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



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GOOD PRACTICES FOR WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN BEYOND PRODUCTION AGRICULTURE INTERVENTIONS: A GENDERED LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

FINAL REPORT

FEED THE FUTURE ADVANCING WOMEN'S
EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

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USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Advancing Women's Economic Empowerment

Advancing Women's Economic Empowerment (AWE) Call Order 4, Good Practices for Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Agriculture and Women's Empowerment Beyond Production, which was funded October 1, 2019. AWE provides consulting services for the Bureau for Resilience and Food Security, Feed the Future Focused and Aligned Missions, and Global Food Security Strategy Target and Aligned Missions worldwide in the areas of gender integration, gender-sensitive design, implementation of agricultural programming, building gender capacity of personnel and programming, and knowledge management and learning.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADVANCE II	Agricultural Development and Value Chain Enhancement II
AY	Advancing Youth
AgDiv	Agriculture Diversification
AIP	Agricultural Innovation Program
AIA	Agricultural Inputs Activity
AIRN	Agro-inputs retailer network
AVC	Agriculture Value Chain
AWE	Advancing Women’s Empowerment (program)
COR	Contracting officer’s representative
ENGINE	Enabling Growth through Investment and Enterprise Program
FinGAP	Financing Ghanaian Agriculture Project
FPL	Innovation Lab for Food Processing and Post-Harvest Handling
Inova	Agricultural Innovations
IP	Implementing partner
KII	Key informant interview
KISAN II	Knowledge-Based Integrated Sustainable Agriculture in Nepal II
LEO	Leveraging Economic Opportunities
LPIN	Livestock Production for Improved Nutrition
LSP	Livestock service provider
MEL	Monitoring, evaluation, and learning
MFI	Microfinance institution
MSME	Micro, small, and medium enterprise
PRIME	Pastoralist Areas Resilience Improvement through Market Expansion
PSDAG	Private Sector Driven Agricultural Growth
REGAL-AG	Resilience and Economic Growth in Arid Lands – Accelerated Growth
RFS	Bureau for Resilience and Food Security
SAFE	Solutions for African Food Enterprises
SAITH	Southern Africa Trade and Investment Hub
SME	Small and medium enterprise
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VSLA	Village savings and loan association
WEAI	Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index
WEAI4VC	WEAI for Value Chains
WHO	World Health Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Feed the Future Advancing Women's Empowerment (AWE) Program is a 5-year activity to enhance women's empowerment and gender equality in agricultural systems. One of AWE's key learning topics is identifying and assessing the impact of good practices for women's empowerment in beyond production activities. To better comprehend the gender gap, the AWE team conducted a landscape analysis on the nature, scope, and scale of women's empowerment in beyond production interventions, and how outcomes are monitored, analyzed, and reported.

AWE performed a desk review and selected key informant interviews of 20 active and recently completed Feed the Future projects with substantial beyond production activities in the agriculture sector. The objectives of the research were to assess whether and how Feed the Future efforts in beyond production activities are affecting women's empowerment, and identify opportunities and practices to increase women's participation in and returns from higher value activities in agribusiness or employment. The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. Are Feed the Future efforts in beyond production activities affecting women's empowerment?
2. How are Feed the Future efforts in beyond production activities affecting women's empowerment?
3. What are the opportunities and practices to increase women's participation in and returns from higher value activities in agribusiness or employment?

KEY FINDINGS

FINDING 1: Some of the reviewed projects had broad scopes, while others worked exclusively in beyond production nodes.

More than half of the reviewed projects worked exclusively in beyond production activities, while eight also supported production-related activities. Projects carried out beyond production interventions at all nodes of the value chain. Many intervened at multiple nodes, and five projects reported intervening along all seven nodes. Within each node, projects conducted a range of beyond production approaches, including training, organizational strengthening, providing linkages, technology and infrastructure, information systems and standards/certification.

FINDING 2: A majority of reviewed projects developed gender mainstreaming strategies to guide beyond production activities.

More than half of the 20 projects carried out gender analyses and used the findings to develop gender strategies.

FINDING 3: Projects implemented a wide range of beyond production activities to support and engage women

Gender-specific interventions were found across the different nodes of the value chain. Almost all projects used a gender integration approach to promote equitable participation of women in activities such as training, grant funding, access to finance, and so on. A little over half the projects also put in place activities specifically targeted at women.

FINDING 4: Projects often adapted beyond production activities by seeking ways to increase women's participation.

Women were not always able to benefit from project interventions for a variety of reasons, including lack of information, assets, mobility, or cultural context. In such cases, projects adapted their interventions or requirements for women's participation.

FINDING 5: Projects adapted approaches to enable women to access credit to invest in beyond production livelihood opportunities.

Project narratives typically focused on linking women's groups to microfinance institutions or establishing/strengthening village savings and loan associations. Where projects linked women to formal financial institutions, they tended to work through women's groups rather than individual women to supply more security to the financial institutions that provide credit or loans.

FINDING 6: Beyond production approaches that targeted youth were able to achieve gender balance in integrated interventions.

A number of projects implemented interventions targeting youth in beyond production activities. These interventions were typically able to reach around 50 percent of young women.

FINDING 7: Beyond production indicators rarely captured gender-differentiated impact data or information about women's empowerment.

Whether or not projects included performance indicators on beyond production and to what extent those indicators provided information about gender-differentiated impacts or women's empowerment varied greatly. Many projects used standard Feed the Future indicators, and while production indicators were generally sex-disaggregated, beyond production indicators were not.

FINDING 8: Few projects used targeted indicators to measure progress or impacts of gender-specific or women's empowerment-focused beyond production work.

Projects used a wide variety of indicators to measure gender-specific impacts. While some indicators clearly pointed to beyond production work, such as value of new private-sector investment in women- and youth-owned businesses, in other cases, it was difficult to determine gender-specific impacts without further disaggregation.

FINDING 9: The Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) was designed to focus on agricultural production, and therefore, was not an effective tool for measuring women's empowerment in beyond production activities.

In accordance with its design, the WEAI is primarily used to measure empowerment in the context of agricultural production based on individual-level data. With just two exceptions, implementing partners did not apply the WEAI domains and indicators of relevancy to beyond production activities.

INTRODUCTION

The Feed the Future Advancing Women's Empowerment (AWE) Program is a 5-year activity to enhance women's empowerment and gender equality in agricultural systems. The AWE team, together with the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID's) Bureau for Resilience and Food Security (RFS) and other USAID stakeholders, developed a learning and research agenda to guide the program in generating new knowledge and evidence on promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in agriculture and Feed the Future programs. One of the key topics that emerged was identifying and assessing the impact of good practices for women's empowerment beyond production. Many implementers engage in activities with both men and women in beyond production roles (e.g., in agro-processing, retail, trade, input, financial service provision, and transport and logistics). However, knowledge on the gendered dimensions behind these efforts is limited.

To better comprehend this gap, the AWE team conducted a gendered landscape analysis to increase understanding of the nature, scope, and scale of women's participation, benefit, and empowerment in beyond production interventions. It also looked at the methods and indicators through which these outcomes are monitored, analyzed, and reported. Further, to provide guidance to USAID, implementing partners (IPs), and the broader agriculture development community, for implementation and monitoring.

RESEARCH PURPOSE

This landscape analysis examined 20 active and recently completed Feed the Future projects that engage substantially in beyond production activities in the agriculture sector. The purpose of the research was not to evaluate projects' work, but to summarize substantial beyond production efforts and describe the approaches used to integrate gender into their implementation, monitoring, and learning.

Findings from the analysis will be used to inform future research and learning opportunities for AWE and other USAID projects and IPs. The report will be shared with USAID and external stakeholders through different dissemination opportunities.

Research Objectives

- Assess whether and how Feed the Future efforts in beyond production affect women's empowerment
- Identify opportunities and practices to increase women's participation in and returns from higher value activities in agribusiness or employment

This landscape analysis was conducted as the first phase under the AWE Beyond Production learning stream, one of three core research areas under the AWE Research and Learning Agenda.¹ The next

¹ The AWE Learning and Research Agenda is designed to generate new knowledge that addresses continuing impediments to women's empowerment in agriculture and Feed the Future programs. The agenda will support discovery of good practices emerging from implementation so that learning is focused, captured, communicated, and applied through adaptive management. Developed through consultation with USAID and key stakeholders, AWE's Research and Learning Agenda focuses on three learning streams: Women's Empowerment in Beyond Production, Gender-Based Violence in Agriculture, and Decision Making in Agriculture.

phase of the Beyond Production learning stream will be an in-depth impact assessment that will evaluate the gains and experiences of women involved in one case selected from the 20 activities examined in this study. Findings from this analysis will be shared with the impact assessment research team, and used to inform their design and selection of the project to be assessed.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The analysis examined the following topics to achieve the core research objectives. See [Annex A: Research Questions](#) for sub-questions under each topic.

1. Are Feed the Future efforts in beyond production activities affecting women's empowerment?
2. How are Feed the Future efforts in beyond production activities affecting women's empowerment?
3. What are the opportunities and practices to increase women's participation in and returns from higher value activities in agribusiness or employment?

This analysis builds on a similar landscape analysis published in July 2016, under the Leveraging Economic Opportunities (LEO) project, which consolidated existing data regarding women's economic empowerment in Feed the Future interventions outside of the production value chain stage and identified areas where further research is needed.²

² More information available at: <https://www.marketlinks.org/library/women-non-production-roles-agriculture-literature-review-promising-practices>

Findings from LEO Landscape Analysis:

- *Value chain nodes*: Women are primarily active in marketing and post-harvest handling, with a minor focus on service provision and processing
- *Common interventions*: Training, organizational strengthening, the development of linkages, and provision of technology or infrastructure
- *Female participation in interventions*: **Lower** around service provision, input provision, and post-harvest handling, **even** around marketing or business or, and **even or higher** around processing interventions; business development was by far the most common category for strategies to include and empower women
- *Approaches*: Fairly even distribution at the input development, marketing, post-harvest handling, and processing value chain levels; service provision activities had relatively few strategies for reaching women
- *Monitoring and evaluation*: Only about 25 percent of the non-production interventions provided sex-disaggregated data

Recommendations:

- Provide targeted support to female-owned enterprises
- Expand initiatives to increase women's participation at the input and service provision value chain levels
- Connect women to buyers through events, the signing of contracts, or the establishment of new structures or systems such as aggregation points
- Offer training designed to decrease gender gaps in business skills and knowledge
- Conduct research to close information gaps related to men's and women's participation in non-production interventions and their benefits from this work

RESEARCH METHODS AND LIMITATIONS

RESEARCH DESIGN

The landscape analysis was designed through a consultative process between the AWE team and USAID, taking into account learning from the previous LEO report and considerations for the subsequent impact assessment. Data gathering for the landscape analysis was designed to take place in two phases:

- Phase 1: A document review for all identified projects
- Phase 2: Key informant interviews (KIIs) with four projects to enable deeper reflection on approaches, measurement, and learning

A research team, comprised of a technical lead and research specialist, led phases 1 and 2; the AWE gender and agriculture systems advisor and the AWE team lead provided oversight. During the design process, it was unclear how consistent project data would be and to what extent the team would be able to quantify findings. Therefore, the research team applied a mixed-methods approach, using both qualitative and quantitative data for this analysis, with the expectation that the qualitative data would provide the most in-depth insights.

PROJECT SELECTION

The research team prepared a list of all eligible Feed the Future projects. The team held a consultation with USAID, including the AWE contracting officer's representative (COR), a market systems specialist, and a private sector advisor, to review and align assumptions regarding the beyond production landscape analysis and finalize the list of 20 projects for the document review, using an agreed upon set of selection criteria.

Project Selection Criteria

- Donor is USAID Feed the Future
- Project is ongoing or ended within the past 5 years
- Project is implemented in a Feed the Future target or aligned country
- Regional programs that include target/aligned countries were also considered
- Geographic/technical diversity is represented
- There is sufficient engagement with women to enhance the learning agenda around women's benefit and/or empowerment in beyond production interventions

The selected projects represented a broad geographic range, covering nine countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and two in Asia, as well as three multi-country projects. Projects targeted various commodities, from crops to livestock to fisheries. Some worked on a range of interventions from production to marketing, while others targeted singular nodes of the value chain. They applied different methodologies, with the more recent projects adopting a market systems approach. See [Annex B](#) for the final project list, and a summary of their overall project and gender objectives and beyond production interventions.

METHODOLOGY

Document Collection and Review: Once projects were selected, the research team carried out an online search for relevant documents, including scanning of the USAID Development Experience Clearinghouse and the Agrilinks/Marketlink database. After the initial search, the team attempted to fill any gaps by reaching out to implementing organizations and asking USAID to source missing documents where possible. The research team collected and reviewed more than 280 documents, including annual, quarterly, and final reports; gender analyses and strategies; value chain analyses; Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plans/Performance Monitoring Plans; evaluations; blog posts and success stories; and discrete studies. The research team examined beyond production work at the seven different nodes of the value chain listed below and analyzed all data using a Microsoft Excel-based process with tagging for key themes and reference points.

- Inputs development – interventions with value chain actors involved in input production, distribution, or retail
- Service provision – interventions with private actors who deliver services, such as information, advice, and animal healthcare
- Post-harvest handling – interventions at the farm or aggregate level to support activities such as shelling, drying, aggregation, and storage
- Processing – interventions to support entrepreneurs and businesses to transform agricultural products

- Marketing – interventions to assist farmers and other actors in trading or selling goods
- Business development – interventions to strengthen business, management, and financial capacity of value chain actors
- Access to finance – interventions to facilitate access to finance for different value chain actors³

Key Informant Interviews: As envisioned in the landscape analysis design, the focus of the KIIs was determined during the document review. As the team reviewed the documents, consistent gaps in information emerged across projects. There was an abundance of data about production-related support to female farmers and how this support affected their lives. There was also some information about how female farmers benefitted from project support to other beyond production actors—for example, strengthening an input dealer network usually meant women had improved access to inputs and technical assistance, leading to increased yields and incomes. However, the information about women participating in nodes of the value chains outside of production was often limited. The research team saw value in conducting KIIs with four projects to confirm and build on what was learned during the document review, as well as explore their approaches, whether and how projects applied data, challenges and lessons learned, and required support for improved implementation.

KIIs were conducted with four projects: Agricultural Development and Value Chain Enhancement II (ADVANCE II), Agricultural Inputs Activity (AIA), Agricultural Innovations (Inova), and Naatal Mbay. See [Annex C](#) for the KII guide, which includes questions asked of all four projects. For confidentiality reasons, questions written specifically for each of the four projects are not included.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The research team incorporated into the KIIs an informed consent section to explain the nature of the research and that participation is entirely voluntary, obtain consent to record. The team clarified that participants' names, locations, institutions, and any other identifiable information would be kept anonymous. The consent stated the purpose of this research, which was not to conduct a formal assessment or critique, but to identify common trends, challenges, and successes as part of a learning exercise.

LIMITATIONS

While the document harvesting process was extensive, the research team was not always able to access the full set of required documents for each project, which led to information gaps that could have affected some conclusions and recommendations. To address this limitation, a draft of the report findings for each project was shared with the IPs for review prior to publication.

AWE's overarching goal is providing targeted technical assistance to missions, IPs, RFS, and USAID offices to increase women's participation, productivity, profit, and benefit in agricultural systems. The research team sought to identify and specify approaches that engaged women as participants, and

³ In some cases, access to finance was described in general terms. It was difficult to separate access to finance interventions for farmers from beyond production.

benefitted and empowered women where possible. However, because project reporting may have accounted simple participation data as empowerment, or because reports lacked specific data on benefit or empowerment in beyond production interventions, it was often difficult to draw conclusions beyond engagement levels. As a result, the authors have used the term "women's empowerment" sparingly throughout the document, even though this may not reflect the true results of project goals or support.

In addition, during the document review phase, the research team found that the indicators and data related to beyond production were applied inconsistently. When projects used similar indicators, they were not always disaggregated by sex. Some used custom indicators or gender-specific indicators, but the information could not be aggregated. Market systems projects tracked systemic change, which meant that indicators were often targeted at the market actor or firm level; this approach is not directly comparable to more traditional USAID MEL processes that measure change at individual or household level. Consequently, it was not always possible to make comparisons across projects, determine direct empowerment impacts of activities, pull out best practices, or quantify findings. If the data were not available, the research team had to draw conclusions based on the narrative in different reports. In line with the scope of the study, the team did not reach out to individual projects to clarify content or review findings, with the exception of the four projects selected for KIIs. Consequently, findings are solely based on the information provided in reports and documentation.

Lastly, this study was initiated in October 2019, programs were selected in November, desk reviews were completed between November 2019 and January 2020, and KIIs were conducted between February and early March 2020. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a public health emergency of international concern on January 30, and a pandemic on March 11, when there were 118,000 cases worldwide. At the time of writing this report, the number of confirmed cases has risen to almost 2.7 million globally. The bulk of the programming—and the reporting about those interventions—occurred in a pre-COVID-19 environment. The analysis contained in this report, therefore, maintains that lens. However, the research team respectfully acknowledges that the pandemic will heavily affect many conditions in the contexts where the programs work, and future interventions will most certainly need to account for COVID-19 recovery efforts, as well as the impacts of the pandemic on households, communities, and social, economic, and food systems globally.

FINDINGS

SECTION I: IMPLEMENTATION

When reviewing project documents or carrying out KIIs, the research team observed that in response to USAID guidance, IPs have progressively worked to increase female farmers' participation, productivity, profit, and benefit in the agriculture sector. It was easy for the team to find numerous examples of innovative approaches to increasing women's productivity. However, it was more challenging to extract information on standard and consistent approaches to engaging women in other nodes of agriculture value chains. It is important to note that this does not necessarily mean implementers are not engaging women or conducting activities in these areas; rather, project reports, which follow current donor requirements, do not include information about progress or activities in

these areas as a standard practice. In general, USAID missions do not require IPs to report specifically on women’s empowerment in beyond production activities, so it is difficult to determine whether the dearth of reporting reflects a lack of actual activity in this area or insufficient reporting requirements.

This section summarizes the key approaches and trends in gender-focused beyond production activities the research team was able to extract by reviewing project documents, as well as information gathered from the KILs that shed more light on the challenges and opportunities IPs face when engaging with women in beyond production activities.

FINDING I: Some of the reviewed projects had broad scopes, while others worked exclusively in beyond production nodes.

All reviewed projects carried out some level of beyond production interventions. More than half worked exclusively in beyond production, while eight also supported production-related activities.

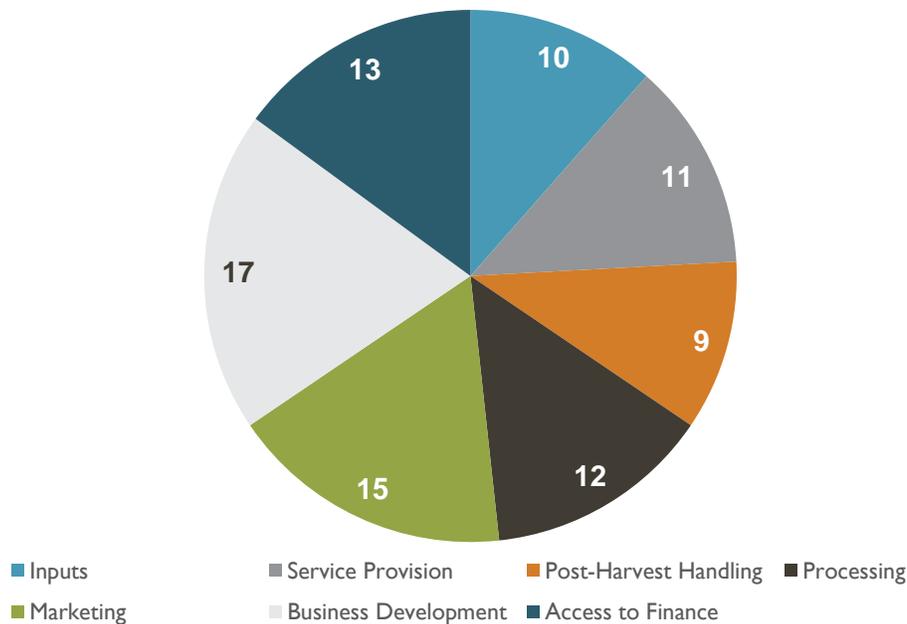
MULTI-NODE PROJECTS THAT INCLUDED BEYOND PRODUCTION ACTIVITIES:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADVANCE II • Agriculture Diversification (AgDiv) Activity • Agriculture Value Chain (AVC) • Pastoralist Areas Resilience Improvement through Market Expansion (PRIME) • Resilience and Economic Growth in Arid Lands – Accelerated Growth (REGAL-AG) • Livestock Production for Improved Nutrition (LPIN) • Naatal Mbay • Knowledge-Based Integrated Sustainable Agriculture in Nepal (KISAN) II
BEYOND PRODUCTION-FOCUSED PROJECTS:	
Multi-node excluding production:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inova
Inputs:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural Innovation Program (AIP) • AIA
Post-harvest handling/processing:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation Lab for Food Processing and Post-Harvest Handling (FPL) • Solutions for African Food Enterprises (SAFE) • Comfish I and II
Investment facilitation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financing Ghanaian Agriculture Project (FinGAP) • Enabling Growth through Investment and Enterprise Program (ENGINE) • Private Sector Driven Agricultural Growth (PSDAG) • Ngurize Nshore
Business development:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advancing Youth (AY)
Trade:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southern Africa Trade and Investment Hub (SAITH)

It is worth noting that in some cases, a mission’s Feed the Future portfolio included projects that focused on production and other value chain nodes, such as ADVANCE II, or targeted a singular production node, such as FinGAP. For example, USAID designed FinGAP explicitly to support other IPs in their work to facilitate financing to their beneficiaries. In line with this mandate, FinGAP spearheaded coordination meetings across IPs to refer clients for financing, provide technical assistance on performance-based sub-award design, and conduct joint work planning. It is possible that in cases such as these, projects coordinated or capitalized on opportunities to work with groups of women who engaged with them at different points in a value chain, but this could be difficult to capture in standard reporting structures.

KII note: According to KII participants who worked in different countries, coordination among Feed the Future projects varied in effectiveness (overall and specifically related to beyond production interventions). This was usually related to how mission and IP leadership and staff managed the cooperation. One KII participant said they were able to coordinate on beyond production and gender issues to some extent with the Feed the Future project that focused on production, and more successfully with a USAID-funded youth-focused project. The type of methodology used also had an impact. A participant from a market systems project said their chief of party believed that coordinating with projects that collaborated with civil society stakeholders conflicted with the project approach.

Projects carried out beyond production interventions at all nodes of the value chain. Many intervened at multiple nodes, and five projects (ADVANCE II, AgDiv, Naatal Mbay, PRIME, and PSDAG) reported intervening along all seven nodes. As seen in *Exhibit 1*, the most common node for interventions was business development, with 17 of 20 projects reporting activities at this node. Other significant nodes include marketing (15/20) and access to finance (13/20). Post-harvest handling (9/20) and inputs (10/20) had the lowest number of reported interventions.

Exhibit 1: Number of projects with interventions in each value chain node



Within each node, projects conducted a range of beyond production approaches. Common approaches included the following:

- **Training** with different actors on best practices and technical topics
- **Organizational strengthening**, including support such as business development services, coaching, and training
- **Providing linkages** between different value chain actors and to networks
- **Technology and infrastructure**—different strategies for value chain stakeholders to acquire equipment/structures to support improved practices
- **Information systems**, including communications technology, mobile money and other digital financial services, and extension/information sharing on relevant topics
- **Standards/certification**, including setting industry standards or assisting actors in getting certification for seeds, food safety, and export

All projects implemented training activities, but trainers, participants, and content varied. Training for farmers, input suppliers, service providers, processors, traders, financial institutions, and others covered a range of topics, including technical, business, technology adoption, and financial literacy. In some cases, the projects conducted the training directly—FPL conducted training sessions for extension agents, farmers, traders, and processors on developed technologies. Others, like AY, partnered with local organizations to develop and deliver vocational training to youth. In other instances, projects, such as SAITH, used technical experts to train and certify companies on meeting different regional and international compliance requirements. Most projects did not report on the length of the training courses, but the ones that did showed a variety of training length and intensity. While many ranged from 1 to 4 days, LPIN offered a 15-day intensive training for female livestock service providers (LSPs), and AIA offered a 14-week certificate course for safe use of inputs to input agro-dealers. Some projects (e.g., AIA, AIP, AY, and SAFE) facilitated joint training for project participants from across the value chains; others targeted specific groups such as processors, entrepreneurs, financial institutions, and so on.

Providing linkages was the second most common approach from the document review, especially common at the service provision, input, and processing levels. Many linkages were vertical among different value chain actors, such as service providers to lead farmers. However, there were also horizontal linkages facilitated among actors of the same type, such as input suppliers to form an input retailer network in the case of AIP in Bangladesh. Technology and acquisition of equipment was the most common in the processing node, followed by post-harvest handling, input, and service provision. Organizational strengthening was found across all nodes, except for post-harvest, and information systems was the least common approach only found at the input and service provision levels.

FINDING 2: A majority of reviewed projects developed gender mainstreaming strategies to guide beyond production activities.

More than half of the 20 projects carried out gender analyses, either as a stand-alone study or embedded into other start-up studies, and used the findings to develop gender strategies. The research

team reviewed 12 gender strategies, of which 10 included specific beyond production interventions across all nodes of the value chain.⁴

When looking at beyond production interventions, projects took different approaches. Some applied a gender integration approach, where gender concerns were mainstreamed across all activities—for example, Naatal Mbay, which engaged women’s groups as part of its consolidation networks that provided services to smallholders. Others designed specific beyond production interventions targeting women, either because they found they were not able to reach women through the standard project activities, or they established that women were not in a position to benefit from regular project activities due to a lack of information, resources, and so on. For example, when they realized women were not able to safely market their produce at traditional markets in Bangladesh, AVC supported the creation of separate women’s vegetable markets. Many projects combined the two approaches.

The research team reviewed quarterly, annual, and final reports to determine whether recommended activities in the gender strategies were implemented; they found that in most cases, they at least partially were. In several cases, the activities proposed in the gender strategy were not reported on, and it was not possible to easily determine the specific reason(s) for this. KIs revealed that in some cases, projects found the gender strategy to be overly ambitious and difficult to implement due to bandwidth limitations or that the proposed activities—while beneficial—were outside of the project’s direct scope. It appears that the level of support from headquarters and project leadership, as well as a high-capacity, full-time project gender advisor may have an impact on how the gender strategy was rolled out. Multiple interviewees also noted that missions’ guidance affected the implementation of the strategies by either demonstrating that gender was not a priority in the beyond production activities or providing feedback that proposed activities in the gender strategy were beyond the project scope.

Although the team did not access or review gender analyses or strategies for the remaining projects, some of them still carried out gender integration and/or women’s empowerment in beyond production activities. It is unclear whether there was any difference in impact between interventions designed as a result of a gender analysis and those that were not. Desk review findings shown that:

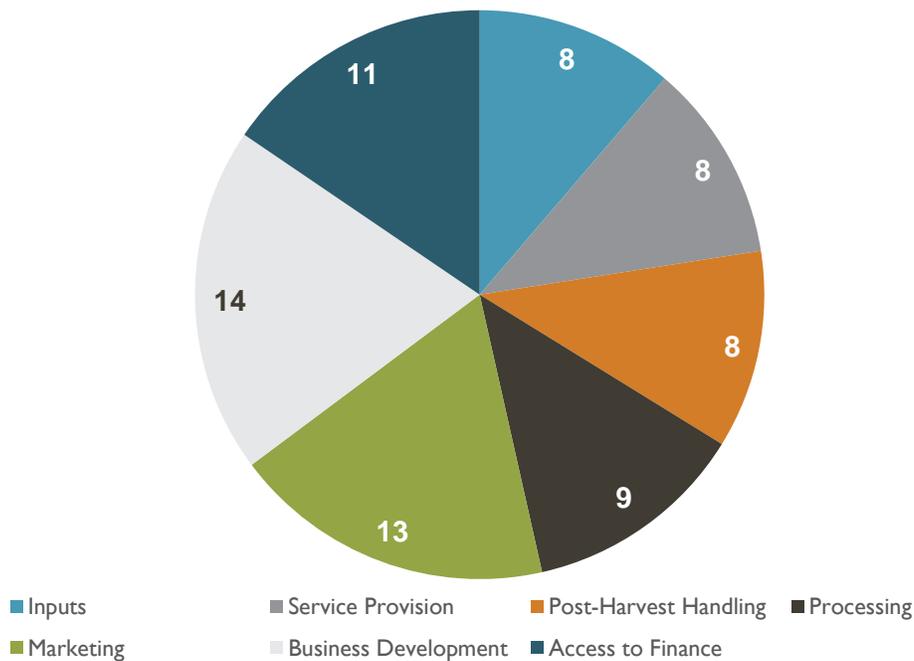
Although FPL had no official gender strategy, it carried out studies to learn about gender-related opportunities and constraints, set targets for women’s participation in trainings and implemented several activities to engage women in processing [...] In the follow-on, they are doing extensive research on constraints and opportunities for women to engage in post-harvest handling, processing, and marketing, which will be used to design interventions. They will include a set of fully disaggregated indicators to track progress.

⁴ At least one project had a gender strategy the research team was not able to review.

FINDING 3: Projects implemented a wide range of beyond production activities to support and engage women

As *Exhibit 2* shows, gender-specific interventions were found across the different nodes of the value chain. Business development was the most common, with 14 of 20 projects reporting gendered interventions. Projects typically brought on business development service providers to conduct training on business and financial literacy, as well as coaching to women’s groups or women owned small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Marketing (13/20) and access to finance (11/20) interventions were also common. Examples of gendered interventions in marketing included training for women to commercialize products and supporting the participation of women’s groups and SMEs in trade fairs. For access to finance, many projects facilitated linkages between women’s groups and SMEs to financial institutions. Some projects, such as ENGINE, also supported financial institutions to develop or adapt financial products to meet the needs of women and youth.

Exhibit 2: Number of projects with gender interventions in each value chain node



Almost all projects (17/20) used a gender integration approach in the nodes to promote equitable participation of women in activities such as training, grant funding, access to finance, and so on. A little over half the projects (12/20) also put in place activities specifically targeted at women. The most common approach was to provide additional or customized training to women’s groups, entrepreneurs, or others on technical, business, and financial topics. Other common targeted approaches were linking women to access to finance, either through village savings and loans associations (VSLAs) or formal finance, and using a champion (male or female) or mentorship model to build the skills of women entrepreneurs or producer associations.

Exhibit 3 highlights illustrative mainstreaming and targeted interventions in different value chain nodes. See [Annex B](#) for a more comprehensive list of overall and gendered beyond production activities.

Exhibit 3: Illustrative gendered beyond production interventions

NODE	GENDER INTEGRATION/MAINSTREAMING	WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT/TARGETED APPROACHES
Inputs	Encourage input firms to engage equal numbers of female and male village-based agents (Inova)	Provide in-kind grants and technical assistance to help women set up input retail shops (AIP)
Service Provision	Train 10% of female extension agents; all receive information on working with male and female farmers (ADVANCE II)	Organize foundation training specifically to establish female animal health livestock producers; link female livestock service providers to internship opportunities and private-sector companies to deliver animal health services (LPIN)
Post-Harvest Handling	Compare how men vs. women access grain drying, grain moisture determination, and storage information to inform gender-sensitive extension efforts (FPL)	Replicate soy kits using locally sourced equipment; establish ongoing mentorship for women entrepreneurs (AgDiv)
Processing	Ensure women's participation in training on cereal processing and natural fortification, entrepreneurship, etc. (FPL)	Construct demonstration artisanal fish processing facility specifically for a local women's group; obtain license to export to Europe (Comfish)
Marketing	Conduct targeted training for women and youth on fodder production and marketing (REGAL-AG)	Provide the Hub's support for eight women-owned or managed companies to exhibit at the Summer Fancy Food Show 2018, in New York, under the Africa Fine Foods Pavilion (SAITH)
Business Development	Enable women's groups and women-owned micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to purchase business development services from project-supported providers (ENGINE)	Actively pursue female consulting firms to encourage them to join the business development network, leading to more female agribusinesses served (FinGAP)
Access to Finance	Facilitate linkages between microfinance institutions (MFIs) and women who own and run small businesses (PRIME)	Support service providers to begin to aggregate women's financing applications into one larger application for submission to rural community banks and MFIs, thereby easing collateral requirements, reducing the transaction costs for the banks evaluating them, and increasing the likelihood of loan approval (FinGAP)

Some projects, primarily the multi-node ones, tended to share more narrative on women's engagement in specific women's beyond production interventions through project documents and success stories than on overall, project-wide beyond production interventions. As above, without more information, the research team was unsure of the extent of beyond production interventions that reached women through the gender integration strategy. Findings from desk reviews shown that:

PRIME's first two results were related to strengthening the livestock value chain. Project documents did not include significant information on women's empowerment beyond production interventions related to these results. The gender focus in the documents was focused [sic] on supporting pastoralist women to transition out of pastoralism, mainly through facilitating training in fields like garment making and hair dressing, which offer less growth potential compared to input supply or feed processing.

The research showed that context, scope, and methodology influenced how projects supported women in beyond production work.

Country and commodity context:

Gender analyses and other studies, such as value chain assessments that applied a gender lens, identified and described gender differences and the relevance of gender issues in the local context, enabling projects to more effectively target or customize their approaches. The document review and KIIs showed that country- or commodity-specific constraints and opportunities affected the approach. In terms of country context, the KII participants confirmed that it was much more straightforward to engage women in beyond production activities in countries where women were already active in those roles (see KII note).

KII note: One participant said that a significant number of women already involved in the sector the project targeted was part of what made the project's gender approach successful. In this case, they had no gender strategy, but were able to reach 38 percent women business owners/employees because of high presence. Another participant said that although they mainstreamed gender across project components, the fact that they worked in a country where women were particularly disadvantaged made it challenging. As a result, they put the most emphasis on gender in the limited areas where women were already present.

In terms of how value chain selection influenced the strategy for engaging women in beyond production, the research team observed two significant patterns:

1. *Projects targeted commodities that do not traditionally attract large numbers of women:* In flagship projects and/or projects, where USAID prescribes the value chains a program will work in, the crops may not traditionally be considered “female crops.” In these cases, the gender work is heavily focused on increasing the number of female farmers the project targets. Identifying women who work in beyond production roles in these value chains can be challenging; working to bring in new female actors can take a great deal of effort that projects may feel is outside the scope of their assignment. One KII participant also mentioned the risk of moving women too quickly into new areas, without enough expertise or a financial safety net. Failure could not only put those women in a difficult position, but also affect the perceptions of both men and women about whether women are ready to play such a role.

ADVANCE II worked in maize, rice and soya staple crops, which in Ghana are not traditionally considered “female crops.” Finding women at higher nodes of the value chains is not common in a country where women typically do not own land or other assets, and social norms dictate that they should remain at home. The three value chains were prescribed by USAID, and the project had to design a gender strategy within that context. The strategy was based on a gender analysis, which found that women were not in an immediate position to benefit from women’s empowerment in beyond production activities, and recommended activities were primarily focused on lessening the inequality between women and men and building women’s capacity to engage.

2. *Projects targeted commodities where women were present:* Certain flagship projects targeted a range of value chains, some of which were considered “female crops.” In these cases, projects tended to

focus on commodities where women were traditionally present rather than work to increase women's participation in "non-traditional" commodities.

AVC targeted eight value chains. While it treated gender as a cross-cutting initiative, the project primarily targeted women in beyond production activities in value chains where women are more present in Bangladesh, such as floriculture. In addition to providing platforms and market linkages, AVC promoted the status of female floriculture farmers, which made up 5 percent of the total [farmers], and encouraged market investment in the sector through flower design training and support on branding and marketing.

Other projects targeted just one commodity where women were known to be present and active in different roles along the value chain, including beyond production activities such as processing, trading, and so on. For example, LPIN, PRIME, and REGAL-AG worked in livestock, and Comfish worked in the fisheries sector. Among the livestock projects under review in the study, one did intensive work with women as livestock producers, while another, in a different country, demonstrated only limited work with women business owners. However, it was not possible to draw any overall conclusions on livestock value chain beyond production approaches given the small sample and the varying country contexts. Nevertheless, because of women's existing and significant engagement in multiple nodes of livestock value chains, these sectors can provide interesting opportunities for IPs to build on and/or expand women's beyond production roles.

LPIN worked with women in various roles as LSPs and entrepreneurs. LSPs are traditionally men due to sociocultural norms and mobility issues, but LPIN sensitized families and communities to support women to take on this role, partnering with local universities to provide a 15-day foundational training to women to become animal health LSPs. Following the training, the activity facilitated two-month internships for the women with government livestock offices, as well as held matchmaking events to link women to private sector animal feed and medicine companies. The project also provided training to women fodder and dairy entrepreneurs and worked with private sector partners to provide training and products to women to become input retailers in hard to reach areas.

Scope: The emphasis on gender integration within flagship projects, even those that do not work directly on productivity, often appeared primarily to be on making sure women smallholder farmers had access to the services and information that enabled them to farm more efficiently. Increasing the number of women who work in the higher nodes of the value chains was not the priority, although there were flagship projects that provided some technical and financial support to women in these areas.

KII note: A chief of party of a multi-node project confirmed the focus was on helping women increase productivity. The project's primary counterparts were higher level value chain stakeholders, such as larger commercial farmers, input dealers, processors, and so on. It did not deliberately seek out women at these levels; instead, it made sure female farmers had access to the resources and information they provided. The project's gendered beyond production approach was opportunistic. Staff did not look for women-owned businesses. However, when they encountered them, they tried to give them extra attention and find ways to support them—for example, by putting in place a smaller, required cost share percentage for equipment grants. They emphasized that had USAID requested it, they could have formalized and expanded these efforts.

Projects with discrete scopes outside of production were often more deliberate in targeting women in beyond production roles than the flagship projects, perhaps because it was more straightforward under a narrow scope or the project was fully focused on beyond production.

In Senegal, Comfish and Comfish Plus worked mainly at the production and governance levels. All beyond production work was targeted towards women artisanal fish processors and was designed to provide them with the skills, information, and networks they needed to participate meaningfully in the sector. Some examples include the provision of hygiene and post-harvest training, as well as financial literacy and business management. Comfish also linked women fish processors to revolving credit programs, at first through project funds and later, through government-extended lines of credit.

When IPs noted that women were not always able to benefit from project support for a variety of reasons, including lack of information, assets, and mobility or cultural context, they were often able to adapt their interventions or requirements for participation so women could enter the project.

SAFE noted that as an industry, food processing was male dominated. Despite women's participation as farmers, food retailers, and consumers, they were poorly represented among food scientists. Realizing that the original design did not address this, the program began to assess what it could do to address the lack of women in the industry. It reached out to women's business associations to identify companies that were women-owned or who had women in management, and created an internship program to help facilitate women's transition from being students of food science to finding employment in the sector.

Methodology: Projects implemented under a more "traditional" value chain approach were able to intervene directly to target and support women in beyond production roles.

As part of its gender strategy, AIP partnered with local NGOs [nongovernmental organizations] to offer in-kind grants and technical assistance to establish women's input retailer shops. Based on project learning, the project later built in community acceptance sessions and established women "Champion" mentors. It also established an initiative to help women retailers become 'bKash' (mobile money) vendors for additional revenue in order to help women input dealers diversify and earn additional income.

Such projects also tended to employ methods such as grant requirements or partnership agreements to ensure partners' interest and accountability for gender integration and women's empowerment. The value chain projects reviewed under this study were more likely to make financial or capacity-building support to partners conditional on achieving gender targets.

PSDAG integrated gender and youth issues throughout its grant process (RFA [request for application], application, grant evaluation criteria, gender analysis

KII note: A staff member from a market systems project said they could guide partner firms and try to demonstrate the commercial advantage of working or hiring women, but at the end of the day, it was up to them. The chief of party for this project did not believe the project itself or civil society had a role to play in bringing women business owners' capacity up to a level where they could compete with men. They thought it had to come directly through private-sector facilitation.

in pre-award assessment, contract with specific gender targets) with private sector companies in order to ensure equitable benefit.

FinGAP included a bonus within the performance incentive scheme to encourage financial institutions and service providers to identify and facilitate financing for women-led agribusinesses.

Market Systems Development

USAID's market system development approach builds the competitiveness and resilience of local economic systems to deliver a sustained flow of benefits to actors, including the poor and otherwise disadvantaged or excluded, which continues to grow beyond the life of the project. This approach leverages the incentives and resources of the private sector, as well as connected political and social systems to drive structural and behavioral changes that improve the flow of benefits to market actors. When adopting a purist approach to market systems, a project serves as a facilitator incentivizing private-sector partners and other stakeholders to develop inclusive business models and initiatives that engage with women, rather than mandate it. An inclusive market development approach can also employ more direct delivery practices, or "push support," to bring women and other vulnerable populations to a level where they can compete effectively with men. *For more information, visit: https://beamexchange.org/uploads/filer_public/58/e9/58e97cfb-73ec-48af-b6be-9eaf51656356/frameworkforinclusivemsd2014_compressed.pdf*

Like the value chain projects, the market systems projects the research team examined also addressed multiple nodes of the value chain with an end goal of benefitting smallholder farmers. Because these projects work primarily through facilitation—engaging market actors to strengthen their business models and the broader agriculture system, these projects were more likely to work through market actor partners to promote women's engagement in beyond production than to implement activities directly. To achieve this goal, they tended to promote a business case for engaging women in various roles—processors, traders, aggregators, suppliers, and buyers—with the goal of influencing market actors' decision making. Once market actors understood the business value of engaging women, market systems projects may provide support to strengthen actors' ability to address gender gaps or increase women's engagement in a particular node, sector, or business operation. Because reporting on these interventions primarily focused on achieving systemic change to enable female farmers to improve productivity, rather than deliberately supporting women to engage and benefit from beyond production opportunities, it is difficult to ascertain the effectiveness of these approaches for promoting women's engagement in beyond production.

FINDING 4: Projects often adapted beyond production activities by seeking ways to increase women's participation.

Women were not always able to benefit from project interventions for a variety of reasons, including lack of information, assets, mobility, or cultural context. In such cases, projects adapted their interventions or requirements for participation so women could participate in the activities or be eligible for support, services, or resources. In the example below, the project found it easier to reach women business owners in a rural context than ask them to travel to the urban center. A KII participant

reiterated this and said that women input dealers they supported tended to be in more remote areas and have smaller businesses than men.

FinGAP hosted a large Agribusiness Investment Summit in Accra each year to bring together actors in the agribusiness financing space across the supply, demand, and enabling environment areas of the sector. For women to access this opportunity, the project also hosted a series of “Mini-Summits” in rural areas where upstream actors are located to facilitate business linkages between women-led business service providers, SMEs [small and medium enterprises], and FIs [financial institutions].

Some of the women’s beyond production interventions targeted agricultural value chains or opportunities within a value chain that were community based, required little investment to start up and maintain, and could provide individual women or women’s groups with some income and promote household food security. Projects used different strategies to support these endeavors, including full or cost-share grants (in kind or cash), links to MFIs, or the promotion of community savings groups.

The ADVANCE II project worked to scale up agricultural investments to improve the competitiveness of the soybean value chain. In Ghana, men tend to dominate commercial soy production, while it is considered a household nutrition crop for women. The project supported women on community-based processing for soybean, transforming it into foods like soy kebab and soy-fortified cereals to market in their communities to earn some income, or for home consumption, especially for children.

AgDiv set up an intervention to replicate the soy kits used to produce soy milk to increase protein for children and pregnant women. AgDiv worked with the Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources to reproduce the kits using locally sourced equipment. Over 80 percent of soy kit entrepreneurs were female. Profits were enough to pay off a soy kit in a year, and have money left over as income.

It was unclear whether projects chose to target these activities because they found they were the best opportunities for women, or they considered these types of interventions as stepping-stones for women to access larger opportunities.

Projects tapped women who succeed in beyond production roles to become role models: In many of the countries where Feed the Future projects work, social constraints limit women’s participation in higher nodes of the value chain. Even if the number of supported female business owners was small, at least 25 percent of reviewed projects brought successful women forward both to mentor other women and demonstrate to the general population that women could play such a role. Mentorship was not always solely targeted toward women. AY offered a 3-month coaching program for entrepreneurs following training, and AgDiv provided ongoing mentorship for soymilk processing cooperatives. AIP was the only project to mention linking male mentors with female business owners. There was not sufficient information to determine through the document review whether these efforts were systematic or sustained. Some projects tracked perceptions around women’s changing roles, but it was unclear what, if any, impact this type of activity had on generating interest from other women. It

was also unclear whether projects chose to support the few powerful women who were already relatively capacitated instead of challenging themselves to seek out a broader range of female entrepreneurs with the potential to grow.

KII notes: When asked about women in beyond production activities, two chiefs of party named specific successful women rather than describing the overall project approach. One KII participant said there were some examples of strong women who helped them gain momentum. They were able to leverage those positive role models and champions, setting them up to become mentors to smaller female business owners. In some cases, these rural businesses became outlets or distribution points for the larger businesses. Another KII participant highlighted a few women entrepreneurs who were able to grow from a small or mid-scale business to a large operation with project's support. These women were typically exceptions to the rule—they could tap into resources and networks that allowed them greater access to finance, markets, and so on.

Projects supported mixed and women's groups in beyond production activities, but the link to empowerment remains unclear: Many projects carried out beyond production interventions involving mixed gender groups, for example, in marketing or sector associations. In a few of those cases, projects introduced approaches to increase women's participation and promote women's leadership in beyond production groups.

Naatal Mbay consolidation networks aggregated production and provided services to farmers such as access to finance, training on best practices, etc. The project introduced a Gender Champions strategy with the networks to increase engagement of women in the target cereal value chains. The strategy involved engaging men to support women's initiatives and introducing participatory diagnostic sessions that reflected on women's positions in the network and identified problems and solutions to help facilitate women's integration into decision-making bodies.

As part of its Cooperative Professionalization Program, the PSDAG project integrated gender and social inclusion principles into all training materials and internal operations documents for cooperatives, which included the promotion of youth and women into cooperative leadership.

However, in the majority of cases, the approach of mixed groups appeared to be gender neutral. While it was presumed that the groups included female members, without clear or specific disaggregation data, it was hard to determine whether and to what extent women participated. Further, learning from production activities has shown that tracking simple participation is not enough to determine whether it contributed to changes in empowerment; tracking *quality* of female participation is an important factor. Reviewing project reports revealed that a number of projects implemented empowerment activities focused on groups, but it was unclear whether these activities were connected to women's empowerment in beyond production roles. As discussed in Finding 9 below, close to half of the projects used the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI), which includes a domain on group participation and leadership, but as with implementation, the monitoring system did not appear to be tied to the beyond production support the projects provided.

The research team found more information around targeted efforts to work with women's groups in beyond production interventions. In some cases, projects used mainstreaming to identify and include women's groups in beyond production activities, such as involving women's groups in seed multiplication activities; others targeted women's groups for specific empowerment activities, such as training, linkages, business development, and access to finance as described in Finding 3 above.

FPL support to women's associations included training members in food-processing technologies to make high-quality food products using locally grown crops such as mango or baobab. FPL also established contacts in Kenya and Senegal as primary processing locations and women's processor groups for the various food product prototypes.

There were no data or supporting narrative to show what challenges and opportunities are specific to women's beyond production groups or how they perform in comparison to mixed groups.

Reporting on women's employment activities and results was limited: In general, there was a lack of information related to women's employment in general, and specifically, in beyond production activities. Many projects measured the number of jobs created by sex, but lacked reporting on the impacts of the employment or further results. Projects used training, investment, business development, and other approaches to strengthen agribusinesses; as a result, there were increased sales and employment. In those cases, projects mainstreamed gender equity and targeted women through such interventions, and some (not all) tracked the resulting job creation or employment opportunities.

There were a few projects that used targeted approaches to increase job creation or employment specifically for women. Examples of these types of approaches include internships and grants to incentivize agribusinesses to hire or create jobs for women; they are described in more detail under Finding 6 below. None of the projects under review reported on interventions focused on improving employment situations or "decent work."⁵

Reporting on inclusive or targeted activities addressing the enabling environment was minimal: The team found several mentions of projects working to address enabling environment issues in the document review. For example, AIP contributed to revising a seed policy law, and Naatal Mbay carried out stakeholder meetings and studies to inform policy. However, most did not mention gender work in their policy components. Where gender was mentioned, in most cases, it was just to highlight the fact that women and youth participated in activities, such as:

ENGINE supported the reform of agricultural and business-enabling environment policies, with special attention given to women and youth. The project supported and participated in the Annual Agricultural Policy Conference in Dodoma.

⁵ According to the International Labour Organization, decent work "involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men." For more information, see: <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/decent-work/lang-en/index.htm>

PSDAG facilitated public-private dialogues (PPDs) in which 42 percent of participants were women who agreed that the process was inclusive.

Details on level of participation, whether the policies under discussion were relevant to women working in beyond production nodes of the value chain, and how their participation affected the end result were lacking. Only one project described actively supporting enabling environment issues relevant to women in beyond production nodes of the value chain.

COMFISH and COMFISH Plus worked to support women's inclusion and participation in fisheries governance bodies, where they had not previously been included as decision-makers and office holders. COMFISH facilitated the preparation of a national declaration on women in fisheries, developed a fisheries sector capacity-building strategy for women in fisheries, and facilitated an Action Plan that was adopted and signed by Department of Maritime Fisheries and other project partners. The project strengthened the capacity of the Network of Women in Artisanal Fishing in Senegal through training in leadership, advocacy, organizational management, participation in trade fairs and office equipment.

FINDING 5: Projects adapted approaches to enable women to access credit to invest in beyond production livelihood opportunities.

In many of the countries where Feed the Future works, women are not easily able to access formal finance. While there are exceptions, rather than helping individual female business owners access loans, project narratives more typically focused on linking women's groups to MFIs or establishing/strengthening VSLAs, usually targeting solely or primarily women who could not access formal loans due to, for example, lack of collateral. VSLA's approach helps women access smaller size loans and provides as means to begin to manage credit.

PRIME facilitated the formation VSLA groups. In one region, the project linked 100 female VSLA members that owned and ran small businesses to an MFI. Each woman obtained a micro loan to improve their small businesses. Experts from the MFI also provided basic business skill training, loan applications and mobile banking.

It is unclear whether support in accessing microfinance is provided as a first step in helping female entrepreneurs to later access larger loans. Such approaches provide women with less individual capital to invest than men, because VSLA loans tend to be smaller. It is important to note that in most documents the research team reviewed, the data provided on access to credit did not supply a breakdown on what the money had been used for. Further, VSLA loans and in some cases, MFI loans, while often described as business loans, are not strictly business loans because they are used to meet a variety of livelihoods and household needs.

ADVANCE II envisioned that supported VSLA members would use the majority of their share-out money and loans to pay for agriculture-related expenses. However, the project found that in addition to farming, many women members used the share-out money to cover a variety of needs that they could not meet before, including both household expenditures and investing in other income-generating activities. The majority of

women VSLA members engaged in dry-season income generating activity in order to earn enough money throughout the year to support themselves and their families. These beyond production activities include processing and trade, as well as off-farm activities such as running a shop or selling household goods.

The team concluded that at least some of the loan funding was used for beyond production activities based on project reporting, but there were not enough available data to quantify percentages or extract information on the type and size of businesses the loans supported.

Where projects linked women to formal financial institutions, they tended to work through women's groups rather than individual women to supply more security to the financial institutions that provide credit or loans.

FinGAP mandated use of financing screening criteria that heavily weighed women-led businesses as recipients of credit. FinGAP intentionally hired female business development service providers, which supported the aggregation of women's financing applications to ease collateral requirements, reduce transaction costs for banks, and increase the likelihood of loan approval.

FINDING 6: Beyond production approaches that targeted youth were able to achieve gender balance in integrated interventions.

A number of projects implemented interventions targeting youth in beyond production activities. AIA, Naatal Mbay, and PSDAG were some of the projects that linked young male and female university students or recent graduates to the private sector through internships or entry-level jobs.

SAITH's Finance and Investment team partnered with the Association of Black Securities and Investment Professionals (ABSIP) to host a career planning and advancement–training event through the ABSIP University of Witwatersrand student chapter. The event was aimed at facilitating student entry into the finance industry, which suffers from skills shortage and lack of women in the industry. The event was aligned with the Hub mandate of “addressing the gender disparities of trade and investment with a focus on women's economic empowerment across all interventions.”

KII notes: A KII participant said it was possible that youth interventions were successful due to the different profile of the female participants. They were well educated, familiar with modern technology, and less hampered by traditional gender norms. The project did not anticipate that its internship intervention would resonate so strongly with women, and the team was pleasantly surprised by the results. Another KII participant said that while other activities stimulating women's participation required effort, young women were eager to be placed with private-sector stakeholders and the project staff did not need to work hard to bring them in.

These interventions, many of which were small or pilots, were typically able to reach around 50 percent of young women. It is unclear whether they were successful at reaching women because of the demographics of the targeted beneficiaries or the way they were designed—for example, a deliberate attention to gender or the promotion of an opportunity that was attractive to female youth. It is also not apparent whether some or all of the youth interventions

had gender strategies or targets. The desk review did not turn up specific gender strategies for the youth interventions, and KIIs indicated an absence of a specific gender approach for the youth work. The research team tried to learn whether any follow-up was done to determine whether young men and women continued working in agriculture beyond production roles as a result of project support. KII participants did not have this information, and it was not available in any of the reports reviewed.

The research team examined just one project focused solely on youth. Because the project was relatively new, learning was limited. However, the project did target and was achieving gender parity, and the gender integration approach to beyond production interventions was clearly laid out in the project documents.

AY was working to increase youth incomes, especially in agriculture value chains. The project had an aggressive gender strategy targeting 60 percent female participation based on two start-up assessments (a Youth and Gender Assessment and a Labor Workforce and Market Assessment). Beyond mainstreaming gender across all activities, the project took steps to promote women's ongoing participation, for example, by establishing two childcare centers to alleviate the burden of caretaking on young mothers, giving them the opportunity to engage in economic activities.

Women and youth were often targeted jointly for beyond production interventions. When data were available, they did not show the breakdown in age groups, or in sex when targeting youth. This made it difficult to assess impact on the two groups.

SECTION II: MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND LEARNING

Extracting reliable data on gender-specific beyond production activities through a review of MEL data was challenging. Quarterly, annual, and final reports often only showed disaggregation by sex for select indicators, mostly related to production. Some did not show disaggregation at all. The KIIs confirmed that projects had more internal disaggregated data, but because they were not required to report on these topics, they did not include them in major reports. Finding information on the impact of interventions intended to engage women in beyond production activities often required reviewing and cross-analyzing numerous documents. The findings below summarize the main trends the research team identified.

KII notes: A chief of party told the research team that even though they worked in services, financial systems, and other beyond production value chain categories, the project was focused on field production. The MEL system was designed to understand the impact on food security and smallholder farmer productivity and income. Analyzing the downstream effect was not considered.

FINDING 7: Beyond production indicators rarely captured gender-differentiated impact data or information about women's empowerment.

Whether or not projects included performance indicators on beyond production and to what extent those indicators provided information about gender-differentiated impacts or women's empowerment varied greatly. The team reviewed MEL plans and performance indicator reference sheets for as many

projects as possible; however, this information was not accessible for all projects. Some indicator information was gathered from annual reports, not all of which included disaggregation (which, as previously noted, may not have been required).

Many projects used standard Feed the Future indicators (some of which have since been dropped or archived), and while production indicators were generally sex-disaggregated, beyond production indicators were not. Although official guidance from the Feed the Future indicator handbook provides information on the types of disaggregation projects are required to report on to track progress for beyond production and women’s empowerment outcomes or impacts, reporting on these recommended types of disaggregates was mixed. In some cases, indicators were disaggregated by organization or beneficiary type without any further sex-disaggregation, which made it difficult to assess whether beyond production interventions had different impacts on women and men. In other cases, indicators were sex-disaggregated, but it was hard to distinguish between production and beyond production interventions, because the indicator showed overall numbers for the project. Examples of these types of indicators and reporting by projects can be found in *Exhibit 4*.

Exhibit 4: Common beyond production indicators and reporting

INDICATOR	NOTES ON REPORTING
Number of food security private enterprises (for profit), producer organizations, women’s groups, and trade and business associations receiving U.S. Government’s assistance	This indicator was commonly disaggregated by type of organization (private enterprise, producer organization, women’s group, etc.), but not by sex. While some information can be gleaned from the number of women’s groups reported, the impact on other groups that could be owned or led by women is undeterminable.
Number of MSMEs, including farmers, receiving business development services as result of U.S. Government’s assistance	This indicator was commonly disaggregated by size MSME (micro, small, or medium) or farmer, but not always by sex.
Number of full-time equivalent jobs created with U.S. Government’s assistance	Many projects sex-disaggregated this indicator, but not all. Additionally, some projects did not report the level of job (production, processing, etc.), so it was difficult to determine whether and to what extent there was an impact in beyond production.
Value of agricultural and rural loans as a result of U.S. Government’s assistance	Most projects sex-disaggregated this indicator, but it was difficult to determine which loans were for production versus beyond production activities.

In most cases, projects either did not report on all of the required disaggregates or did not share the information in the reports. For example, one of the project reports under review targeted the inputs sector. The research team was not able to track how many female-owned businesses the project supported by reading annual and quarterly reports, but located these data in a short gender study. It is unclear whether projects that had the data but were not reporting on them were using the data to guide implementation.

Some projects presented disaggregated results in their reports. The data captured in the two examples below could be extremely useful in targeting women in beyond production interventions.

FinGAP disaggregated finance received by beneficiaries by type of value chain actor, size of value chain actor (small, medium or large) and within those types of value chain actors, percentage of women.

AgDiv disaggregated the indicator “Value of agricultural and rural loans as a result of USG [U.S. Government] assistance” by sex for producers, local traders/assemblers, wholesalers/processors and others. When measuring “Number of MSMEs, including farmers receiving agricultural related [sic] credit as a result of USG assistance,” the project disaggregated by sex of owner (male, female, joint). However, for “Number of farmers in the target value chains receiving the contractor's assistance in production, access to finance or access to markets,” the project disaggregated by sex, but did not show what the assistance was for, so it was not possible to see what percentage of female farmers received beyond production support.

It was challenging to identify specific levels of gender integration or women’s empowerment results in beyond production interventions in the market systems projects under review. Such projects frequently targeted measurement at firm-level changes or systems change concepts, including observed shifts in trust and cooperation between smallholder farmers and other market actors, which were disaggregated by market system function, market actor, and type.

Because standard donor reports provided limited information about gender-specific or women’s empowerment progress or impacts of beyond production activities, the research team also reviewed many success stories about women engaging in a wide range of beyond production roles. These were primarily about individual women business owners or women’s groups, and showed various types of beyond production activities where projects had supported women. However, because success stories mostly focused on individuals, the research team was not able to extract overall findings about interventions or impact.

KII notes: One participant confirmed that the project did not track women in beyond production activities other than one-off success stories. Staff had observed women taking on different roles, but the data were not systematically collected. In fact, the project’s data collection infrastructure was broad, and were they required to collect such data, so they could have easily adapted the system. Another participant said their project also had a detailed database. They suspected that they had more information about women in beyond production roles, but because it had not been required, they did not extract it for analysis.

FINDING 8: Few projects used targeted indicators to measure progress or impacts of gender-specific or women’s empowerment-focused beyond production work.

Of the 20 projects reviewed, only seven used gender-specific beyond production indicators. Of these seven, most had only one gender-specific beyond production indicator, although two projects had multiple. The most common indicator used by four of the seven projects is a Feed the Future indicator: *Percentage of female participants in USG-assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources*. However, the indicator and the data required for reporting to it do not provide a breakdown between female participants active in productive or beyond production activities. In three of the four projects that included production and beyond production interventions, it was difficult to determine

impact without the further disaggregation. Only in the fourth project was the impact on women in beyond production interventions clearly demonstrated, because the project was focused entirely on beyond production activities in the inputs sector, so no additional disaggregation was needed.

Four projects also developed custom gender beyond production indicators, such as:

- Number of persons trained with U.S. Government's assistance to advance outcomes consistent with gender equality or female empowerment through their roles in public or private-sector institutions or organizations
- Number of female beneficiaries receiving socioeconomic empowerment training
- Value of new private-sector investment targeting women- and youth-owned businesses

As these examples demonstrate, projects used a wide variety of indicators to measure gender-specific impacts. While some indicators clearly point to beyond production work, such as value of new private-sector investment in women- and youth-owned businesses, in other cases, it was difficult to determine gender-specific impacts without further disaggregation.

FINDING 9: The WEAI was designed to focus on agricultural production, and therefore, was not an effective tool for measuring women's empowerment in beyond production activities.

The WEAI⁶ was used as a tool to measure women's empowerment by at least eight projects. As seen in the textbox, IPs applied different variations or adaptations of the tool.

Different methods for applying the WEAI

- REGAL-AG: The WEAI study was conducted at the Zone of Influence level by an external evaluation team USAID hired. The REGAL-AG team directly collected data on four domains of change (decision making, time use, production, and use of income) to measure the project's contribution to changes in WEAI scores.
- AVC: The project used the abbreviated version (A-WEAI) of the index at baseline. At midline and endline, a different version of the index was administered (Pro-WEAI). It appears the tool was used only in the jute value chain.
- AY: The project applied a modified version of the WEAI to measure the roles and extent of female youth's engagement on four domains: leadership in the community, income, time, and technology.
- PRIME: The project did not use the WEAI, but applied a proprietary tool to measure women's decision-making power.

⁶The WEAI is a tool that tracks women's engagement in agriculture in five areas: production, resources, income, leadership, and time use. It also measures women's empowerment relative to men within their households, providing a more robust understanding of gender dynamics within households and communities. *For more information, visit: <https://www.feedthefuture.gov/the-womens-empowerment-in-agriculture-index/>*

In accordance with its design, the WEAI is used to measure empowerment in the context of agricultural production based on individual-level data. Other than the two examples below, IPs did not apply the WEAI domains and indicators of relevancy to beyond production activities. As a result, it was not possible for the research team to draw any conclusions on the impact of beyond production activities on women's empowerment.

In the cases below, the original WEAI and a modified version were used to capture information on women's empowerment in beyond production interventions.

AIP developed a modified WEAI-based gender assessment to identify specific actions AIP could take to effectively address gender equity constraints in the agricultural inputs sector within the scope of the project. The project applied the tool with a subset of potential female retailers and substituted business for production in Domain I.

AY's post-award assessments revealed that some of the WEAI domains would be important to address if they wanted to engage young women in beyond production work. The project used the WEAI to track four domains: leadership; income, time; and technology. Interventions were designed around these topics to support the technical activities laid out in the gender integration strategy.

However, examples such as these were few and there was no information on the use of other gender-specific tools to capture relevant information. The KII participants provided more detailed information regarding the WEAI and the overall lack of tools to measure women's empowerment in beyond production interventions.

KII note: Participants said the WEAI in its original form was not useful for capturing data on beyond production interventions, particularly in a market systems context. One of the market systems projects initially had a WEAI indicator, but dropped it when it found that within market systems programs, it was extremely difficult to influence inter-household dynamics.

KII participants highlighted a lack of appropriate tools for design, implementation, and monitoring of women's empowerment in beyond production interventions. Some said they sought guidance on how to support women in beyond production roles. They acknowledged the research done under LEO and were also able to find some useful reports other donors prepared. Some mentioned that they personally implemented or were familiar with other projects outside of the Feed the Future portfolio that had an intentional focus on supporting women working in beyond production nodes of the targeted value chains. They brought up clear differences between these projects and the ones covered in the landscape analysis—because of the gender focus, there was buy-in from IP management, project staff, and the USAID mission; and start-up analyses were carried out with a gender-sensitive lens, appropriate MEL systems were put in place, and some applied innovative tools at different phases of the project lifecycle.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The goal of this landscape analysis was to summarize substantial beyond production efforts in current and recently closed Feed the Future programs, and describe the approaches used to integrate gender into their implementation, monitoring, and learning. Key learning is summarized below.

Recommendations focus on additional research and improved MEL to guide effective implementation.

How the 2020 landscape analysis compares to the 2016 LEO report

Directly comparing the findings of the 2016 LEO report to this gendered landscape report is not entirely valid, because the LEO report looked broadly at 67 Feed the Future projects using only desk research, while this analysis looked at a smaller sample, using both desk research and KIIs with select projects. Additionally, LEO had less of a mandate to research MEL, whereas that was a more important focus for AWE, so there are more details on how beyond production is or is not monitored and to some extent, why things are that way. However, there are some points worth noting:

- Common nodes – Marketing is a common, popular node in both reports. However, in the LEO report, post-harvest handling was a popular node, while in AWE’s report, it is the least common node.
- Common interventions – Both studies found implementers conducting similar interventions (training, organizational strengthening, linkages, etc.), but in AWE analysis, standards setting/certification was an added approach.
- Female participation – Both studies report similar findings. In LEO, interventions related to marketing or business, including business development, had higher female participation. In AWE, the highest node was around business development, marketing, and access to finance. Inputs, service provision, and post-harvest handling were the three nodes with lower reported interventions in both reports.
- Monitoring and evaluation – In LEO, 25 percent of non-production interventions provided sex disaggregated data; for AWE, 85 percent of projects (17/20) provided sex-disaggregation on at least one beyond production indicator.

CONCLUSIONS

Research topic 1: Are Feed the Future efforts in beyond production interventions affecting women’s empowerment?

Conclusion 1: Although it was difficult to aggregate project activities and impact, projects were carrying out a range of interventions to support women in beyond production that benefited women and could provide learning in the future.

Reporting demonstrates that projects are carrying out a range of activities at different value chain nodes. There was some movement to different nodes between the 2016 and 2020 landscape analysis. The factors affecting the shifts are not fully clear and could be influenced by donor’s preference, project methodology, and IPs’ learning around more effective implementation strategies. Because the topic was not always considered core to overall project goals, reporting on results was inconsistent, which made it challenging to quantify participation, benefit and empowerment, summarize trends, and draw overall

conclusions. Improved MEL strategies are needed to answer certain questions that emerged from the landscape analysis; some strategies can be put in place relatively easily.

Conclusion 2: The level of women's engagement in beyond production activities is still, to some extent, unknown.

Although the team assessed available quantitative and narrative documentation for each non-production activity, limited disaggregation in beyond production-related indicators made it difficult to aggregate and quantify the level of women's engagement within specific activities. Overall, the research showed that women were least engaged in interventions related to service provision, input provision, and post-harvest handling. They were slightly more active in processing interventions and most significantly, in interventions related to marketing or business development. It appears that they were also substantially engaged in access to finance interventions, but it is possible that the data on access to finance are skewed because it is not possible to differentiate between loans provided for beyond production and production activities.

Support to women in beyond production nodes was carried out either through a project's gender integration strategy or targeted interventions. All projects mainstreamed gender across activities, but the level of effort they made to reach women varied. The ability to reach women in beyond production activities is shaped by factors such as:

- **Methodology:** "Pure" market systems projects saw themselves as facilitators, not implementers. They could provide information and capacity building to the private sector and other actors on the benefits of engaging with or employing women, but they rarely intervened directly at the level of individuals or households. It is important to assess and address private sector's capacity and motivation to tackle gender/women's empowerment considerations and prepare women to participate in market systems interventions. This could be achieved by finding approaches and facilitation partners through private and civil society that strengthen capacities for private-sector partners and women actors to work together effectively. A combination of facilitative and direct-impact interventions that support market systems development will be necessary to ensure effective and sustainable women's empowerment beyond production approaches.

More traditional value chain projects are supported by a broad evidence base, years of experience about what works, and effective measurement tools to capture participation, benefit, and empowerment of women in agriculture. However, much of the robust knowledge and experience is centered on production and focused on individuals or household-level change. Meanwhile, market systems programs have high potential to change social norms, close gender gaps, and promote women's engagement in beyond production were the approaches to incorporate attention to the root causes of gender gaps and key leverage points for reducing inequalities early and well. Both value chain and market systems approaches offer significant insights regarding direct versus facilitative methods for engaging and empowering women in beyond production. It is important to consider scale and sustainability, while also addressing root causes and social norms. This means donors and IPs may not only need to consider whether or not a traditional value chain or a market systems approach is effective, but also what can be learned from these approaches and

whether they can work together in combination to promote women's engagement or empowerment goals.

- **Scope:** It appears that more complex projects, which worked on multiple nodes of the value chain with the ultimate objective of increasing productivity and incomes for smallholder farmers, directed the greatest share of efforts to strengthening and empowering female farmers, with a more gender-neutral approach to developing other parts of the value chain. Less complex projects, which addressed a smaller range of beyond production nodes of the value chain, tended to have a clearer strategy for supporting women.
- **Country context:** In countries or value chains where women were already active in beyond production roles, projects found it easier to support them and enhance their participation, presumably leading to increased benefit and empowerment; inadequate MEL systems made it difficult to capture the evidence to support this link. Projects found it more difficult to engage with women in more traditional environments and male-dominated value chains, and were also aware of the potential of putting women at risk. In these cases, projects often highlighted support to women in less profitable nodes of the value chain or to a limited set of successful women. Projects in such contexts risk reinforcing gender gaps in value chains if they only focus on promoting women “where they are,” instead of identifying opportunities to expand engagement or movement within the value chain or into new commodities/value chains.

Both in terms of scope and county context, without adequate MEL, it is not fully possible to assess the success or effectiveness of specific strategies, or to identify more effective approaches to move women into profitable beyond production roles. Because USAID asks IPs to put emphasis on gender integration and women’s empowerment in beyond production work, allowing for evidenced-based targets as well as learning and adaptive management focused on gender and women’s empowerment will be important.

Research topic 2: How are Feed the Future efforts in beyond production affecting women’s empowerment?

Conclusion 3: In most cases, reported data did not provide sufficient information on gender-specific beyond production activities.

The research team found that while production-related indicators were generally disaggregated, reviewing the data related to beyond production results presented challenges. Some indicators were either not disaggregated or disaggregated results were not presented in the reports reviewed for this analysis. In certain cases, when disaggregated data were collected and included in reports, the disaggregation did not provide a clear picture. For indicators that were disaggregated, they tended to provide information on women’s participation rather than benefit or empowerment. The types of indicators market systems projects used may not be suitable for assessing impact of gender-specific beyond production activities. Some projects that were focused on specific beyond production value chain nodes, such as inputs, access to finance, or processing, tended to disaggregate more beyond production indicators; more complex projects, with overall goals tied to increased productivity, primarily tracked disaggregated data around production. These types of projects tended to provide minimal or no disaggregated data related to beyond production activities.

KIIs revealed that at least some project implementers did, in fact, have complex data collection systems that could already contain more information on women's empowerment or gender in beyond production, or be adjusted to capture such information. However, because this information was not requested or required as part of standard USAID reporting, they either did not make an effort to capture it, or if they had it, they did not extract and analyze it.

Conclusion 4: There is little understanding of how beyond production interventions addressed aspects of women's empowerment.

Most projects worked to facilitate women's access to services like business development, finance, technology, and so on at various beyond production value chain nodes. It is less clear how interventions at these beyond production nodes involved activities targeted at women's agency and decision making, and corresponding results. With the exception of the KIIs, the team was unable to confirm whether projects collected data on these topics and were not reporting on them, and if they had the data, whether they used them to guide implementation. Because USAID asks projects to expand on women's empowerment in beyond production approaches, they will need appropriate tools to understand the link between participation in beyond production activities and women's empowerment, and what role they can play in supporting that. There are lessons learned from supporting women in production activities that may be relevant.

The WEAI includes domains on access and control over resources (including access to and decisions over credit), control over income, group participation, and time use. More than half of the reviewed projects use some form of the WEAI to measure women's empowerment. However, the WEAI indicators are production-focused and are not designed to assess whether/how beyond production interventions increase women's empowerment. This is something USAID and IPs are likely interested in measuring. It is worth exploring whether the WEAI can be adapted or domains can be added to understand empowerment issues from a beyond production perspective, or whether there is a need for other tools to capture required information.

Research topic 3: What are the opportunities and practices to increase women's participation in and returns from high-value activities in agribusiness or employment?

Conclusion 5: Projects increased women's participation by adapting interventions in line with women's circumstances.

One of the most common approaches observed was the adaptation of standard project activities to meet women's needs based on information in the gender analysis or staff observations. If mobility was an issue, they moved the intervention to the rural areas. If knowledge was the challenge, they set up a training for women. If access to finance was a significant constraint and women business owners could not access formal credit, they established VSLAs. These types of approaches worked to build women up so they could participate more effectively in gender mainstreaming activities along with the men.

Another strategy for reaching women in beyond production activities was to target members of mixed groups. While it is possible that this was an effective strategy, the lack of disaggregation made it difficult to evaluate, as did the dearth of information on whether empowerment interventions, such as leadership training for women, were tied to these beyond production activities. Learning from

production activities has shown that without empowering women, it is possible that they may receive fewer benefits from group support than male members.

Support to women's groups was also a common strategy, and an important one. Collectives—whether mixed group or women only—have a clear market function (economies of scale and bargaining power), as well as a social networking and solidarity function. It was unclear whether projects working with women's group captured any best practices on either implementation or MEL. Given that many of the countries where projects worked did not typically have women working in these nodes of the value chains, it would be useful to have more information on how women's beyond production groups performed, the best ways to support them, and the relevance of concurrently addressing empowerment issues, such as group participation and leadership.

Other approaches supported women in beyond production roles that were outside of the core project objectives. While these provided some income-generating opportunities, they were usually less than what participants in the main project activities had access to. It was not possible to assess through this landscape analysis whether and how women targeted through these side interventions participated in other project activities or what support they would need to be more fully integrated. It is possible that there were alternative solutions to integrate them more fully into beyond production activities, but that would likely require additional project resources and capacity-building support that was not identified during the project planning phase.

Conclusion 6: Some IPs found that it was easier to achieve gender balance when targeting youth.

The research team examined one project fully dedicated to youth, as well as a number of interventions in other projects that were designed to engage youth in beyond production roles in the agriculture sector. The percentage of women participating in these activities tended to be close to or above 50 percent. While the research team did not find any research conducted by IPs on this topic, it is possible that the young women targeted for these activities were more educated (i.e., university graduates) and had better mobility than both younger and older women in more rural areas. It would be interesting to gain better understanding of contributing factors to the outcomes, as well as whether the success of younger women had any impact on increased participation of other younger or older women, and whether the women continued to engage in the agriculture sector once project support ended.

Conclusion 7: More guidance and appropriate tools were needed for projects to increase their gendered beyond production activities and monitoring.

Projects requested better tools and capacity building to design, measure, and report on women's beyond production activities. Project staff need guidance from missions and their own senior management.

RECOMMENDATIONS

IMPLEMENTATION

Carry out learning research/pilots to support gender-specific and women's empowerment in beyond production interventions.

Additional learning studies will be important to continue to develop the evidence base around which beyond production interventions are the most effective in promoting women's empowerment, as well as which are the most effective in closing gender gaps or promoting female participation and benefit in beyond production activities. IPs should be supported to conduct and share impact assessments and other learning studies on individual projects to evaluate the participation, benefit, and empowerment impacts of beyond production interventions.

Beyond that, USAID and projects such as AWE should carry out additional research that contributes to the beyond production evidence base and the development of effective implementation strategies. These studies may be value chain or geographically focused and seek to address learning questions such as:

- Is there a trajectory for women working in less profitable beyond production areas to graduate to bigger opportunities? What factors should be considered in designing and implementing a “graduating approach” to increasing women's engagement in higher levels of a value chain?
- Do projects that highlight or engage female role models/mentors demonstrate a positive impact on the number of women who take on beyond production roles? Do male champions/mentors have comparable impacts? What are best practices for supporting women through coaching, mentoring, or role models?
- What are successful strategies for motivating the private sector to engage with women-owned businesses and employ women, in particular when implementing a market systems project? What key interventions and approaches can be integrated within the market systems/facilitation model to enable women to compete equitably with men? Is there an opportunity to leverage the work of sister projects that operate under a more traditional approach?
- Is supporting access to finance a key component of increasing women's empowerment in beyond production interventions? Which access to finance models are the most effective or the most promising for promoting women's engagement/empowerment in beyond production roles?
- When women work across multiple nodes or value chains, what are best practices for supporting them? Are there key factors to consider for boosting their capacity, engagement, or benefit? What are drawbacks or risks to consider?
- What are promising practices for supporting women's entry into non-traditional roles or value chains? What are strategies for identifying and mitigating potential risks?
- Are there meaningful beyond production employment opportunities for women or does it make sense to put a greater focus on women's entrepreneurship? If there are meaningful opportunities, should Feed the Future projects increase emphasis on this area? What are these opportunities and are they different from opportunities for men? What are best practices for linking women to these opportunities?

- How would a stronger gender focus when carrying out interventions that target national and institutional policies and practices support women to enhance their participation, benefit, and empowerment in beyond production activities?

While all research topics can be disaggregated to look at issues from the perspective of different age groups, the research team also recommends dedicating several learning questions specifically to youth. Potential topics could include:

- Are there specific beyond production activities young women are more likely to take an interest /thrive in? How, if at all, is that tied to their level of education/marital status and proximity to urban centers?
- Is there a spillover effect (with both younger and older women) when young women become active in these roles? How can that be accelerated?
- A number of interventions linked students or recent graduates to different roles in beyond production nodes of the value chain. Do these young people continue to work in the agriculture sector as either employees or entrepreneurs? Are there any differences in outcomes between young men and young women? At what point could a project intervene to best support young women in developing their careers in the agriculture sector?

Provide missions and IPs with guidance on engaging women in beyond production interventions, as well as tools to carry out initial analysis and intervention design.

IPs have taken on the lessons around engaging women more meaningfully in production-related activities. USAID can follow a similar strategy to encourage them to do the same around beyond production activities:

- Raise awareness among USAID staff and missions with guidance on engaging women in beyond production activities and tools to include the topic in project development and requests for proposals, among others, so that IPs understand the importance.
- Provide guidance to IPs on reaching both men and women in beyond production activities and tracking impact.
- Develop tools to support project design and implementation—potentially to include a value chain analysis tool that explores women’s beyond production roles, an implementation guide with suggested approaches and best practices, mission and staff training courses, an online forum where implementers can discuss challenges and opportunities, and so on.

MEL

Ask IPs to set ambitious, yet realistic targets to increase women’s participation in beyond production activities.

As above, projects face a range of circumstances related to methodology, gender roles within specific value chains, and country context. It will be important to take those into account when setting targets.

- Ensure the gender analysis looks at women’s constraints and opportunities in beyond production roles, in addition to identifying risks to women in beyond production endeavors and requiring that the MEL systems track and can respond quickly to any negative consequences.
- Set gender targets in accordance with the results of a gender analysis that explores beyond production constraints and opportunities.
- Consider setting different targets for various value chains/nodes of the value chain in accordance with the results of a gender analysis.
- Continue to adapt gendered beyond production targeting strategies as needed, based on results of research/pilots/improved MEL strategies that become available.

Require IPs to disaggregate beyond production indicators, present disaggregated results in official reports, and use data for effective implementation.

- Review beyond production indicators and require disaggregation that provides the needed information. For example, if a project provides support to enterprises, what percentage of the businesses supported are women-owned, whether/how do they differ from male-owned businesses, whether/how they are changing over time as a result of project support, and so on.
- Review market systems indicators and see whether/how they can be adjusted to provide disaggregated data.
- Encourage projects to consider specific gender indicators if disaggregation does not provide the required information.

Determine an effective strategy to measure women’s empowerment in beyond production interventions.

The WEAI in its original format is not intended to be applied to beyond production activities. It may be possible to adapt it, or another tool may be required.

- The WEAI for Value Chains (WEAI4VC) tool designed by the International Food Policy Research Institute⁷ shows how WEAI domains can be used to gather data relevant to beyond production information that is not captured by current data collection methods. The tool expands the amount of information projects may capture about household-level decision making and participation in marketing, processing, and trading, as well as access to information and credit. However, this tool does not capture decision-making and engagement data that are important for understanding women's empowerment and engagement in beyond production activities, which may not be effectively captured in a tool designed as a household survey that compares male and female responses. For example, while the WEAI4VC captures the reported level of female decision making in various crops at different nodes—farming, processing, trading or marketing, it does not capture women's decision-making power over opening, operating, and investing in their own agribusiness. WEAI4VC captures the reported level of female decision making over household income generated

⁷ WEAI4VC tool designed by International Food Policy Research Institute: <http://weai.ifpri.info/versions/weai4vc/>

from farming, processing, trading, marketing, or off-farm work activities, but it does not capture whether women are able to apply income toward their own agribusinesses. It will be helpful to review the WEAI4VC to assess whether additional domains would be helpful to support measuring women's empowerment in beyond production, particularly for women's agribusiness development or to support expanding women's engagement in additional value chain nodes. Select projects may test and validate proposed additional components through discreet activities or pilots.

- It is clear that additional tools to measure women's engagement and empowerment in beyond production are needed. Many projects capture data that report on results of efforts to increase women's participation, benefit, and empowerment in beyond production activities, but have not analyzed the data or reported on them due to a lack of reporting requirements. Alternatively, many projects struggle to develop and implement effective measurement methods that help them track and report progress. We recommend supporting the development of improved measurement tools in this area by:
 - Consulting with and convening IPs from across USAID and other donors to share learning around measurement methods, including indicators, learning questions, methods for capturing quantitative and qualitative data, reporting guidance, and methods for responding to and applying data
 - Developing a preliminary resource of existing, accessible, and useful tools that measure women's engagement and empowerment in beyond production
 - Identifying promising measurement approaches, including potential indicators and assessment tools, to refine and pilot; and developing a learning brief or resource to support projects that implement beyond production activities in capturing and reporting women's engagement and empowerment results

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ANNEXES.

ANNEX A: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Are Feed the Future efforts in beyond production affecting women's empowerment?

- What types of interventions in beyond production are projects implementing, and at what level are they engaging women?
- Of these, which types of activities contribute to women's empowerment?
- Are projects using both direct and indirect approaches?
- What if any difference can be seen in the two approaches?
- Are there common practices that contribute to women's empowerment? How do successful practices differ among projects?

2. How are Feed the Future efforts in beyond production affecting women's empowerment?

- What tools are projects using to measure women's empowerment?
- What are projects measuring (participation, benefit, empowerment)?
- What do results—both quantitative and qualitative—tell us about impact?
- Are observed impacts at the level(s) of participation, benefit, and/or empowerment?

3. What are opportunities and practices to increase women's participation in and returns from higher value activities in agribusiness or employment?

- What interventions or types of interventions have been successful across projects (same or different types of projects)?
- Is there anything to indicate that they could be broadly replicable?
- What challenges have project implementers encountered in empowering women in beyond production roles and why?
- What insights do they have about how these challenges can be addressed?
- Are there common trends among the opportunities and challenges IPs face, and/or their response to address them?

ANNEX B: SELECTED FEED THE FUTURE PROJECTS

AWE BEYOND PRODUCTION LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS PROJECT SUMMARY*

* Information sourced from document review and may not reflect the full range of activities.

** Ongoing=including current implementation, extension, or follow-on

*** Includes only significant interventions. Most BP interventions are gender-mainstreamed, though level of women's participation in and benefit from these activities ranges significantly from project to project and activity to activity and is difficult to quantify.

PROJECT (IP, COUNTRY, START DATE, AND STATUS)	ACTIVITY OBJECTIVE/ GENDER OBJECTIVE	BP INTERVENTIONS/ GENDER-SPECIFIC BP INTERVENTIONS ***
Agricultural Development and Value Chain Enhancement (ADVANCE) II (ACDI/VOCA, Ghana, 2014, Ongoing**)	<p>To sustainably reduce poverty and hunger by improving the competitiveness of selected value chains to benefit large numbers of male and female smallholders.</p> <p>To ensure that both women and men fully benefit from the value chain development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen outgrower businesses through technical and operational support and linkages to service providers, financial institutions, and buyers. Support input dealers to market products to smallholders through training, networking, expanding agent networks, and access to finance. Facilitate local commercial agricultural services for smallholders (e.g., extension, tractor services, threshing, advisory). Promote the adoption of modern technology in production, post-harvest handling, and processing through small equipment grants. Support processors through grants, links to financial institutions, and outgrower businesses. Provide business development services to SMEs. Establish associate outgrower businesses for women to put them on the path to build capacity to manage outgrower schemes. Train female value chain leaders on gender equality and leadership and entrepreneurship. Conduct training sessions for women interested in commercializing soybean products. Support VSLAs to allow women to engage in economic activities.
Ag Diversification (AgDiv) (Palladium, Malawi, 206, Ongoing**)	<p>To foster sustainable, inclusive economic growth, balancing market income objectives with behavior change incentives to improve resilience to climate change, nutritional outcomes, and women's empowerment.</p> <p>To improve women's access to and decision-making power over income, access to and decision-making power over productive resources, women's participation in leadership roles, and women's role in production decision making.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage anchor farms to provide quality extension services and financing in the form of agricultural inputs and post-harvest handling equipment and technologies. Work with commercial seed suppliers and large market players to generate demand among farmers to purchase improved seeds. Link international manufacturers of drip irrigation technology to distributors and other commercial partners. Work with Purdue Improved Crop Storage bag suppliers to improve their collaboration with local distributors. Pilot the use of SoyCows in coops, provide business management training. Expose smallholder farmers to quality-enhancing post-harvest handling technologies and techniques. Link farmer cooperatives and/or associations to agro-processing companies and other input and business development service providers.

PROJECT (IP, COUNTRY, START DATE, AND STATUS)	ACTIVITY OBJECTIVE/ GENDER OBJECTIVE	BP INTERVENTIONS/ GENDER-SPECIFIC BP INTERVENTIONS ***
Agricultural Innovations Activity (Inova) (DAI, Mozambique, 2017, Ongoing**)	To partner with farmers, businesses, and policymakers to explore ways to improve production and increase sales of key cash crops. To address disparity between women and men's access to agricultural inputs, markets and support services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Sunseed Oil to introduce soy as a new product line. • Procure/replicate SoyaKits for female entrepreneurs. • Establish mentorship and peer-to-peer programs to create leadership opportunities among women. • Pilot microfinance capital injection programs for female group members. • Work with Sunseed Oil to engage female technicians, scientists, marketing agents, and managers to develop a cadre of females in this male-dominated industry. • Explore technological inputs that can aid women in marketing and preparing Orange-fleshed sweet potato products. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link input manufacturers to distributors. • Support input distributors and suppliers to introduce commission-based models and performance incentives that help reduce the price of inputs while driving sales. • Work with traders, processors, and exporters to build a supplier base and invest in transparent and performance-based supply chain management practices • Link agribusinesses with financial service providers. • Work with industry—particularly MSMEs—to advance the adoption of value-added processing in the domestic market. • Promote the establishment of affordable consulting and internship services to support the growth of agro-dealers and agricultural companies. • Convene stakeholder dialogues to stimulate collaboration among market actors. Use these to document good practices in relation to gender and share with other market actors. • Place student interns with agribusinesses (high female participation). • Encourage input distributors and suppliers to engage equal numbers of female and male sales agents. • Prioritize preference for women-owned businesses in support work with input distributors, suppliers, traders, processors, exporters, and SMEs, MSMEs. • Build environmental and gender review and reporting functions directly into its Deal Note development to capture gender considerations at all levels of activity ideation and development. • Incorporate gender-disaggregated monitoring into its business performance monitoring with partners to drive decision-making and adaptation based on gender-related feedback. • Provide technical assistance to private-sector firms and institutions, with special attention given to women-owned businesses and organizations.
Agro-Inputs Project (AIP) (CNFA, Bangladesh, 2012, Finished)	To improve the supply of quality agricultural inputs through input retailers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created agro-inputs retailer network (AIRN). Provided training and conducted study tours. • Created call center for farmers to contact with questions or complaints about inputs purchased through AIRN.

PROJECT (IP, COUNTRY, START DATE, AND STATUS)	ACTIVITY OBJECTIVE/ GENDER OBJECTIVE	BP INTERVENTIONS/ GENDER-SPECIFIC BP INTERVENTIONS ***
	To integrate female empowerment and gender equality throughout its overall approach and all project activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened ag-input wholesale associations. Provide capacity development of Bangladesh Seed Association, Bangladesh Fertilizer Association, and Bangladesh Crop Protection Association to improve business ethics and member services. • Created market information systems, mainly through monthly price outlook bulletin. • Assisted input companies and associations in obtaining and implementing International Organization for Standardization certification. • Established a gender lens committee that was responsible for integrating and monitoring overall project gender activities. • Provided in-kind grants (\$1,000) aimed at assisting rural women to apply for and implement matching grants to establish women-owned and operated agro-input retailerships. • Established a cadre of women “champions,” who serve as supportive mentors to groups of 10 retailers. Also had male mentors paired with women retailers. • Conducted community acceptance sessions—created acceptance and commitment for women retailers by community members, local elites, and local government and private-sector representatives. • Helped women retailers become <i>bKash</i> (mobile money) vendors for additional revenue generation.
Agricultural Inputs (AIA) Activity (TetraTech, Uganda, 2012, Finished)	To increase the use of high-quality agricultural inputs through improved availability of high-quality inputs to farmers, and decreased prevalence of counterfeit agricultural inputs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported agro-input suppliers and wholesalers to strengthen relationships with distributors through product knowledge training, equipment drives, and marketing and promotional events. • Promoted training and certification of agro-chemical dealers and supported private-sector spraying services that can safely and effectively apply agro-chemicals. • Supported the development of a credible, affordable, and high-quality private-sector option for seed certification. • Worked with key market actors in finance and agro-inputs supply/distribution to stimulate demand for, and then bridge the gap between supply and demand of appropriate, affordable working capital finance. • Facilitated the coordination of public-sector bodies to inform/educate agro-inputs firms on regulatory compliance.
Advancing Youth (AY) (DAI, Tanzania, 2017, Ongoing**)	To increase youth incomes, especially in agriculture value chains. To use gender-transformative approaches and gender analysis to maximize female youth involvement as successful partners and beneficiaries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train youth in financial literacy, life skills, and leadership. • Identify potential employment market gaps youth could fill, and partner with local organizations to develop curricula and deliver vocational training to match skills needed by employers. • Provide grants to help businesses provide on-the-job training, internships, and placements for youth. • Establish/support youth savings and loan associations to enable youth to improve or establish businesses. • Sponsor youth to attend trade fairs to network, market products. • Link youth to business pitching competition.

PROJECT (IP, COUNTRY, START DATE, AND STATUS)	ACTIVITY OBJECTIVE/ GENDER OBJECTIVE	BP INTERVENTIONS/ GENDER-SPECIFIC BP INTERVENTIONS ***
Agricultural Value Chain (AVC) (DAI, Bangladesh, 2013, Finished)	<p>To develop long-term food security by applying a market systems approach to improve availability of diverse and nutritious fruits, vegetables, and pulses in local, regional, and national markets.</p> <p>To ensure that Bangladeshi women have equitable opportunities alongside men to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from the project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worked with input supply companies to introduce and expand the sale and use of higher quality inputs. • Increased mechanization and improve farmers' access to technology and machinery service providers. • Strengthened the supply chain through structured contract farming schemes, inventory management initiatives, and embedded trainings and services. • Facilitated the emergence of a processing hub for pulses in the Southern Delta. • Provided supply chain management support. • Improved capacity of key market actors to design and implement effective marketing and promotion campaigns. • Convened stakeholder workshops, sector-wide events and regional and national agro-input, agro-technology, and value chain specific industry fairs. • Provided women working in floriculture market linkages with branding, marketing, and flower design training, as well as an exposure visit to India for eight women farmers. • Established women's markets for female vegetable sellers to connect to new customers and equip them with business skills. • Piloted an intervention to deploy 30 female sales agents to sell promotional input packs for homestead gardening supported by three female call center agents to offer after-sales support to farmers.
Comfish and Comfish Plus (CRC/University of Rhode Island, Senegal, 2011, Finished)	<p>Comfish – To support the Government of Senegal's efforts to achieve reform of its fisheries sector by strengthening many of the enabling conditions necessary for improved governance and demonstrating effective tools and approaches for ecosystem-based collaborative management of its marine fisheries.</p> <p>Comfish Plus – To support the Government of Senegal's efforts to achieve reform of its fisheries sector and increase the resilience of fishing communities and fishing livelihoods.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • *Comfish and Comfish Plus only had gender-specific beyond production interventions. • Built capacity of women fish processing groups (technical capacity, business management, financial literacy, literacy, site improvement). • Constructed demonstration artisanal fish processing facility for women fish processing group and helped obtain license to export to Europe, FDA certification. • Provided materials and upgraded energy efficient equipment for facility. • Provided revolving credit programs for women fish processors. • Supported diversification of women fish processors into other income generating activities.
Enabling Growth through Investment and	<p>To increase private-sector investment leading to inclusive, broad-based economic growth in the SAGCOT (Southern</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen business development service providers through technical assistance. • Facilitate business linkages between business development service providers and MSMEs.

PROJECT (IP, COUNTRY, START DATE, AND STATUS)	ACTIVITY OBJECTIVE/ GENDER OBJECTIVE	BP INTERVENTIONS/ GENDER-SPECIFIC BP INTERVENTIONS ***
Enterprise (ENGINE) (IESC, Tanzania, 2016, Ongoing**)	<p>Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania) regions of Tanzania: Iringa, Mbeya, Morogoro, and Zanzibar.</p> <p>To implement a methodology that integrates gender as a cross-cutting component into its activities and the results of the three program components.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage use of e-Coupons and BizFundi platform by MSMEs to search for business development and financial services. • Provide technical assistance to financial institutions directly as well as through the Tanzania Institute of Bankers. • Organize public awareness campaigns to sensitize MSMEs on business development and financial services. • Provide grants mechanism for business development service providers and financial institutions to create inclusive, innovative products, services or delivery mechanisms to increase business development sales and MSME lending.
Financing Ghanaian Agriculture Project (FinGAP) (Palladium, Ghana, 2013, Finished)	<p>To facilitate finance and investment in the north of Ghana.</p> <p>To incorporate a gender lens across each of its components, as a strategy to improve program quality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built capacity of local business advisory service providers to identify and develop agribusiness opportunities and close financing transactions for clients. • Built capacity/trained financial institutions, provided grants for varied purposes, including creating agrifinance desks, creating/investing in new financial products, hiring loan officers, etc. • Assisted in the creation of public–private partnerships to enable lead firms to provide smallholders with inputs, credit, mechanization services, and extension support. • Provided capacity building for SMEs: finance facilitation, proposal development, debt restructuring, investment advisory. • Held investment summits to bring together actors in the agribusiness financing space across the supply, demand, and enabling environment areas of the sector. • Targeted agribusinesses for financing, which frequently “on-lend” to upstream actors where most women are located within each value chain. • Designed and executed performance-based sub-awards to compensate financial institutions and service providers upon identifying and financing SMEs and large enterprises, especially those that were women-led, or employed/benefitted many women. • Sought out and convinced female consulting firms to encourage them to join the service provider network, leading to more female agribusinesses served. • Aggregated women’s financing applications to ease collateral requirements, reduce transaction costs for banks, and increase the likelihood of loan approval.
Innovation Lab for Food Processing and Post-Harvest Handling (FPL) (Purdue University, Multy-country, 2014, Ongoing**)	<p>To develop sustainable market-driven value chains that reduce food losses, improve food and nutrition security, and contribute to economic growth for farmers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with private sector to scale up the most cost-effective moisture testing, drying, and storage technologies. • Conduct workshops/training/demos for extension agents, farmers, traders, and processors on improved technologies. • Carry out market assessments to identify potential drivers for processed and nutritionally-enhanced processed products among different socioeconomic groups. • Support the opening of a center to be used for product development, assessment studies, and training.

PROJECT (IP, COUNTRY, START DATE, AND STATUS)	ACTIVITY OBJECTIVE/ GENDER OBJECTIVE	BP INTERVENTIONS/ GENDER-SPECIFIC BP INTERVENTIONS ***
Knowledge-based Integrated Sustainable Agriculture and Nutrition Project II (KISAN II) (Winrock, Nepal, 2017, Ongoing**)	<p>To increase resilience, inclusiveness and sustainability of income growth through facilitation of systemic changes in the agricultural sector.</p> <p>To enhance benefits for women, youth, and disadvantaged farmers by increasing their productivity, profits, access to resources, linkages with government support, and ability to act within market systems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand incubation centers to serve existing rural markets and improve nutrition by making foods that local consumers want and can purchase. Compare how men and women access grain drying, grain moisture determination, and storage information to inform gender-sensitive extension efforts. Train and support women groups for drying and storage technology distribution and service provision. Increase the ability of rural food processors, most of whom are women, to effectively process, package, and market quality products. Establish agreements with private sector partners through grants and memoranda of understanding to reach farmers. Seek out promising cooperatives, build their capacity to be more business oriented, and link them to private sector to carry out different BP roles depending on agreement. Pilot inventory credit products with several coops. Increase access to mechanized services through partnership with private sector firms. Assist with grants to private sector enterprises that support activities that expand and/or strengthen direct or indirect linkages between businesses and smallholder farmers. Mentor project's business partners. Expand SME agribusiness lending. Seek businesses that are run or managed by youth, women, and disadvantaged groups and/or target youth, women, and disadvantaged groups. Integrate women, youth, disadvantaged castes, and ethnic minorities through literacy, life skills, and entrepreneurial training.
Livestock through Improved Nutrition (LPIN) (ACDI/VOCA, Bangladesh, 2015, Ongoing**)	<p>To improve rural household nutrition by increasing livestock productivity, improving access of rural households to hygienic, diverse and quality food, and improving nutrition-related behaviors of rural households.</p> <p>To strengthen skills and knowledge among project, Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee, and local government staff related to integration of gender into project activities; equitable participation of women in training and access to livestock services enhanced with increased production and improved</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support fodder entrepreneurs – develop plots and nurseries, provide training on production and business operation, facilitate access to seed/cutting varieties. Train and provide technical assistance to LSPs to cascade training and services (vaccines, artificial insemination, animal health, etc.) to farmers. Train community agents who work with LSPs to organize animal health and nutrition campaigns; train milk collectors on hygienic milking, preservation, and transportation. Grants program and support for financial institutions, input dealers, and milk processing companies to provide training, services, and markets for farmers. Partner with university on training program for women to become animal health LSPs. Linked female LSPs to government and input dealers. Conduct gender training with private-sector grantees and included gender targets in grant agreements.

PROJECT (IP, COUNTRY, START DATE, AND STATUS)	ACTIVITY OBJECTIVE/ GENDER OBJECTIVE	BP INTERVENTIONS/ GENDER-SPECIFIC BP INTERVENTIONS ***
Naatal Mbay (RTI, Senegal, 2015, Ongoing**)	<p data-bbox="464 326 835 418">nutrition of the household and self; enhanced women's decision-making power as it applies to dairy and livestock value chains.</p> <p data-bbox="464 483 835 743">To significantly scale-up and expand successful value chain approaches, both in terms of potential beneficiaries and geographical coverage, and to systematically strengthen production, productivity and marketing of target crops in a way that is inclusive and makes use of known best practices and technological packages.</p>	<ul data-bbox="867 440 1950 792" style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanded certified seed production—seed sector production planning and price setting. • Consolidated networks provide farmer services –information, finance, marketing, extension, etc. • Supported rice millers – upgrade plans, training, access to finance, link to farmers for raw materials. • Supported producer/transformer participation in market fairs and developed regional platform for marketing of local rice. • Helped processors with technical assistance related to financing, branding, packaging, and marketing of products. • Created Gender Champions strategy with producer to networks – awareness-raising activities, select champions, engage men to support women's initiatives. • Helped women's groups acquire equipment and storage warehouses through own income or linkages with other programs.
Nguriza Nshore (DAI, Rwanda, 2018, Ongoing**)	<p data-bbox="464 862 835 938">To drive rural economic growth through facilitating the emergence of a dynamic agribusiness sector.</p>	<ul data-bbox="867 808 1950 997" style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce Catalytic Growth Facility to co-create concept notes with organizations, formalize into scope of work and later request for proposal. • Provide tailored services to financial institutions to increase SME lending. • Pilot and scale successful financing models. • Use development credit authority to de-risk lending to new sectors. • Move SMEs into position of investment readiness through consulting firms and other experts.
Pastoralist Areas Resilience Improvement through Market Expansion (PRIME) (Mercy Corps, Ethiopia, 2012, Finished)	<p data-bbox="464 1133 835 1230">To reduce poverty and hunger by enhancing resilience to climate change through market linkages in the drylands.</p>	<ul data-bbox="867 1019 1950 1341" style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided technical and financial support for the development of the dairy value chain actors, such as producers, milk collectors, and milk processing companies. • Supported the establishment and expansion of livestock holding grounds and local feedlots in its operation clusters. • Facilitated the expansion of Private Veterinarian Pharmacies and strengthen their linkage with wholesalers and community animal health workers. • Supported input suppliers through small business expansion grants. • Installed supplementary feed production processing plants. Train on alternative feed/fodder technologies. • Supported grain-threshing service providers. • Facilitated business-to-business linkages workshop with 42 local livestock traders.

PROJECT (IP, COUNTRY, START DATE, AND STATUS)	ACTIVITY OBJECTIVE/ GENDER OBJECTIVE	BP INTERVENTIONS/ GENDER-SPECIFIC BP INTERVENTIONS ***
Private Sector Driven Agricultural Growth (PSDAG) (RTI, Rwanda, 2014, Ongoing**)	To increase smallholder incomes by promoting private sector investment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitated technical and soft skills training through public and private technical and vocational colleges to enhance employability and create self-employment for people transitioning out of pastoralism. Facilitated the formation of village savings and loan associations.
Resilience and Economic Growth in Arid Lands – Accelerated Growth (REGAL-AG) (ACDI/VOCA, Kenya, 2013, Finished)	To increase economic growth in rural communities by building a more inclusive and competitive livestock value chain. To promote the inclusiveness of women, youth, and marginalized groups (stand-alone program area).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthened private sector firms through the value chain competitiveness fund (VCCF). Grantees included input providers, post-harvest handling, processing, marketing and financial services who used grants for materials and equipment. Offered business development services to assist 36 companies as a complement to VCCF. Created Cooperative Professionalization Program - Local IPs facilitated quality service management and business development technical assistance for 60 cooperatives. Upgraded Potato Collection Centers (PCCs) – PCCs co-invested in post-harvest handling equipment and materials. PCCs used CRS' Farmbook's 19 Map and Track module to improve their capacity to collect information on farm suppliers and make informed business decisions. Mainstreamed gender and social inclusion in VCCF selection process, including exceptions to co-investment thresholds for women-, youth-, and people with disability-owned SMEs. Supported 28 grantees to develop and implement gender and social inclusion strategies. Developed gender and social inclusion training-of-trainers for business development services to cascaded to grantees. Issued special request for applications specifically for women and youth who had innovative and competitive projects/businesses and need support to upgrade. Created internship program for women, youth, and people with disabilities in agribusiness. Linked livestock enterprises and markets to wide range of business advisory support services. Linked livestock enterprises with end markets by facilitating grantee participation at workshops, shows, and other events. Built capacity of agrovets to increase knowledge, provided equipment grants. Linked fodder producers with dairy producers. Co-invested in one hydroponic fodder production and three hay production enterprises. Supported three milk processing plants, two red-meat processing plants, one chicken processing plant, and one fish processing enterprise. Constructed modern livestock markets and other catalytic market infrastructure. Looked out for good businesses run by women and encouraged them to apply for the grant funds. Provided targeted training for women and youth on fodder production and marketing; gender champions used to train other people interested in fodder production.
Solutions for African Food	To increase the competitiveness of the African food processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen capacity of food processors to produce and market quality, safe and nutritious foods through customized training, sector-wide training, and technology transfer.

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Enterprises (SAFE) (Technoserve, Multy-country, 2013, Ongoing**)	sector to expand availability of affordable and nutritious foods by facilitating the transfer of technology and knowledge between skilled volunteer experts and African food processors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support individual processors to develop market linkages for their products, either through expansion of existing markets, penetration of new market segments, or marketing of a new product. • Partner with and strengthen local institutions/service providers working in the food processing sector. • Build the capacity of local trainers with strong and current content, assist them to improve their facilitation skills and use of adult learning methodologies. • Provide direct, customized support to selected processors to enable them to comply with lenders' requirements and to access finance. • Organize fora to develop relationships between agro-processors and a variety of financial institutions.
Southern Africa Trade & Investment Hub (DAI, Regional, 2016, Ongoing**)	To engage with partners across Southern Africa to deepen regional economic integration, promote two-way trade with the United States under AGOA, and attract investment that drives commercial expansion within the region and to global markets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on trade in feed (which uses maize and soya as key ingredients), improved seed, fertilizer, and other inputs. • Deploy investment team to address firm-level barriers and to catalyze investment into the region. • Host events to strengthen the continent's trade, finance, and investment capacity. • Establish partnerships to support financing deals on anchor farms and rural warehousing. • Support companies to meet social, organic, U.S. Food and Drug Administration compliance certification and training. • Conduct training targeted at young people on pest risk analysis, SPS customs standards, and phytosanitary information management, as well as a career building training. • Support eight women-owned or managed companies to exhibit at the Summer Fancy Food Show in New York. • Complete a market analysis, financial analysis and a technical and commercial validation of the planned distribution strategy for an emerging South African female-owned Black Economic Empowerment-compliant industrial firm planning to invest into a greenfield olive oil processing facility. • Partner with the Association of Black Securities and Investment Professionals to host a career planning and advancement-training event with majority female participation.

ANNEX C: KII IMPLEMENTING PARTNER INTERVIEW GUIDE

Date:

Interviewee Name(s):

Title:

Organization:

Interviewer:

INTERVIEWER: INTRODUCTION

Thank you very much for setting aside the time to talk with me today.

Project Introduction: The Feed the Future Advancing Women’s Empowerment (AWE) program provides technical assistance, capacity building, tools, and resources to USAID and implementing partners to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment for improved development outcomes.

Research Introduction: We are conducting a gendered landscape analysis of Feed the Future agriculture activities engaging substantially in beyond production. Phase I was a document of review of 20 Feed the Future projects. This interview is part of Phase 2, where we are speaking with staff from four of the 20 projects to gain a deeper understanding of beyond production activities, as well as related monitoring, evaluation and learning strategies. This is not an assessment; it is a learning exercise that will contribute to USAID’s development objectives in gender equality and women’s empowerment. Results will be published in a report that will highlight key learning about what is happening across the Feed the Future portfolio, where activities have been particularly effective or promising for promoting women’s empowerment, and recommendations for increasing the capture of this learning and sharing results.

Voluntary Participation and Confidentiality: Taking part in the interview is voluntary. We will record and transcribe the interview. Your responses will be used to inform our research, kept confidential, and no respondents will be identified individually unless you choose to release this information.

Interview Timeframe and Procedure: The conversation will take about 60 minutes. We will ask you several questions, and I will take notes. Before we begin, do you have any questions?

STANDARD INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: IMPLEMENTATION

1. Could you tell me a little bit about the project’s overall work, and particular strengths, in beyond production activities?

Probes: input and other kinds of service provision, processing, marketing, etc.

2. Is the project promoting women’s engagement or empowerment in beyond production activities, either through mainstreaming or specific gender focused activities?

Probes: mainstreaming, targeted support, training, business development, mentorship, access to finance, etc.

3. If the project is promoting women’s engagement or empowerment in beyond production activities, what are the factors that are key to making these approaches successful? What did these achievements look like? How did you get there? Who was involved?

Probes: specific value chains, gender analysis/strategy, staff, targeted support, etc.

4. What was the most helpful USAID guidance on WE in beyond production and why? How did you use it?

Probes: women’s economic empowerment, women’s entrepreneurship, etc.

STANDARD INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: MEL

5. How is the project measuring your overall beyond production work? Is it able to measure women’s engagement/empowerment in beyond production? If yes, how? At what level is it capturing information?

(Interviewers will have the project indicators on hand and will be able to use those to probe. We may have to ask the people being interviewed to track down more information for us later.)

Probes: standard indicators, custom indicators, type of business, size of business, number/sex of employees, formal/informal etc.

6. Is the project using gender-specific data about beyond production activities or outcomes to inform or support implementation? In what ways? If not, why not?

Probes: gender strategy, mainstreaming, targeted activities, etc.

7. Which toolkits, resources, guides, checklists, manuals, etc. have you found most useful to implement/track gendered beyond production activities?

Probes: What made that tool so useful, how it was used, by whom, WEAI.

8. In an ideal scenario, what resources or support would make it possible to improve implementation or data capture/sharing?

Probes: toolkits, resources, guides, checklists, manuals, indicators, buy-in, leadership or donor support

CONCLUSION

9. Is there anything else we should know about women’s empowerment in beyond production intervention/MEL strategies that I didn’t ask you about yet?

10. What questions do you have for us?



Thank you!