reclaim Sustainability team to facilitate a 3-day capacity building and GESI dialogue with 170 youth to support young farmers and agricultural value chain actors with the knowledge, confidence, skills and social capital to contribute to a sustainable agri-food system in Kenya. The workshop was facilitated in partnership with the Kenya National Federation of Farmers and other stakeholders like the SNV and Agritererra.

The 3-day Capacity building activity had numerous panels led and open discussions under the 3 themes;

1. Youth in Policy Action
2. Youth for Climate Action
3. Youth in Agribusiness

3.2.1. Youth in Policy Action

The youth do not adequately participate in policy dialogue making the developed strategies less responsive to the unique needs of the youth. In situations where policies exist, there are some cultural barriers that hinder productive participation of youth in agribusiness. Under Youth and Policy Action, the youth were trained in policy dialogues, lobby and advocacy and youth involvement in policy making.

3.2.2. Youth for Climate Action.

Climate change is a global reality that poses multiple constraints in the agricultural sector. It disproportionately impacts on youth vulnerability by making agricultural engagement riskier, posing a challenge to break away from the poverty cycle. There is inadequate use of technologies and innovations that enhance youth resilience to the adverse effects of climate change. There is also a low level of awareness of green jobs and opportunities for climate smart agriculture. Furthermore, there is limited development and upgrading of skills and knowledge to match with the dynamics of climate change for practitioners in agriculture. The youth were trained on climate resilient agribusiness, the role of the youth in climate action and Kenya's 2016 Climate Change Act.

3.2.3. Youth in Agribusiness.

Viable agribusiness initiatives require capital investment and insurance as a necessity. Agriculture is considered risky by financiers due to its high vulnerability to external shocks including extreme weather events, pest and disease outbreaks and seasonality. Insurance in agriculture is not well

developed, yet insurance and credit usually go hand-in-hand to reduce possible lending risks for financial institutions. In addition, the available financial products do not adequately target the youth and are not easily accessible. Formal financial service providers also perceive lending to youth as risky because of their weak financial capacity, lack of collateral, poor saving culture, minimal financial track records, and education systems that do not equip them with financial literacy. Majority of the youth often do not have experience in agriculture making it difficult for them to engage in contract farming, which would normally be a valuable strategy for securing credit. Other challenges include; limited access to banking institutions in some areas, reluctance to exploit the available credit facilities due to uncertainties and low level of awareness, as well as limited insurance to mitigate against risks in agricultural enterprises. For youth in Agribusiness, the training focused on the following key topics: opportunities for youth in agribusiness, challenges that hinder youth participation in agribusiness and the role of technology and innovation in agribusiness.

3.3. Case study evidence of positive “Stories of Change”

Agribusiness continues to play a vital role in the livelihood of Kenyan people. Over decades, the sector has acted as a source of income to farmers as well as contributed immensely to job creation in addition to the country’s economic development. GESI is a core thematic theme in Solidaridad East and Central Africa, and in this regard the Reclaim Sustainability (RS!) Programme applies a gender equality and intersectionality lens in its lobby and advocacy efforts. Although the RS! Programme is yet to produce evidence based positive stories of success, the team used previously implemented projects to highlight how diversification, in particular venturing into agro entrepreneurial activities to diversify income impacts the farmers and strengthens their resilience on matters of food security, nutrition and improves quality of life. The team was able to document stories from the ‘Practice for Change Project’, Food Security Kenya and Food For All Projects. These case stories¹ highlighted the importance of applying a gender lens in access to productive technologies, equal access to good agricultural training, inclusive access to market connections, inclusive agribusiness training and promotion of household well being where there is joint decision making.

3.3.1. Case Story 1 - Meet Mary.

Mary Wairimu Oloo is not only a wife and mother of four, but an entrepreneur in Agriculture with a VISION! Her ambition to grow an agricultural business empire is a pillar of strength to other women in her community. She decided to expand her family’s land that is 5.75 acre of farm in Cherengani sub-county, Trans Nzoia county after retiring from her government job in 2017. That decision motivated by hope and her strong desire to earn a decent living post-retirement continues to inspire other women in her community to follow their own dreams! *“As an intervention for climate risks and food security, I achieve an economic and nutritional balance by having maize, beans, green indigenous vegetables (spider net, saget/sagaa and black nightshade, managu), poultry keeping, animal husbandry, beekeeping, piggyery, dairy cows, sheep, horticultural fruits and vegetables soya beans, apples and avocados.”* Mary Wairimu Oloo. Mary’s strategy to embrace different crops and diversify into animal husbandry was to secure her households food supply and ensure there is a consistent flow of income

¹ These stories were done with consent from the participants for pictures and videos to be taken by the team.

however little she made. This ensured her children stayed focused in school while maintaining a balanced nutrition at home. Coffee farming was one escape project to increase her income and better attend to her household needs.

Link to full story [article](#) and [video](#).

3.3.2. Case Story 2 - A Bright Future for Kenya Coffee.

Gibson Kinyua and Faith Wambui are a husband-and-wife team with more than 20 years of experience farming coffee in Nyeri, Kenya. Joining Solidaridad's 'Food Security through Improved Resilience of Smallholder Coffee Farmers in Ethiopia and Kenya' (FOSEK) has transformed their farming operation. Through diversification, combining export crop production with the production of food crops for local markets and home consumption, farming households were supported to stabilize and increase their income by broadening their sources and livelihoods. *"We expanded our coffee and dairy production by acquiring an additional piece of land (one acre) and two additional cows. In addition, we started growing bananas, arrow roots, maize, Napier grass, and vegetables. We earn annual income from coffee, monthly income from dairy, and weekly income from arrowroots and bananas. We use maize and vegetables for household consumption while Napier grass and maize provide animal feeds,"* says Mr. Kinyua. Effects of climate change, rising costs of inputs, poor infrastructure, unpredictable coffee prices are some of the major challenges impacting the performance of the coffee sector in Kenya. Smallholder coffee farmers must embrace various strategies to enhance their resilience and ensure profitability. Solidaridad promoted climate-smart agriculture among other practices to enable farmers like Mr. and Mrs. Kinyua to increase their productivity and profitability.

[Link to read full story.](#)

3.3.3. Case Story 3 - Building a Sustainable Dairy Sector in Kenya.

Muthiru Dairy Farmers Cooperative Society, located in Tharaka Nithi county, is one of five cooperatives that Solidaridad East & Central Africa supports through the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) funded Food for All Project in Kenya (F4APK). The cooperative was registered as a self-help group in 1996 and later incorporated in 2013 as a cooperative. With over 4,000 members, Muthiru is among the largest milk aggregation centers within the catchment area, collecting an average of 16,000 liters of milk each day. Muthiru Cooperative has now been transformed into a 'dairy hub', a one-stop-shop, for dairy farmers thus assuring them of a reliable market for their milk and embedded services that contribute towards increased productivity, food safety and reduced food loss. The role that the cooperative plays in bulking and chilling using innovative technologies minimizes spoilage and ensures a higher return on investment for the smallholder farmer. While the farmers of Muthiru Cooperative also benefit from economies of scale and a regular, dependable market for their raw milk. Farmers within the locality visit Kaburu's farm to learn and collect fodder seeds and cuttings to plant in their farms to increase access to nutritious feed for their dairy cows. Another plot consists of an open drip vegetable crop demonstration plot for farmers' practical training on climate change adaptation methodologies through the adoption of smart water for agriculture technologies.

[Link to read full story.](#)

4. PROJECT OUTCOMES

4.1. GESI Framework

To achieve its higher-level objectives, as outlined above, the project activities in Kenya focused on sustainable and inclusive food agribusiness ecosystems. These engagements formed the basis for future initiatives around amplification of voices in civil society, GESI advocacy, and acceleration of disruptive innovations. In particular, the GESI dialogues managed to achieve the objective of co-creating contextually relevant and inclusive interventions targeting women and youth in agri-business, and in understanding how these initiatives can either be initiated, or sustained in collaboration with local multi-stakeholder partners, including women and youth producers.

The following is a roadmap of interventions emanating from the GESI dialogues. Given the short period of the UU initiative, these are ‘quick wins’ which can be incorporated into Solidaridad’s existing RS! Programme interventions or in collaboration with UU’s other work packages (WPs).

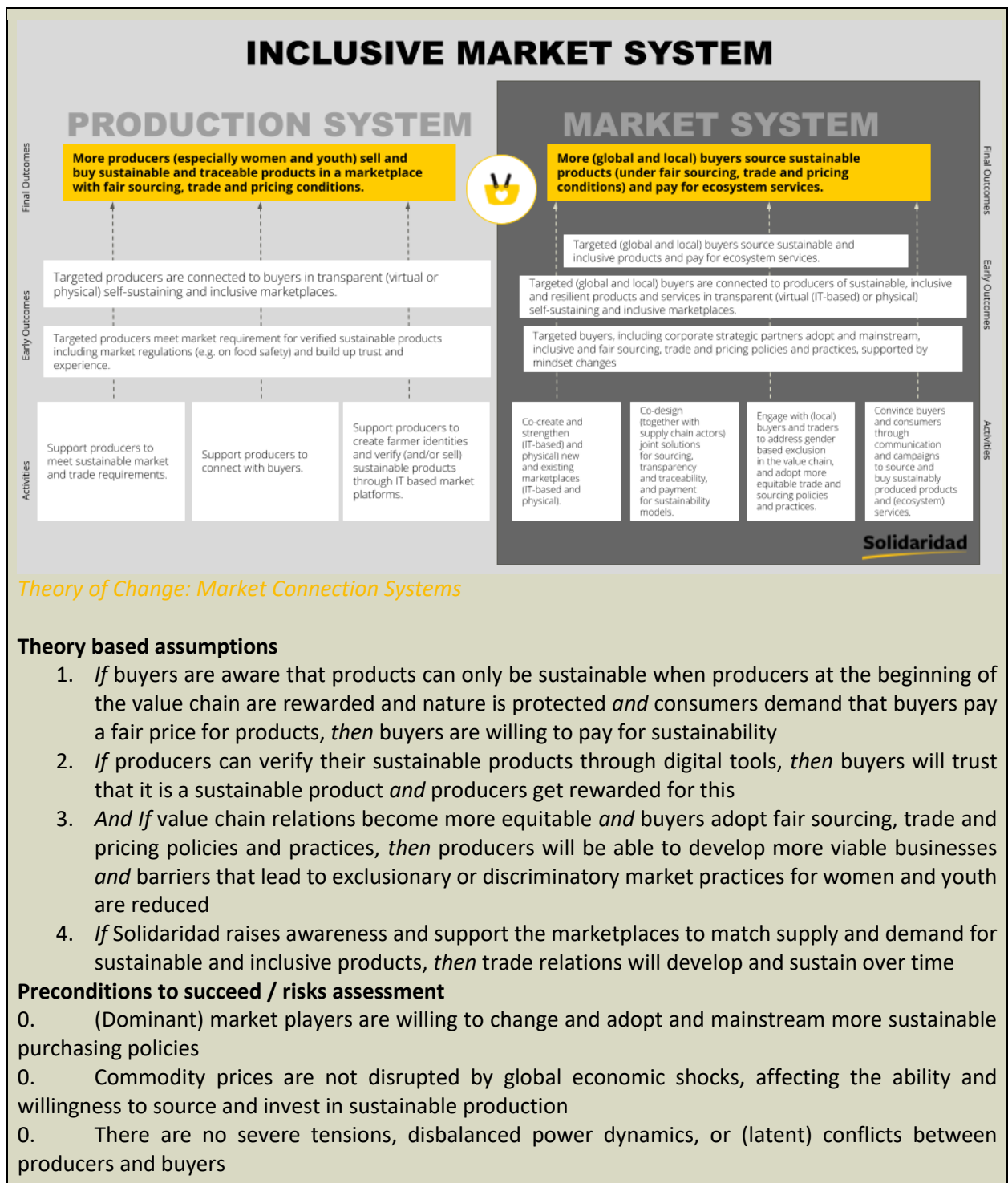
GESI Roadmap

Intervention	Impact on gender empowerment	Resources required to adopt the recommendation
Identify and collaborate with gender sensitive agri-business Mentors to support women and youth with agro-business advisory Information (targeting women led agri-businesses, cooperatives, start-ups, SMEs etc)	High	Agri-Business mentors and coaches across supply chains. Potential link with WP 3
Establish youth and women self-help saving groups (SHG) that facilitate access to local finance	Medium/High	Local Savings Group Programmes and resources
Support Gender Sensitive Innovations and Agri-Tech Services e.g., mechanization, and enablers for irrigation	Medium	Link with UU WP1
Work closely with private sector investors, financial institutions, corporates to promote inclusivity trade policies/finance models - and establish score cards for these to create inclusivity competitiveness	Medium	Current Programme activities
Launch and operate incubation	High	Entrepreneurship training materials Link with UU WP3

and acceleration program that focuses of value-added products, including grants for women and youth winners, and demo day for investor matchmaking activities.		
Establish a local policy hub that facilitates women and youth participation in policy dialogues and access to information	Medium/high	WP 4 linkages Solidaridad's MSP platforms

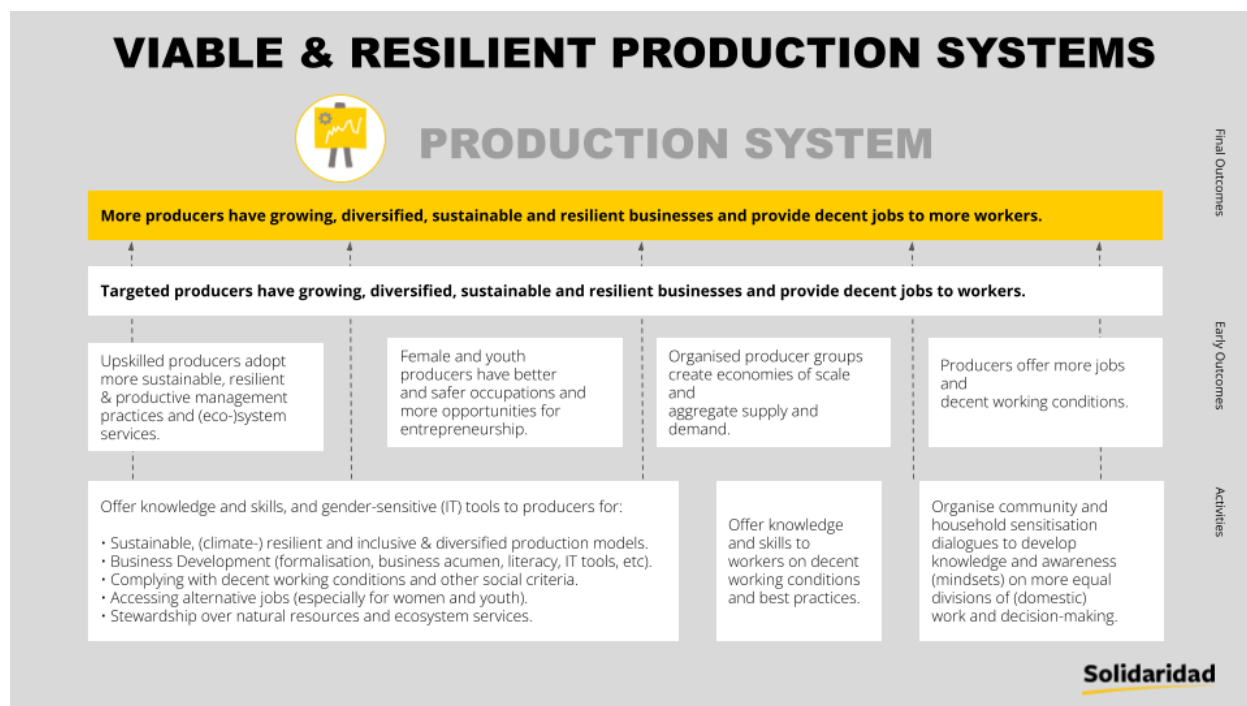
4.2. Theory Of Change; Actionable pathways to GESI-informed agri-business

The following Theory of Change and Pathways proposed herein borrow from Solidaridad's latest Pathways to Prosperity Programme; whose overall vision is to see producers and workers thrive by participating in supply chains that are economically profitable, socially responsible, and environmentally sound. These are very much relevant and well suited to respond to issues raised during the voice amplification and capacity building activities as reflected in this report. Furthermore, there is a clear need to achieve inclusive services to avoid (un)intentional exclusion of women, youth, and marginalized groups across agri-value chains. Achievement of true gender transformation in the agriculture sector will require tailor made strategies, tools, and resources to enhance gender and social sensitivity among multiple sectors and players. This will ensure that products, technologies, inputs, and services are equally accessible for and benefit men, women, and youth. Concurrently, women and youth-specific capacity building training such as financial literacy, agri-business and value addition access and management, and leadership skills and support with accessing (IT) technologies, are built into the proposed ToC and proposed interventions.



Proposed ToC 1: (source: Solidaridad P2P Programme)

This pathway addresses the need for women and youth farmers being enabled to meet stringent market requirements, and the need for buyers to provide inclusive business investments. This will help solve the problems rooted in **unequal power dynamics** and the lack of inclusive **business models** to trade, and sourcing sustainably and offering fair prices for women and youth products/produce.



Proposed ToC 2: (source: Solidaridad P2P Programme)

Theory based Assumptions

1. *If* farmers understand the benefits of improved practices and have access to inputs, *then* they are willing to invest in them
2. *If* data can be funneled back, *then* producers will be incentivised to (continue to) adopt smart practices
3. *If* farmers are onboarded, sensitised and *if* have gained awareness, *then* their motivation to engage in sustainable production methods increases

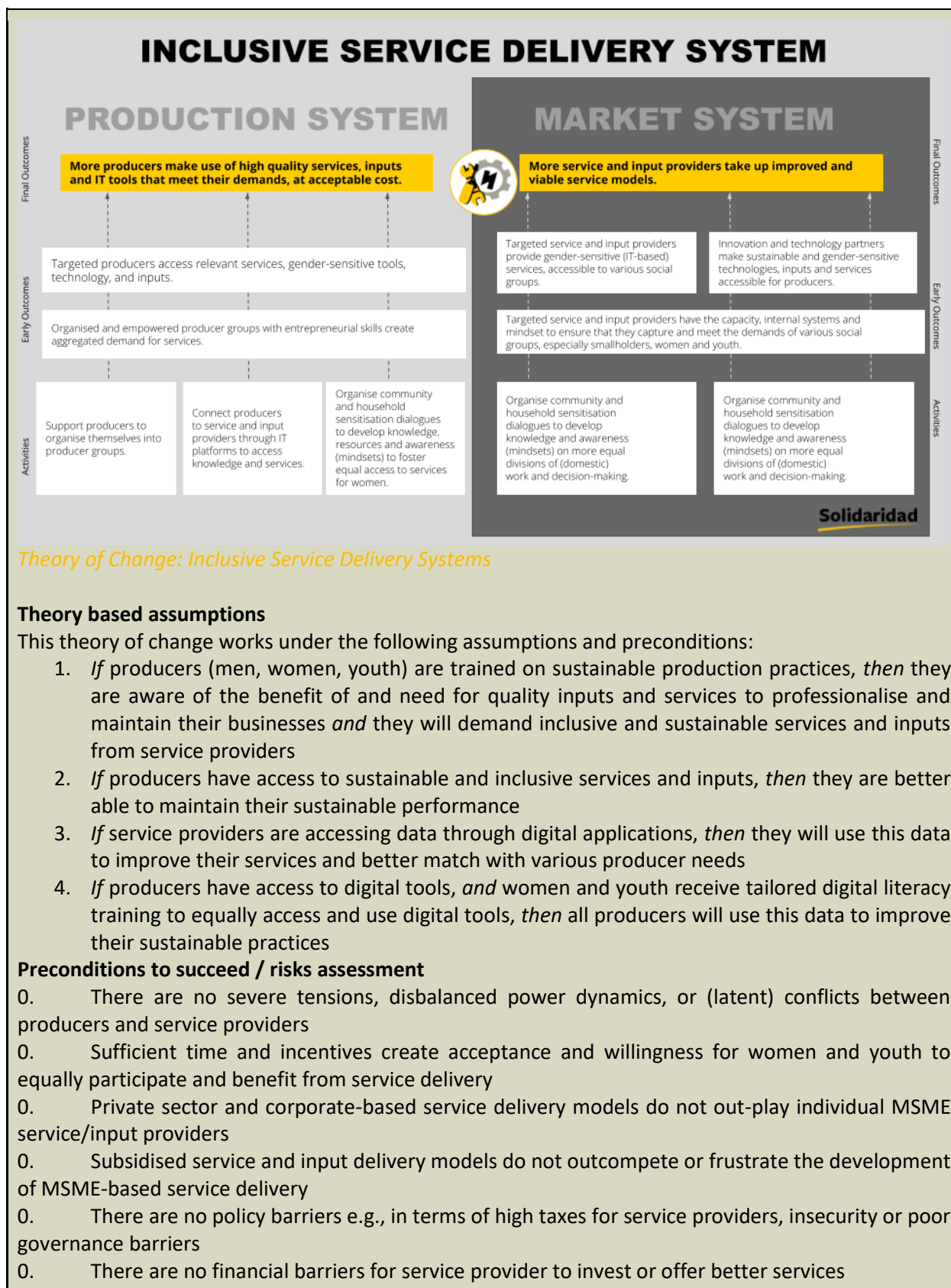
Preconditions to succeed / risks assessment

0. Extreme weather events do not disproportionately affect yields
0. Community-based tensions or conflicts do not occur or severely affect land ownership or land management
0. Availability and reasonable prices of farm inputs, including finance
0. Sufficient time and incentives create acceptance and willingness for women and youth to equally participate and benefit in formal supply chains

This pathway focuses on addressing the root causes that lie underneath the current vulnerable production systems which include:

1. Limited availability resilient production systems.
2. Women and youth producers' lack of capacity, knowledge and entrepreneurial skills and mindsets.
3. Shortage of decent work and agri- opportunities (especially for youth).
4. Lacking stewardship over resources to ensure ecosystem services.

To address these root causes, there is a need to offer rich (innovative) knowledge transfer and skills building to producers, their workers, and local communities in order for producers and their workforces to adopt sustainable (climate) smart production models to increase and diversify their income and optimize their businesses, offering higher quality products and (ecosystem) services, and more decent jobs.



Proposed ToC 3: (source: Solidaridad P2P Programme)

This pathway seeks to address the key barriers to develop, strengthen and maintain a sustainable and profitable agri- business, which are:

- i) weak or absent inclusive service delivery and technology that responds to the needs of the various target groups
- ii) a poorly organized producer base

Therefore, supporting the organization of women and youth producer base with enhanced entrepreneurial skills and governance to create demand for services is essential. In addition, dedicated dialogues at household and community level that are intended to raise awareness and opportunities for youth and women to equitably access services should be considered.

Furthermore, in support of stronger and more gender inclusive service delivery, support for service and knowledge providers and innovation hubs to develop a business in service delivery to ensure farmers enhanced and lasting access to relevant technology, (financial) inputs, products and services is needed. Such services include, for instance, farm inputs provision (e.g., seedlings, planting materials, agrochemicals, fertilizer, financial services and loans, light tools, and equipment), on-farm services (planting, farm maintenance, harvesting, haulage, etc.), processing services; trade and marketing services, and information services as well as formalization and certification support (business registration, permits, local certification, international certification).

5. PROJECT OUTPUT

The GESI dialogues highlighted key challenges that women and youth in agribusiness face and proposed actions to mitigate the same. The table below highlights the issues and proposed actions;

Strategic Plan Pillars	Issues Raised	Proposed Actions /Strategies
Pillar 1: Lobby advocacy, and policy action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited agriculture extension services and information on international standards for export produce - Insufficient women, youth leaders to participate in agriculture and livestock lobbying, advocacy, and policy actions at the county level - Lack of visibility of women and Youth groups at the county level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lobby the county government to hire agriculture extension officers and create awareness on all existing international standards - Identify potential leaders in their counties who can help with agricultural and livestock and build their capacity on lobbying, advocacy, and policy issues - Organize courtesy calls and meetings with relevant county government officials i.e., agriculture, livestock, gender, and trade, to enhance the visibility of the women and youth groups.

Pillar 2: Member services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low women groups membership in counties - Unsafe markets for produce and limited market linkages and knowledge on value addition - Limited forum for networking and sharing farming experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organize meetings and forums to sensitize, mobilize and recruit new women groups in the counties - Organize field days and exchange visits in counties and regions to allow women to participate and understand the importance of joining the National Farmers Federation to access the relevant training and information. - Form a WhatsApp group to share timely market and climate issues information. - Organize women farmers' forums in counties and regions for sharing farming experiences and best practices.
Pillar 3: Gender and Social Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited participation of women and youth in financial decision-making at the household level - Land ownership restrictions imposed on women due to cultural beliefs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create platforms for mentoring women and youth on financial decision-making involvement - Empower and build capacities of women in counties on their rights to own assets such as land
Pillar 4: Farmer-driven climate action and resilience building against shocks and emergencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minimum participation of women in tree planting exercises - Inadequate knowledge of how to establish tree seedlings nurseries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a women's tree planting day in each region and county - Lobby county governments to provide extension officers to educate women on the suitable tree species for the area and how to grow and nurture them

6. OVERALL ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The private and public sectors in Kenya are informed by various policies that govern and regulate the industry. The policies, however, do not explicitly state that they are gender-sensitive or include gender-specific provisions. However, it is important to note that the horticulture industry in Kenya has a significant gender dimension, with women making up a large proportion of the workforce, particularly in the production and harvesting of horticultural crops.

Therefore, while the policies may not explicitly address gender issues, their implementation and impact may have gender-specific implications. For example, policies that promote access to credit and finance for small-scale food agribusiness producers may have a greater impact on women farmers, who may face greater barriers to accessing finance due to gender-based discrimination.

Similarly, policies that aim to improve infrastructure and transport networks in rural areas may have a greater impact on women, who may be responsible for transporting produce to markets and may face gender-specific challenges in accessing transport.

Therefore, while the policies may not be explicitly gender-sensitive, it is important to consider their potential gender implications and to ensure that they are implemented in a way that promotes gender equality and the empowerment of women in the agribusiness sector. This may involve additional interventions, such as training and capacity-building programs, to address gender-specific barriers and challenges faced by women in the industry.

In order to achieve true gender transformation, change as envisioned under UU's WP5, the initiative should consider increasing support towards a system change process that involves multiple partnerships/connections across the other UU work packages. Adequate budget allocations for the proposed interventions (as proposed above), need to be considered to address the root causes of inclusivity problems. Borrowing from Solidaridad's P2P Programme, we would like to recommend collaboration with UU in supporting the following accelerators or drivers that are instrumental to ensure our transformative gender impact will sustain over time. Herein, we have identified five important **core drivers** for effective change:

1. Digital Solutions and new technologies offer ample opportunities for transformative change, by facilitating transparency and verification, enabling fair market connection and by facilitating outreach to youth and women producers with knowledge, intelligence, and services.
2. Climate Action, climate smart and regenerative agricultural practices and the sale of carbon credits can be very beneficial for women smallholder farmers and open interesting opportunities to improve livelihoods.
3. Gender and Social Inclusion is a necessity and good for business and society as inclusive approaches aim to catalyze the economic potential of women and youth. Additionally, women and youth empowerment is key to achieve the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs 5, 8, and 10).
4. Learning and Innovation is an essential driver to constantly improve, be agile and benefit from new developments and insights leading to effective programming and lasting results.
5. Public Private Partnerships are a key driver to make supply chains more inclusive and sustainable, by providing gender sensitive technology and innovation, applying sustainable sourcing principles at scale.

7. APPENDIX

Appendix 1; [Voice Amplification Report](#).

Appendix 2; [Capacity Building Report](#).

Appendix 3; Publication of Positive Stories of Change.

3.1. Meet Mary ([Article](#) and [Video](#)).

3.2. [A Bright Future for Kenyan Coffee](#).

3.3. [Building a Sustainable Dairy Sector in Kenya](#).

ABOUT THE ORGANIZERS

International Water Management Institute (IWMI)

The International Water Management Institute (IWMI) is an international, research-for-development organization that works with governments, civil society and the private sector to solve water problems in developing countries and scale up solutions. Through partnership, IWMI combines research on the sustainable use of water and land resources, knowledge services and products with capacity strengthening, dialogue and policy analysis to support implementation of water management solutions for agriculture, ecosystems, climate change and inclusive economic growth. Headquartered in Colombo, Sri Lanka, IWMI is a CGIAR Research Center with offices in 15 countries and a global network of scientists operating in more than 55 countries.

CGIAR

CGIAR is a global research partnership for a food-secure future. CGIAR science is dedicated to transforming food, land, and water systems in a climate crisis. Its research is carried out by 13 CGIAR Centers/Alliances in close collaboration with hundreds of partners, including national and regional research institutes, civil society organizations, academia, development organizations and the private sector. We would like to thank all funders who support this research through their contributions to the CGIAR Trust Fund: www.cgiar.org/funders. To learn more about Ukama Ustawi and other initiatives in the CGIAR research portfolio, please visit www.cgiar.org/cgiar-portfolio.