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Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa

# A Toolkit for Gender Mainstreaming in Agribusiness Incubation

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# A Toolkit for Gender Mainstreaming in Agribusiness Incubation

**Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa**
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# Contents

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The First draft of this toolkit was prepared by Ms Ann Apekey, Gender Youth and Social Development Specialist, FARA; and Ms Sarah Mayanja, Research Associate – Value Chains and Agricultural Marketing, International Potato Center (CIP).

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- Ms Sarah Mayanja, Research Associate Value Chains and Agricultural Marketing – CIP
- Netsayi Noris Mudege (PhD): Gender Research Coordinator for CIP and Gender Focal Point for Roots, Tubers and Bananas
- Anna Sikira (PhD): Lecturer, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Tanzania

# Introduction

Business incubators temporarily provide start-up entrepreneurs (also known as clients) with a complex package of services to improve the client's chance of survival in the early phase of the enterprise's life span. Services provided may include coaching and mentoring, advice on business development, linkages to networks, and access to finance. The motivating factor is that if start-ups and Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) are provided with mentorship and relevant business services, it improves their chance of survival and sustainability. Given the importance of business incubators, it is important that efforts are made to mainstream gender into all elements of these programmes, including the incubation process, so as to ensure that women and youth participate in, and benefit from the programme. If gender considerations are not included into incubation programmes and processes, including selection of value chains of focus, incubators may fail to meet the unique needs of women and youth.

## Why this toolkit?

The Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) has a mandate to strengthen gender mainstreaming as well as involvement of youth in agricultural research and development. FARA seeks to provide 'appropriate leadership for mainstreaming gender in the work of partner institutions and the secretariat' in order to ensure 'gender responsiveness in actions, results, systems and resource allocation both within FARA and among partner institutions' (http://faraafrica.org/programs/cross-cutting-issues/gender/). In 2010, FARA and its partners (universities, research institutions and the private sector), with funding from Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), launched the Universities, Business and Research in Agricultural Innovation (UniBRAIN) programme. The programme is meant to foster innovative solutions and products in agriculture, agribusiness and agroindustry. The programme also offers incubation services to business start-ups. However, many incubators and incubation programmes have not

successfully integrated gender considerations in programme development and implementation. Key questions that have eluded many incubation programmes are:

- How to integrate gender into business incubation.
- Whether gender mainstreaming is compatible with profit-making motives of many agribusiness incubation programs. This toolkit seeks to address these and other questions.

The toolkit is a result of widespread stakeholder consultation processes conducted by FARA and its partners, and aims to spearhead and advise on gender mainstreaming into business incubations processes under the UniBRAIN programme. It provides support to incubation programmes, incubator managers and incubatees who wish to promote inclusive businesses, and motivates intended users by providing practical gender mainstreaming tools to use. The ideas, processes and tips in this toolkit can also be applied in other similar business incubation programmes and business strengthening undertakings.

The toolkit will:

- Enhance stakeholders' understanding of the incubation process, value chain and gender concepts.
- Raise awareness on the importance and benefits of integrating gender considerations into agribusiness incubation processes.
- Enable practitioners to mainstream gender into incubation processes.

Although the toolkit recognises that agribusiness incubation programmes employ a value chain development approach, its main focus is mainstreaming gender into the incubation process.

The toolkit is composed of five sections. Section 1 provides an overview of the toolkit's rationale. Section 2 makes the case for integrating gender considerations into business incubation processes. Section 3 introduces agribusiness incubation within the value chain development context, and describes the UniBRAIN incubation process. This section enables the reader to understand the UniBRAIN model as well as conceptualise the logic followed in gender mainstreaming. Section 4 introduces and discusses strategies for gender mainstreaming into incubation programmes and processes. Section 5 introduces tools that may be used by practitioners to ensure gender mainstreaming in agribusiness incubators as well as to gauge the degree of gender responsiveness of outcomes, the performance of agribusiness incubators and the inclusiveness of the incubated businesses. The section also provides additional resources on gender mainstreaming that agribusiness incubator managers can consult.

## Users of the toolkit

The toolkit is primarily designed for business incubators and incubatees. Therefore, the target groups are:

1. FARA
2. African Agriculture Incubation Network (AAIN)
3. Incubators: Sub-regional Research Organizations (SROs), Universities and research institutions, and the Private Sector.
4. Incubator clients or incubatees.

# Why mainstream gender in Agribusiness Incubation?

Few Business Incubators address gender mainstreaming in operationalisation of their activities. According to Silver and Ahoefa (2009:43), business incubation theories and models tend to treat 'the incubators and the business incubation processes as unproblematic institutions for creating businesses and stimulating local economic growth. There is usually no attempt to understand the role of women and youth in entrepreneurship development, as well as the best ways to integrate and mentor them through business incubation. Men and women may face different constraints and opportunities, which need to be taken into account when developing targeted business support mechanisms through incubation.

A number of intervention strategies often assume that women, men and youth actors will engage at the same level, and derive similar benefits accruing from chain upgrading strategies. However, research has shown that vulnerable groups are usually found in the nodes where there is a minimal benefit. Globally, many women are involved in business enterprises, but often dominate in the low-income informal sector businesses. In contrast to men, women are not significantly represented in manufacturing and construction sectors, but are overrepresented in the consumer and retail sectors (Vossenberg, 2013), which are often less profitable. On the other hand, the youth have minimal access to productive assets such as land, machinery and equipment, and this hinders their participation in lucrative value chains.

Proprietors of business incubators often ask why gender concerns should be an integral component in business incubation. Arguments for gender-responsive business incubation and value chain development can be categorised as follows:

## Business arguments

*Gender unresponsiveness of agribusiness incubation programmes may result in economic inefficiency and underperformance of the agribusiness sector.*

Agribusiness incubation strategies and opportunities that do not take into account the different roles of male and female chain actors in the selected value chain may create obstacles to women's effective participation in emerging business opportunities (KIT, 2013).The World Bank states that unequal economic growth is 'inefficient' and leads to 'wasted human resources and missed opportunities for innovation'.

Vossenberg (2013: 4) notes that women face more challenges in growing businesses beyond start-up, especially in developing countries where businesses owned by women have higher exit rates than businesses owned by men. Other studies have also demonstrated that failure of small businesses and start-ups is linked to a lack of proper business plans, a characteristic most common in businesses owned by women (Perry, 2001). Given the huge costs associated with business failure, it is necessary to incubate 'female enterprises from an early stage' in order to 'give the businesses credibility; increase the likelihood of their survival and their abilities to build effective networks and access critical resources such as finance' (Silver and Ahoefa 2009:44).

*If women do not have access to business training, they will not benefit from new technologies and effective business management models.*

Women entrepreneurs may lack business management skills and the technology they need to drive their businesses to full potential, and would therefore benefit from agribusiness incubation. However, research has demonstrated that, often, training on agribusiness principles does not target women.

**Box 1**

Research on the development of potato marketing strategies in Malawi showed that government organizations and NGOs trained more men than women on marketing and profit calculation because of the perception that more men than women were involved in seed potato markets. As a result, women were often not able to negotiate for fair terms of trade. Women were often underpaid and their businesses were not as profitable as men's businesses. (Mudege, forthcoming).

For women to benefit meaningfully, agribusiness incubation programmes need to be carefully managed to include the issue of raising awareness among implementers, of the potential blind spots that may result from their own biases and gender role stereotypes. Most female entrepreneurs have limited access to technology, and are mistakenly seen as averse to technology. This greatly impacts on the quality and homogeneity of their products (e.g., small-scale processors), and limits opportunities to venture into bigger and newer markets.

*Women need strong business networks to be competitive in the business sector.*

Vossenberg (2013:8) notes that women often have 'powerless social networks', meaning that women may not have access to appropriate role models or the information they need to start successful business enterprises. Limited access to formal and informal networks useful for fostering business growth and access to information may hinder women's ability to benefit from business opportunities such as participation in an incubation programme. Gender- responsive incubators that provide women with the desired information, have the potential to increase their opportunities to access financial capital and other business development services needed to spur sustainable businesses. International Trade Centre (nd: 2) notes that, 'for women to grow their businesses and expand in an increasingly competitive world, they have to have equal access to the opportunities, support and benefits that male- owned businesses have'.

Equitable involvement of women in business incubation will increase their business acumen, leading to sustainable female-owned businesses, thus matching those owned by men.

## Social Justice arguments

Both men and women should benefit equally from agribusiness development. Women constitute the largest portion of the workforce in agricultural value chains, but are usually the most disadvantaged (Apotheker et al, 2012). Institutional and social barriers may bar women from participating in nodes of value chains that have higher margins even if they have the capability. Strong gender segmentation of occupations has been noted in many value chains, with women's work often arbitrarily assumed to be of lower value and men typically occupying permanent and management positions. Gender wage gaps are also evident in many value chains. Women are often perceived as a source of cheap labour, and their contributions are often not valued fairly.

Benefits from economic growth should be distributed equitably in order to promote gender equality and women's empowerment (http://genderinvaluechains.ning.com/page/why-the-arguments ). Mudege et al., (forthcoming) suggest that involving women in businesses that are traditionally regarded as outside women's domain, and strengthening services and input provision for women in those sectors will be potentially gender transformative. This is because the active engagement of women will require a change in attitudes, roles and relations at household, community and organizational levels, and markets.

## Poverty alleviation arguments

Women and youth are important actors in alleviating poverty (KIT et al, 2012). They often provide labour, even though women are also heavily involved in reproductive roles within families. Poverty alleviation strategies that are gender 'blind', may have unintended negative consequences and may fail. As observed by Stotsky (2006), 'societies that increase women's access to social and business services narrow differences between men and women in economic

opportunities [and] hence increase the pace of economic development and poverty reduction'. Interventions that target the economic empowerment of different groups (classified according to sex and age) are far more likely to improve livelihoods and well-being.

High exit rates among female entrepreneurs are attributed to lack of financing, insufficient profitability and family responsibilities (GEM, 2010, cited in Vossenberg 2013: 4). Further, limited access to strong networks and financing leads to engagement in petty businesses. Providing women and youth with access to business incubation services that meet their needs would improve their chances of developing sustainable businesses, leading to the significant reduction of poverty.

## Why are agribusinesses/ incubators often not gender responsive?

- Agribusiness developers/incubators often think that business models are gender neutral. They fail to recognise that men and women may have different starting points, and are presented with different opportunities and constraints in relation to their gender roles.
- Agribusiness incubators may not regard promoting gender equality and women's empowerment as their role, and, if involving women means extra effort and expenditure of additional resources, they may view gender mainstreaming as antithetical to business and profit making.
- Incubators may also subscribe to stereotypes associated with women's involvement in certain types of business. This may be further compounded by the business incubator's belief that there may be resistance to women's involvement. Since the purpose of business incubators is to launch successful businesses, if women entrepreneurs are considered 'high risk', they may not be enrolled into incubation programmes.
- Sometimes incubators acknowledge the relevance of gender integration but lack the knowledge necessary to integrate gender considerations into incubation models and processes. In some cases, they mention the lack of female applicants to the programme, or lack of sound business plans by female applicants.

Clearly, some of the beliefs associated with the negative impact of gender mainstreaming into incubation programmes are unfounded. As this section has illustrated, gender mainstreaming is important in agribusiness development and incubation because it has the potential to propel the establishment of inclusive businesses that benefit men, women and the youth, as well as the continent at large.

# Agribusiness incubation and value chain development concepts


This section provides a brief overview of key concepts related to the UniBRAIN incubation models and processes. It will also provide definitions of key value chain concepts related to agribusiness incubation because the UniBRAIN agribusiness incubator model adopts a value chain approach.

## Key terms: Agribusiness Incubation

**Incubation:** A business support process that accelerates the successful development of start-up and fledging companies by providing entrepreneurs with customised services and resources. Customised services can include, but are not limited to, providing 'premises, support and advisory services, networking and access to finance' (Silver and Ahoefa, 2009). From this perspective, different stakeholders have to contribute to the success of incubation and graduation of incubated businesses. Hackett and Dilts (2004) define incubation as a carefully conceptualised multi-stakeholder process with various 'building blocks', which offers several resources and services to start-ups or fledgling businesses.

**Agribusiness incubation:** An agribusiness incubator creates a mechanism to assist in the identification and commercialisation of research products (e.g., technologies and

innovations) from public and private agricultural institutions and universities for adaptation by the private sector. As such, the incubators aim to support the commercialisation of new products, technologies and services that will leverage the resources invested in Research and Development (R&D) processes. This improves/upgrades the value chain, creates employment opportunities and supports livelihood improvement (Sharma et al, 2012).

**Agribusiness Incubator:** An Agribusiness Incubator is a structure that supports the agribusiness venture creation process through provision of various incubation services. The incubators nurture the development of 'early stage' and new companies, and thus help them to grow and survive during the early turbulent times. The UniBRAIN incubators have adopted and customizsd various models that range from technology models (Ghana) to mixed or 'combo' models (Uganda).

**Incubatees/ Client:** The Business Incubator "Client" or "Incubatee" can be any entrepreneur [Small and Medium Enterprise (SME)] or start-up who is accepted in the incubator. For UniBRAIN, this includes commercial clients seeking skills and/or facilities they do not have. A potential client must fulfill the selection criteria (set by the incubator) to be eligible to enroll under the incubation programme. Among other conditions, the criteria assess the nature of the business/business idea, business and financial performance, credibility, and ability to absorb the incubator services. The successful entrepreneur has to go through a number of processes before being enrolled.

**UniBRAIN Incubation Model:** The UniBRAIN incubation model is based on UniBRAIN's value proposition that seeks to place agribusiness incubators in position to harness the opportunities provided by universities, research institutions and the private sector in their quest to offer services to commercial clients that spur agribusiness development.

## Value chain concepts

Agricultural **market chains** represent linkages between actors who knowingly or unknowingly work together to move products and services along the production – consumption continuum (KIT, 2006). The different actors are illustrated in Figure 1.

**Value chain actors**: The chain of actors who directly deal with the products, i.e., those who produce, process, trade and own them.

**Value chain supporters**: The various actors who provide value-adding services, but never directly deal with the product (for example, financial institutions).

**Value chain influencers**: The regulatory framework, policies, infrastructures, etc. (at the local, national and international level).

**Value chain analysis**: Refers to an in-depth study/review of each step of the value chain that a product/service goes through, that is, from raw material acquisition to the eventual end user of the finished product, with the goal of delivering maximum value at minimal cost.

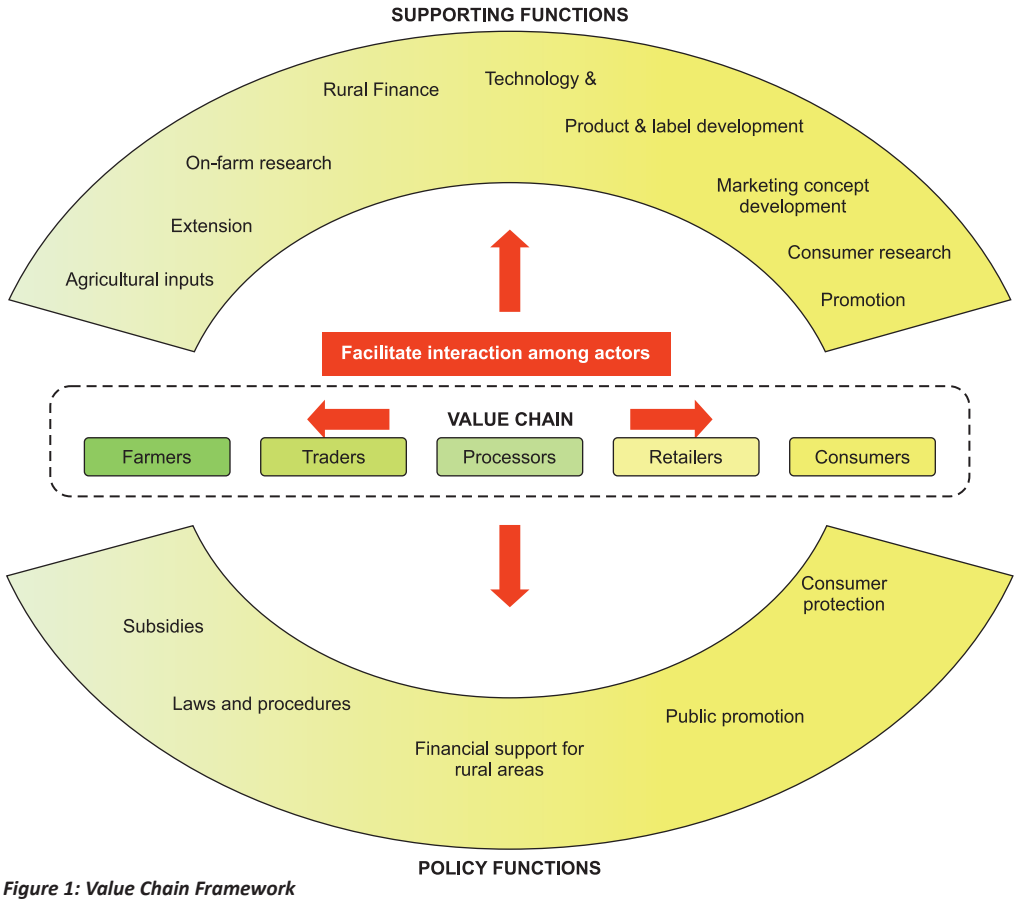



***Figure 1: Value Chain Framework***

Incubators and incubatees need to have a clear perception of the chain they are operating, in order to successfully build sustainable businesses. As such, there is need to conduct a value chain analysis to understand who the value chain actors and chain influencers are, and their functions, as well as to understand who the chain supporters are and how to access the services they provide. Mapping the chain is the first step towards building strong business models that will respond to chain upgrading and improvement strategies.

**Value Chain Development:** According to the World Bank (2010), Value Chain Development (VCD) can be defined as 'an effort to strengthen mutually beneficial linkages among firms so that they work together to take advantage of market opportunities so as to create and build trust among value chain participants'.

## *The role of innovation brokers*

Several scholars including Nederlof (2012), Klerkx (2010) and Thiele (2011) underscore the importance of innovation brokerage in value chains. Previously, the assumption was that the 'hidden hand of the market' was capable of organizing functional innovation systems, but as Mur (2012) states, intermediary organizations are now stepping in to take up this role. Mayanja

et al. (2013) further mention that innovation brokers may take on the role of champions who can be facilitators of the innovation process, actors within the chain, or perform supporting functions. Agribusiness incubators are also innovation brokers. For instance, agribusiness incubators may facilitate linkages between value chain actors, as well as between core value chain actors and chain supporters. Furthermore, their role places them in a better position to influence higher-level policy makers.

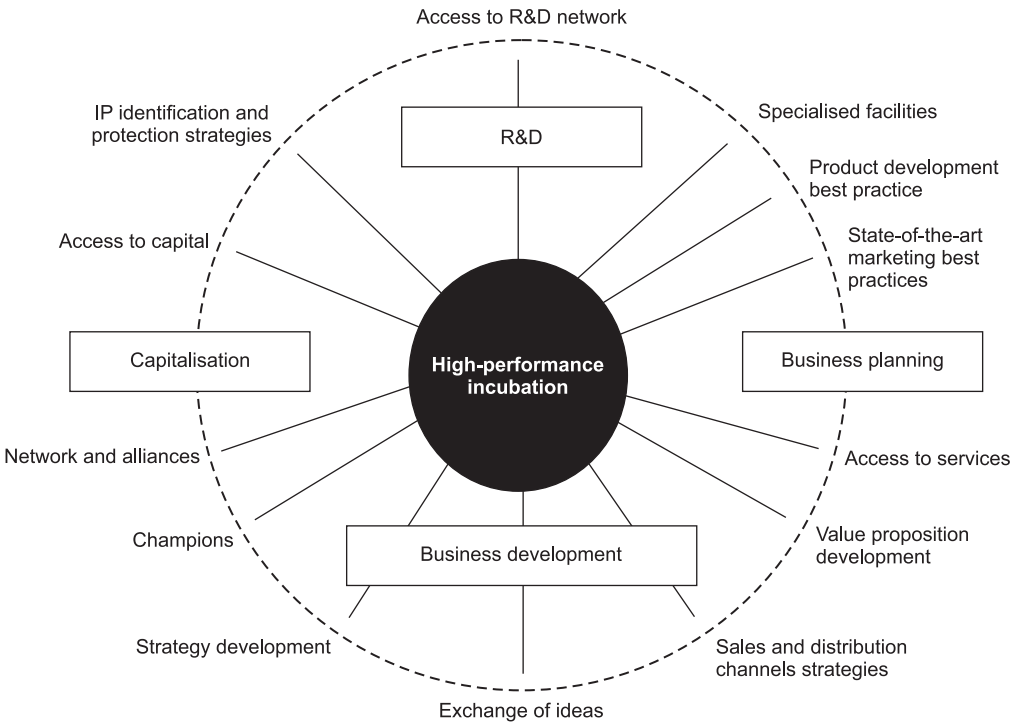
## The Incubation Process

The incubation process is structured and customised to meet the incubatees' needs and add value to the growth of their businesses, while at the same time earning income for the incubator. Figure 2 below presents a framework for business incubation, and highlights the major tenets on which the incubation process is premised.

The incubation process is elaborated below:

**Business plan development:** All incubatees are required to develop a business plan – some present the plan before admission while others (start-ups) are provided with support to develop the business plan. The incubation manager provides a standard template for the plan, but incubatees may need support to develop sections of the plan, especially the financial and promotional strategies.

***Figure 2: Framework for business incubation in Agribusiness Incubators***




Source: ABI Strategic Business Plan 2008-13

**Incubatee recruitment process and selection:** The incubator manager plays an important role by screening potential clients and recommending them for admission. Screening is a multi-step process that includes reviewing the business idea, business plan and application, due diligence, and determining if the applicant meets the incubator criteria for admission. The incubator manager presents the findings to the admission committee, which then reviews the application, interviews the applicant and confirms candidates suitable for enrolment. The admission committee submits a report(s) to the Board of Directors.

Following a successful enterprise review and admission, an engagement plan, outlining the relationship between the incubator and the incubatee, is developed. The plan outlines the type of engagement, which could be at one of the following three levels: (i) basic level - the client joins the affiliate, virtual or pre-incubation programme (ii) intermediate level – the client enrolls for a classic incubation programme, or (iii) advanced level – the client enrolls for the investee programme.

### *Incubatee mentorship programme development*

A strategic and technological mentoring programme is offered by the incubator, and is guided by the engagement contract.

- In line with the engagement contract, the mentoring programme covers the following areas: Strategic direction – including strategy development, review and validation of the business model, business building process, growth strategy, and exit strategy.
- Consolidating internal processes
- Product development
- Market growth strategy
- Staff and management development
- Financing

The plan details how the incubator will address the above-mentioned areas, the resources required, the risks involved, and the strategic reasons for taking on the investment. The plan is used to prepare the engagement contract which, when signed by both parties, signals the commencement of the incubation programme.

The incubatee can also take advantage of other mentorship programmes that may be available outside the incubator. In addition, incubatees can access direct consulting services, seminars and workshops.

### *Technology and innovation selection*

An inventory of technologies and innovations are carried out by incubators and partners so as to assess the potential and opportunities for technologies identified as well as adoption rate along the business value proposition. Selection for commercialisation is guided by cost of

technology, source of the technology, associated benefits and adoption capacity by the clients of the incubator.

### *Value chains selection process*

The process of selecting value chains is done by incubators and incubates based on potential market opportunities. The enterprise selection process in incubation is purely informed by the market and incubation ecosystem. The selected value chains are assessed using value chain analysis tools and follow the country investment plans guided by Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) principles.

### *Graduation and/ or exit – follow-up plan*

**Exit criteria and process**

The incubators have a strategy for the exit of successful and unsuccessful clients, which is built into the engagement contract. Clients who are not successful or are perceived as unlikely to become successful will be asked to exit the incubator in order to make space for new clients. In some cases when clients are in breach of any agreements with the incubator, the client may also be asked to exit the incubator and the client's rights to services may also be terminated. In the event of an unsuccessful exit, the client is asked to vacate the premises at any time and terminate all ties with incubator. In the event of successful exit, the incubator will provide approval for the client to exit the premises of the incubator as well as approve final status of client from Tenant to Affiliate or Graduate status. In some cases, the client may be successful but not yet ready to leave the incubator premises, the incubator will reserve the right to modify the tenancy agreement and expand the occupancy period before giving final approval for successful exit.

**Graduation:**

Graduating clients have to meet a set of criteria based on current performance, future needs and growth potential. These include:

- A balanced and experienced management team with critical expertise in technology/ product/market and business development.
- Financial stability: As demonstrated vis-à-vis a significant outside investment or a long-term investor commitment to the company.
- Stable sales and backlog indicating customer demand.
- Good/solid operational/business plan.
- Need for and use of the services provided by the incubator.

After a client graduates, it does not necessarily mean the end of their relationship with the incubator. The client is free to request business development services, from the incubator who may continue to provide such support virtually as well as for walk-in clients. There are also opportunities for business-to-business learning and mentoring. Graduates who wish to continue to attend refresher courses may do so for a fee.

*Monitoring and Evaluation process*

In its M&E framework, the UniBRAIN programme monitors and measures three key result areas with several indicators as shown in Table 1 below:

**Table 1: UniBRAIN Results framework**

| Result area | UniBRAIN indicators |
|---|---|
| Result 1: Commercialisation of agribusiness innovations supported and promoted | Number of jobs to be created; total revenue generated; number of existing agribusinesses to be given support to expand, diversify, enter new markets, etc. ; total incremental revenue generated; number of farm families to benefit as suppliers to supported agribusinesses; number of start-up businesses to be incubated. |
| Agribusiness graduates produced by tertiary and agricultural institutions with the potential to become efficient entrepreneurs | Number of BSc candidates to receive improved agribusiness courses; number of MSc candidates to receive improved agribusiness courses. |
| UniBRAIN's innovative outputs, experiences and practices shared and up-scaled | By the end of the fourth year, five more agribusiness incubators established and 10 more in the pipeline. |

UniBRAIN M&E systems seek to monitor key quantitative measurements including those related to numbers of people participating and total revenue generated. This indicates that the focus of the M&E framework is on volumetric measurements.

# Strategies for mainstreaming gender into incubator programmes

Gender mainstreaming in agribusiness value chains and business incubators is not a one-off event; care has to be taken to ensure that gender considerations are imbedded in every stage of the agribusiness incubator design and development process.

When working with business incubator programmes, there are three major strategies that can be adopted to integrate gender considerations:

1) Mainstreaming gender into value chain development
2) Integrating gender concerns into the design of agribusiness incubation programmes
3) Promoting women's participation in agribusinesses and agribusiness incubation. These strategies are not mutually exclusive. An agribusiness incubator programme can choose to use all approaches, or any combination of the three, depending on the aims of the incubator as well as the value chain in context. The strategies can also address (i) the incubator, or (ii) the incubation process.

Gender mainstreaming in incubation processes is the responsibility of the incubator's management. This section discusses various strategies that can be used to mainstream gender at the different levels:

**Table 2: Strategies suitable for gender mainstreaming at different levels of the agribusiness incubators.**

| Level | Suitable strategies |
|---|---|
| Programme level | • Mainstream gender in the entire organization UniBRAIN and partner organizations (engendering of their policies).<br>• Use of gender responsive agribusiness value chain mapping.<br>• Design a gender responsive M&E system. |
| Incubator Level | • Use gender lens in selecting agribusiness value chains and business plans.<br>• Use of diagnostic market survey.<br>• Use of gender responsive constraints analysis.<br>• Build an enabling environment for women and youth to participate in the incubation process.<br>• Implement a gender responsive incubation process and use of gender responsive M&E system to track performance of graduates. |
| Incubatee | • Develop business plans that are gender responsive.<br>• Use of training and mentorship strategies. |

## Mainstreaming gender into agribusiness value chain development

Under this strategy, several activities and tools can be used to assist with gender responsive value chain development.

### *Selection of gender responsive value chain*

Mainstreaming gender at this stage provides the incubator with an opportunity to identify a value chain that allows for equitable benefits to men, women and youth. The gender-sensitive selection of a value chain (see Section 5) may help in this regard. Depending on the aims of the business incubator, it may select value chains that it knows will directly benefit women as programme participants. This may involve the selection of specific nodes within a value chain when developing business models. For example, along a sweet potato value chain, a business incubator may decide to focus on a specific node, such as processing, where they know they will likely reach more women and still make a profit. Or they may decide to target different nodes within the sweet potato value chain while ensuring that women and youth are also given appropriate support to participate.

### *Gender responsive value chain mapping*

A diagnostic market survey of the selected chain may be carried out in order to provide information that can be used in the preliminary mapping of the chain, as is usually done in a chain-analysis. However, to obtain a gender dimension of the chain map, a 'gender lens' is used to obtain a clearer understanding of the gender dynamics within the chain. This activity helps the incubator's management to obtain foresight of the existing challenges, constraints and opportunities that both male and female chain actors face, and acquire the necessary

sensitivity to the genders' differing needs in their quest to build stronger businesses. The gender mapping of value chains tool (see tools section) provides step by step guidance on how to collect, analyse and utilise this information. This strategy is also useful for incubators that have already selected value chains to engage in.

### *Gender responsive constraints analysis*

This strategy enables incubator managers to obtain a clearer perception of gender-based constraints and opportunities that male and female entrepreneurs may face in executing an identified business opportunity. The analysis is done for businesses at various nodes of the value chain. Identified gender inequalities are then addressed through the design of gender responsive strategies that are integrated in the incubatees business plans, as well as through the design of training and mentoring programmes aimed at mitigating possible negative impacts of these gender inequalities. The gender-based constraints analysis tool (see tools section) can be used to address this need. During planning, appropriate gender indicators need to be identified. These indicators will then be monitored through a gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation system to assess progress towards achievement of improved gender equality.

### *Gender-sensitive business planning*

There is room for incubators to mainstream gender into the business plan template to enable potential clients to start thinking about gender (if they haven't already) during the application process. Business plans guide the trajectory of growth and, hence, their importance to gender mainstreaming cannot be over-emphasised.Using a gender lens during business plan development is another strategy for creating inclusive businesses.

Business development planning templates may be revised to address some or all of the following issues:

- Who are the actors (owners of the business plan)? What is the proportion of women? What role do men and women play in developing/implementing the identified business opportunity?
- What are the risks/critical success factors for the business? Are any of these linked to the constraints women are likely to face during developing/implementing the business idea (in terms of accessing/controlling certain resources)? How will those risks be mitigated?
- What are the benefits for the community? (Impact on male/female market chain actors in terms of job opportunities, income, visibility/credibility, elevation in the chain, social relations, time, etc.)

Including gender issues at this stage also increases the chances of inclusion of gender at later stages of business development and incubation process.

*What happens when an incubator has chosen the value chain before starting an incubation programme? Can the incubator still mainstream gender?*

In many cases, companies (incubators) preselect a value chain of focus for their business incubator. In that case, the incubator may use different means to ensure that they gather as

much information about the value chain in order to design products that will benefit both male and female entrepreneurs.

For example, incubator clients may be requested to collect value chain analysis information needed to map where the various actors are located, and the gender-based constraints and opportunities related to participation. This will also help the mentors in the business incubator to give advice on how women can be involved in ways that are beneficial to them.

## Integrating gender into the design of agribusiness incubation programmes

There are different ways to mainstream gender into the design of agribusiness incubation programmes. However, in order to successfully mainstream gender into incubation programme designs, managers should not only understand the role of women in relevant value chains as discussed in previous strategies; they also need to understand the role of women in incubation programmes.

### *Understand the role of women in incubation programmes*

The role of women in incubation programmes needs to be understood. Are women involved in programmes as incubatees, incubators or as providers of labour for those who participate in agribusiness incubator programmes? Incubators should review their undertakings with a critical gender lens in order to ascertain whether women are involved in the programme and, if they are, how.

**Programme governance structures**

- Are women members of the Board of Directors of the incubator? Yes/No
- Are women present at the level of decision-making and governance of the incubator consortium? Yes/No
- Is there a gender balanced representation in the governance of the incubator? Yes/No

If your answer to the above three questions is “No”, there may be need to review governance structures as well as raise awareness of the need to integrate gender concerns into management decisions related to incubation.

If women are not involved as incubators, female entrepreneurs may lack role models for inspiration. To understand the role of women in the incubator programme, the programme manager may decide to use the ‘Gender mapping of the incubator programme’ tool or the “Actor analysis” tool (see tools section) that will help him/her to understand where men, women and youth are located in the programme’s governance structure. Since this tool addresses governance structures, it will help in understanding whether women and youth are actively participating as clients and benefiting at the same level as men.

If the manager finds out that women are not fully represented at leadership levels, he/she may design / adopt some affirmative action strategies to improve women's involvement. The manager may also adopt capacity building strategies, to build the capacity of women to take up leadership positions successfully.

**Women as part of incubator management team**

- Are women part of incubator management team? Yes/No
- Are they actively involved in decision-making at incubator level? Yes/No

**Women as Incubatees/ Clients**

- Are women and youth involved as incubatees in the programme at the same level as men? Yes/No
- Are women and youth participating as owners of businesses or entrepreneurs? Yes/No
- Are women and youth graduating from the programme at the same level as men? Yes/No
- Are there opportunities for active involvement of women and youth? Yes/No

If the answer to any of the above questions is "No", there is need to understand why women may not be involved as incubatees and why they are failing to successfully graduate. An incubator who is interested in gender mainstreaming may use the gender-based constraints analysis tool (see tools section) to answer these questions and devise a plan that could result in more involvement of women and youth in the programme. It could be the role of university partners in the programme to gather this information.

**Role of women as employees of successfully incubated businesses**

Ask the following questions:

- Are women benefiting from the job opportunities created by the incubated businesses? Yes/No
- Are women mostly employed at the low and least paying levels of the agribusiness? Yes/No
- Are women adequately represented as employees at higher levels of these businesses? Yes/No

You can also ask the same questions related to the involvement of youth if the incubator programme is also interested in improving the livelihoods of young men and women.

Successful incubatees will need to constantly track this information. Depending on the engagement contract, they should report the results of such tracking to the incubator and, ultimately, to the programme. Having this information could help incubatees to design appropriate strategies for engaging men, women and youth as employees or service providers to their business venture.

There is need for continued monitoring and tracking of this information during the monitoring and evaluation processes after the incubatee graduates.

### *Building an enabling environment for women and youth participation*

Incubators need to build an enabling environment for male, female and youth entrepreneurs to participate in the programme. Incubators are best placed in communities where they are trying to help. Female and youth entrepreneurs may not be able to easily access incubators if they are located far away from their communities. Silver and Ahoefa (2009:60) state that 'the approach to incubating female entrepreneurship should focus on identifying women's needs in geographically specific locations. Regions have been known to possess variable resources; this framework puts emphasis on designing a set of specific regional policies for supporting entrepreneurs'. By so doing, incubators acquire the flexibility needed for responding to opportunities and constraints that male and female entrepreneurs encounter. *Needs assessment* should tease out the varying needs that male and female entrepreneurs have, and develop strategies to meet these needs.

### *Selection and recruitment*

The selection and recruitment processes of incubators may be biased. Selection bias may be a result of different things:

1. Biased/gender-blind selection criteria that discriminate against women and youth. These criteria, for example, may not acknowledge that, by virtue of their socio-economic roles, women may not have access to important resources such as land, finance or even skills, to be able to competitively participate at the same level as men.
2. Dissemination of recruitment information through channels that women and other disadvantaged groups may not readily access.
3. Gender stereotyping by incubators that negatively influence their views on the ability of women to participate as business owners in general, or at certain nodes of the value chain.
4. Women may have access to information but lack the confidence and self-esteem necessary to apply it. They may also regard advertised opportunities as only available to men, and therefore not be confident that they will be considered if they apply to the programme.

Strategies that can be used include those:

1. Related to selection criteria. Selection criteria should be gender responsive.
    a. Some selection criteria may leave women out. For example, if incubatees are expected to have adequate rent and land to host the business, this may exclude women. In the beginning, women may need support or may need to be hosted at a place with reduced rental demands until they can stand on their own feet.
    b. Where women cannot be supported with rent, it may be useful to mentor a women's collective so that the women may be able, as a group, to mobilise money for rent or start-up capital.
    c. Women who are not successful when they first apply could be identified for coaching and mentoring programmes aimed at helping them to produce bankable business plans.

d. Selection criteria could ensure that technologies that are sensitive to women's needs and abilities are not left out. This would enable business selection criteria that emphasise technological content and export earnings potential to include women's businesses which rely on low level technologies and focus on serving local markets.

2. Related to dissemination of information: Business incubators should target information dissemination channels that are accessible to men and women. For example, television and radio may be used, and the advertisements run in the evening when women have time to listen and/or watch radio and television programmes. Women's groups can also be targeted with information provided through selected partner NGOs. It has been noted that posters that involve a lot of graphics and pictures may be easily accessible to women. It is also necessary to use a language that people can understand.
3. Related to stereotypes by incubators: Incubator managers may be sensitised to the need to diversify their client base, as well as the need for training on gender responsive client management.
4. Related to lack of confidence: Although agribusiness incubators have a profit motive, they also have corporate social responsibility to ensure that their businesses improve the lives of the men, women and youth they work with. As a result, incubators could partner with NGOs and women's groups (if funding is available) for pre-financing programmes that assist with the development of proposals and business plans.

### *Technology and innovation selection*

In countries such as Uganda, high technology-based enterprises such those involved in producing banana-based products (e.g. making juice sold in supermarkets) and coffee products (e.g. making instant coffee), may be regarded as belonging to the men's domain. When technological demands are not high, as is the case with boiling bananas (*Matoke*) for sale at local markets, women may be involved. This means that by choosing a specific value chain/ technology for incubation, a segment of the population may be left out if the chosen chain is not regarded as a chain that they would normally participate in. The following questions can aid agribusiness incubators in selecting technologies and innovations:

- Do men and women have equal access to resources required to use this technology? Yes/No
- Will men and women have access to training on how to use the technology? Yes/No
- Does the use of the technology affect men and women differently? Yes/No
- Are there cultural and social attitudes that can prevent women from taking advantage of the technology? Yes/No
- Is the technology women friendly? Yes/No

Depending on the technology selected, there may be resistance against the participation of women in certain agribusinesses. Some technologies are regarded as belonging to women's domain, so technologies that target those domains may benefit women.

**Box 2**

A study by CIP in Uganda demonstrated that although women were engaged in sweet potato production, they could not engage in remunerable nodes of the chain because of limited investment capital and mobility issues. The study further showed that women were engaged in small-scale processing while the larger processing operations were owned by men. Technology developed targeted large scale processors. Through sensitisation and advocacy, the large processors allowed women's processor groups to use the bakery mixing machine for free, especially during training.

Similarly, a study done by Nombo and Sikira (2012) demonstrated that in Tanzania informal milk processing is regarded as women's activity because the processing requires the boiling of milk, which is traditionally viewed as a woman's role. Technologies that can make milk processing efficient as well as link women to markets to ensure that they are also involved in marketing the milk will therefore be able to benefit women.

Incubators should therefore also promote the development of women-friendly technologies. Women can be involved in the development and testing of technologies to ensure that their needs are met. Where use of advanced technologies is regarded as men's domain, incubators should ensure that women and youth are involved in training programmes, and receive support on the use of the respective technologies and innovations.

## Promoting women's participation in agribusinesses and agribusiness incubation programmes

Having mapped where women are located, and also armed with the information on opportunities, needs and constraints (for the various groups – men, women and youth), the incubator can develop innovative products that respond to needs. The following sub-strategies can be used to address the issue of women's participation in the programme:

### *Building on tradition*

After mapping where men and women are, as well as identifying men and women's constraints and opportunities, an incubator may decide to increase women's visibility in value chains 'by professionalizing their traditional tasks, which increases the benefits that accrue to women' (KIT, 2013). Women will often have deeper knowledge about these value chains and may have particular knowledge and skills related to the existing business opportunities. Incubators can carefully select partners (e.g., NGOs interested in agribusiness opportunities or join networks like Participatory Ecological Land Use Management PELUM) that advocate for the involvement of women in business. They may also alert university partners to the need for developing appropriate technologies that women can use to commercialise their agribusinesses. Questions to be considered in such an undertaking include:

- Are technologies that are being developed by research institutions and universities gender responsive? Yes/No (for example, if technologies require higher start-up capital, are labour intensive, or require higher technical skills to operate they may not be woman friendly)

- Is research and development on technology also targeting lower level nodes where women may be more highly and actively engaged? Yes/No
- Do engagement contracts acknowledge and deal with some social and economic constraints that women may face, including lack of access to resources such as land, equipment and capital? Yes/No

If the answer is "Yes" to all of the above questions, it may reflect that the incubator is already integrating gender by focusing on technologies that women and youth can use, and by also focusing on technological development and innovation on nodes where women are most likely to benefit. If the answer to any of the above questions is "No", the incubator could:

- Target university students with gender-sensitive curriculum and other initiatives aimed at raising awareness of the need to promote women's involvement in business. Agribusiness curriculum could be reviewed to ensure that courses or modules are gender responsive. The Royal Tropical Institute has been involved in working with universities to develop gender responsive or gender-sensitive agribusiness courses.
- Seek to influence universities and private research institutions to develop gender responsive technologies.
- Develop gender-responsive services that provide support to women entrepreneurs until they can stand on their own. As noted before, women may lack access to basic resources such as space to set up business, equipment and even skills. It is therefore worthwhile to customise engagement contracts to ensure that men and women's needs are addressed by the incubators.

**Caution**: It has been noted that when chains that were predominantly managed by women are commercialised, men take over, leaving women behind. Incubators therefore need to encourage women to apply and to ensure women's participation in the incubator programme by being sensitive to their socio-economic needs.

### *Creating space for women in male-dominated agribusiness ventures*

Women may be encouraged to participate in male-dominated sectors of the value chain as part of the incubation process. This strategy will be easy to apply where there is no major resistance against women's participation in certain sectors of the economy. Where there is resistance, the strategy may require more effort from the incubator to mentor women into active participation. In case of resistance, incubators may also need to have sensitisation programmes for both men and women. In order to facilitate this strategy, the following can be done:

#### Pre-selection and selection

- Identify women who can be mentored to develop business plans for funding. This can be done by having a mentorship programme that can help women to develop business ideas in certain identified sectors.
- The incubator may need to conduct a scan to find companies and organisations that are willing to provide business development services to female entrepreneurs. Identified

women can be linked to these for training. For example, women can be linked with Savings And Credit Co-operatives (SACCOs) or pro-women enterprise development programmes (e.g. Women in Business bank accounts).

  - When scanning the environment, women who are already involved in male-dominated sectors may be identified and linked with training programmes to increase their competitiveness as well as provide them with techniques, networks and resources that they need to upgrade and develop sound business plans.
  - Women who are not successful during selection, but are deemed to have potential, can be advised to attend business training.

- Sensitisation campaigns for men and women.

**After selection**

Incubators can build a cadre of female entrepreneurial mentors from their graduates who are willing to mentor other women coming into the programme at a small fee. Talking about business incubators for black women in South Africa, the International Finance Corporation (2006:53) noted that women need role models in incubator programmes because they need to be 'inspired by other women who have beaten the odds.' These women can also provide mentorship to other women.

CAUTION: Gender norms are changing. In some cases, where perceived male chains are selected, there is need for concerted effort from incubators to include women. Incubators should ensure that their selection of women participants is not based on stereotypes about what men and women do or know, or what they perceive as the role of women in the communities they are working in. It should also be noted that women are not one homogeneous group, i.e., a married woman may not have the same level of access to resources and benefits as a widow or unmarried woman.

**Corporate Social Responsibility**

Many business entities view Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as an additional burden to economic sustainability and engage with it on the periphery. According to United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) (n.d.) , CSR is a management concept where companies seek to integrate social and environmental concerns beyond the legal requirement into their activities (http://www.unido.org/en/what-we-do/trade/csr/what-is-csr.html) . It calls for a healthy perspective on value chains and allows for inclusion of 'pro-poor services and clear strategies to reduce inequalities'.

Agribusiness incubators can also take CSR to a higher level beyond economic sustainability, and embrace strategies that counter gender inequalities and promote inclusive businesses. Such strategies include:

- Promoting 'new' business ventures in the value chain of focus that lies outside the traditional business activities, and promotes women participation. This can be done through exploring Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) with organizations that seek to

promote women empowerment. For example, an NGO that promotes 'turning waste into wealth': An incubator promoting beverages can promote businesses based on wastes from the beverage chain, e.g. making handicrafts from straws. The NGO would train farmers on weaving the mats and simple entrepreneurial skills, while the incubator may advertise and promote the mats as part of product portfolio.

- Integrating gender into its core business principle at various levels: ensuring that senior management has a strong role in promoting gender equality.
- Continuously learning from other companies and being open to try out new ways of promoting inclusive businesses – this calls for active engagement of management in networks that promote pro-poor businesses.

The incubators can also encourage incubatees to in-build CSR pro-poor and equality strategies in their operational plan by mentoring and exposing them to good practices during the incubation process. Such strategies would also be included on the list of 'must-haves' criteria of eligibility to graduate.

## Standard, certificates and labels

Labels and seals:

Increasingly, the market is recognising labels and seals as a signal of values/quality, and these can thus be used to increase sales of goods and services made by women. 'Women – only' labeling, like any other label however has to conform to set standards and codes (e.g. fairtrade, organic, eco-labels, etc.) which calls for rigour in complying to and maintaining the standard.

This strategy can uplift and increase visibility of women enterprises nested in male dominated chains e.g., crafts made by women from banana fibres. Agribusiness incubation managers would play an important role in scanning the market for such opportunities and enroll women entrepreneurs for incubation to take advantage of this opportunity. This would be preceded by designing customised training, mentoring and follow-up support for business sustainability.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

Silver and Ahoefa (2009:47) note that many M&E activities of business incubator programmes focus 'on volumetric measures or outputs such as the number of businesses created, employment generation, taxes and regional economic growth.' They go further to suggest that 'these measures are short of giving a clear indication as to whether the incubation process is there to nurture businesses (enterprises) or entrepreneurs (the human side).' When considering the result areas and indicators for the UniBRAIN model (see Table 1), it is obvious that UniBRAIN needs to develop gender-sensitive indicators at the programme level. Gender-sensitive monitoring should be an integral part of the incubation process. Programmes

need gender-responsive indicators for their processes and activities, which include Business Plan Development, Incubatee recruitment and selection process, Mentoring programme, Technology/Innovation selection, Graduates Follow-up and Curriculum development.

Gender-sensitive indicators also have the added advantage 'of pointing out gender-related changes in society over time' (CIDA, 1997). Gender-sensitive indicators may be useful in the further development of gender-responsive agribusiness incubation strategies.

Three kinds of gender-sensitive indicators:

1. Sex-disaggregated data collection to help inform managers and other stakeholders whether both men and women are participating in incubation processes and benefiting.
2. Gender-specific indicators that help to show how the incubation has improved the socio-economic wellbeing of women and men involved in the incubation process, both as incubatees and as farm families who act as suppliers to incubated agribusinesses.
3. Qualitative indicators of the incubation process that monitor the quality of services that men and women received instead of just focusing on sex-disaggregated numbers.

Monitoring of the results of business incubation from a gender perspective need to go beyond volumetric measurements to include more qualitative indicators such as those related to empowerment processes for male and female participants and graduates of the business incubator programme. In addition to sex-disaggregation of existing indicators, incubator programmes could also monitor the following indicators at different levels of the incubation process:

1. Business incubatees: Doing better and being seen, that is, the level of participation and visibility of women involved in agribusiness incubation programmes.
2. Business incubator graduates: Women's participation and successful graduation from the business incubators; usefulness of the skills they gain in owning and managing sustainable businesses, and controlling the income they earn from such businesses; level of women's access to new markets and skills
3. Business partnerships and networks: The extent to which women have access to 'powerful business networks' such as 'formal or informal communications networks that share entrepreneurship information, including social (networking) settings?' (USAID, 2011:6), and the extent to which they are able to utilise them. 'The involvement of women in leadership and decision-making processes in the incubator programme, as incubators and mentors. The extent to which rules, regulations and policies are gender-sensitive.'
4. Business owner: Whether a significant number of women own or co-own enterprises and have direct linkages with other chain actors, including consumer markets.

Incubation programmes are not expected to track all gender monitoring and evaluation indicators suggested above. Gender indicators will be selected according to what each programme seeks to achieve.

# Useful tools for mainstreaming gender in agribusiness incubation

## Gender-sensitive selection of a value chain

*Adapted from Vanderschaeghe, Lindo and Senders based on Oxfam GB and GIZ Value Links*

Brief description of the tool:

This tool provides options for comparing a number of value chains based on business growth potential and gender advancement criteria. It is used in a participatory manner to ensure that opinions and differing perspectives of the various stakeholders are taken into account. It thus requires that ample information be collected beforehand and availed to the process participants. The users/process facilitators should aim for consensus on strategies and transparency in decision making and accountability.

Purpose:

This tool enables users to select a value chain that has the potential to contribute to gender equality and women empowerment without

compromising on the upgrading and chain development objectives of the agribusiness incubator. It ensures that selection of a value chain is not based on superficial observation and thus limits the risk of choosing a chain with little potential for either upgrading or achieving gender objectives. It is important to base the selection of a value chain on the objectives of the agribusiness incubator. This tool provides one of the first steps in ensuring that the chain 'work[s] for [female] entrepreneurs'. The tool can also be used in monitoring the interventions of the incubator in selected sub-sectors.

Preliminary steps:

Information gathering on potential value chains. Ensure that basic information on the three sets of criteria used is gathered and made available. The three criteria are:

- Market/growth potential
- Potential to contribute to increased women's empowerment and gender equality
- Pragmatic arguments

Data on market demand, agronomy & environment, and key actors in various agricultural production activities in the specific geographical area can be gathered from secondary sources and from quick interviews/ discussions with key stakeholders. Specific attention needs to be given to the characteristics of the products' market structure as well as the potential for smallholders' and women's participation.

**Step 1: Assessing criteria for value chain selection:**

The incubator management convenes a meeting with stakeholders, and explains the criteria for assessing the value chains. The participants review the criteria and agree on the weighing and scoring of each indicator using a scale from 0 ("no", "not at all") to 5 ("yes", "very important"). Below is an example of the criteria that could be used for each indicator:

*A. Criteria for growth potential*

- Positive growth trend of the value chain as indicated by unmet market demand.
- Available sales outlets, high interest of buyers in buying the product.
- Scope for expanding production and/or scope for value addition through processing or product improvement (new products for which there is a market).
- Lower costs of the value chain vis-à-vis competitors.
- Other competitive advantages of the value chain vis-à-vis competitors (unique product/ local specialty).
- Potential for collaboration and coordination between actors in value chain upgrading

- Sufficient technological and managerial level expertise of enterprises in the sector for upgrading and innovation.
- Access to infrastructure, qualified labour force, raw material and other inputs.
- Sufficient access to financial services.
- Sufficient access to business development services for quality improvement of the production process.

*B. Potential to contribute to increased women's empowerment and gender equality*

- High proportion of women employed in the value chain as compared to the economy at large.
- High number of female entrepreneurs in the value chain.
- Women's control of equipment/ assets.
- Women acquire skills needed for profitable value addition opportunities, such as processing and product diversification.
- Women's control over sales income and the enterprise.
- Geographical proximity to the households of the targeted community and individuals.
- Low entry barriers for small-scale and poor entrepreneurs (small-scale production, low start-up costs, minor capital investment, low-tech skills).
- Low entry barriers for female entrepreneurs (time and mobility, access to technology and assets, cultural constraints).
- New opportunities for women.
- Extent to which the new activities fall in line with livelihood conditions (year-round income, use of family labour, rapid returns, contribution to food security, environmental sustainability including impact on access to, and availability of clean water).

**Step 2: Selecting the value chain**

Stakeholders work in small groups to review and award a score to each indicator. There are no right or wrong answers; the sets of criteria are meant to make people think and discuss both market potential and gender equality potential of a value chain development intervention. It is important that the pragmatic criteria are critically reviewed before the final decision is made by each group. Tables 3 and 4 show examples of an Excel sheet presentation of the scores of different value chains, these scores are summed up and later plotted on a graph (Figure 3). Following the discussions, a consensus on which value chain to focus on is reached.

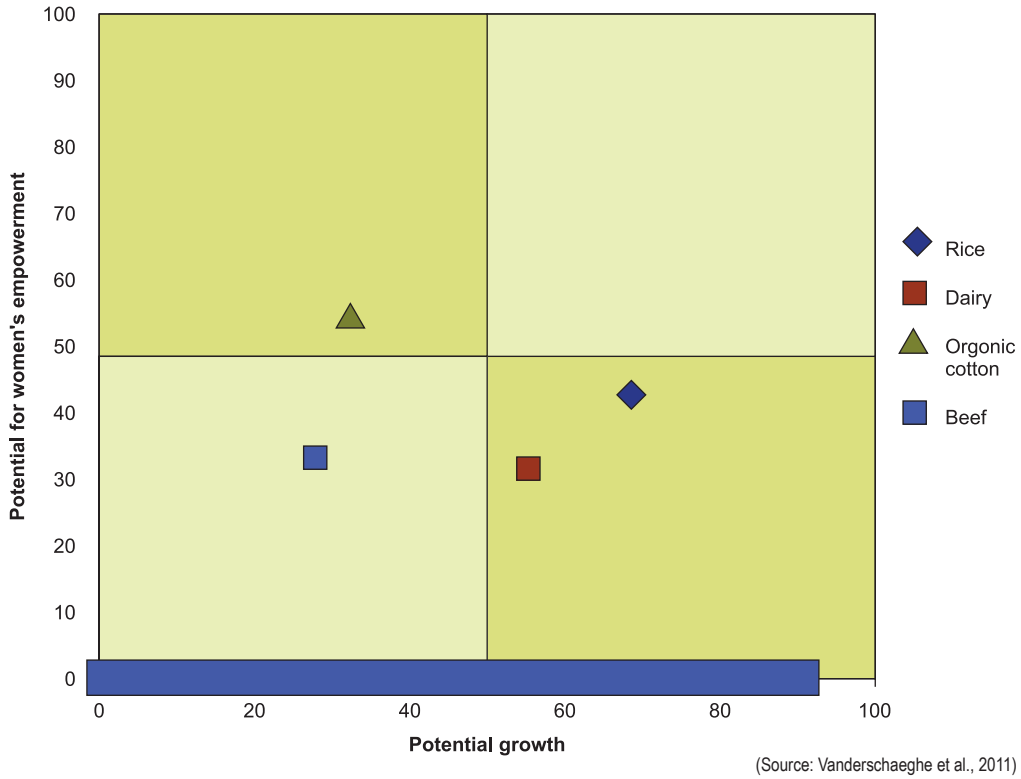
**Table 3: Example of matrix for criteria value chain selection**

| | Sub-sector or value chain | Beef | | | Dairy | | | Organic cotton | | | Rice | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | * | Score | Weight | Total | Score | Weight | Total | Score | Weight | Total | Score | Weight | Total |
| | Criteria for growth potential | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | Positive growth trend of the value chain, unmet market demand | 1 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 15 |
| 2 | Available sales outlets, high interest of buyers in the product | 1 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 10 |
| 3 | Scope for expanding production and/ or scope for value addition through processing or product improvement (new products for which there is a market) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 5 |
| 4 | Lower costs of the value chain vis-à-vis competitors | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 5 |
| 5 | Other competitive advantages of the value chain vis-à-vis competitors (unique product/ local specialty) | 1 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 3 |
| 6 | Potential for collaboration and coordination between actors in value chain upgrading. | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 10 |
| 7 | Sufficient technological and managerial level expertise of enterprises in the sector for upgrading and innovation. | 1 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 3 |
| 8 | Access to infrastructure, qualified labour force, raw material and other inputs | 1 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 9 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 15 |
| 9 | Sufficient access to financial services | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 10 | Sufficient access to business development services for quality improvement of the production process | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | Total growth potential | | | 20 | | | 54 | | | 32 | | | 68 |

*Scores: 5 = high, 1 = low, weight: 1-4

**Table 4: Criteria for potential for selection of value chain focusing on women's empowerment and gender equality**

| | Sub-sector or value chain | Beef | | | Dairy | | | Organic cotton | | | Rice | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | * | Score | Weight | Total | Score | Weight | Total | Score | Weight | Total | Score | Weight | Total |
| | **Potential criteria for women's empowerment and gender equality** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | High proportion of women employed in the value chain as compared to the economy at large | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 8 |
| 2 | High number of female entrepreneurs in the value chain. | 4 | 2 | 8 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| 3 | Women's control of equipment/assets | 4 | 3 | 12 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 15 | 2 | 3 | 6 |
| 4 | Women have or can acquire skills needed for profitable value addition opportunities through processing product & diversification | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| 5 | Women's control over the sales income and the enterprise | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 8 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| 6 | Geographical proximity to the households of the targeted community and individuals | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 3 |
| 7 | Low entry barriers for small-scale and poor entrepreneurs (small-scale production, low start-up costs, low capital investment, low-tech skills). | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 3 |
| 8 | Low entry barriers for female entrepreneurs (time and mobility, access to technology and assets, cultural constraints) | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| 9 | New opportunities for women | 1 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 3 | | 4 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 4 |
| 10 | Extent to which the new activities fall in line with livelihood conditions (year-round income, use of family labour, rapid returns, contribution to food security, environmental sustainability including impact on access to, and availability of clean water | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 8 |
| | Total potential for women's empowerment and gender equality | | | 35 | | | 33 | | | 55 | | | 44 |




(Source: Vanderschaeghe et al., 2011)

***Figure 3: Gender-sensitive value chain selection***

The above example shows that while organic cotton is more likely to empower women it had a low growth potential. On the other hand rice value chains have a high grown potential and while the women empowerment potential is slightly less than that of the organic cotton it performs much better on this score than beef and dairy. It is important to stress that pragmatic criteria should be considered to help guide the potential trade-offs in profitability and gender responsiveness. Depending on the needs of the incubator for example, they may choose rice value chains because they offer the highest potential for growth whilst at the same time addressing women empowerment needs.

## Gender mapping of value chains

*Adapted from Lindho, Mayoux and Terrilon*

Brief description:

This tool can be used to map the value chain of interest. The incubator manager uses this tool in a participatory manner with the different stakeholders involved in the value chain. The tool raises awareness on existing gender dynamics and reflects on what could be done to upgrade or improve the chain in a gender responsive manner.

Purpose:

By highlighting women's contribution to the value chain, this tool can assist in identifying gender responsive technologies to be developed by incubator and partners.

Uses a gender lens to identify bottlenecks in the value chain so as to develop strategies that can help upgrade women to higher value chain nodes.

Identifies which sex is dominant in segments of the chain where value is high.

Uses a gender lens to identify where power/influence/control lies.

Uses a gender lens to determine if the environment (physical, business, policy, social, etc.) is enabling for male and female chain actors to upgrade to being business entrepreneurs (not only in the production sector) along the entire value chain. The tool can also help in terms of decisions related to technology development, for example, if incubator wants to develop women friendly technologies.

**Step 1 Actor mapping:**

In a participatory manner, stakeholders are guided to draw a map of the chain using the following criteria:

- What are the main processes involved in the chain?
- Who are the main actors in the chains?
- At each node of the chain, how many actors are men and how many are women?

Stakeholders are encouraged to provide a key to enable easy reading of the map.

**Step 2 Activity mapping:**

- Who does what?
- Highlight women's participation in the mapping of the activities in the different processes of the value chain.

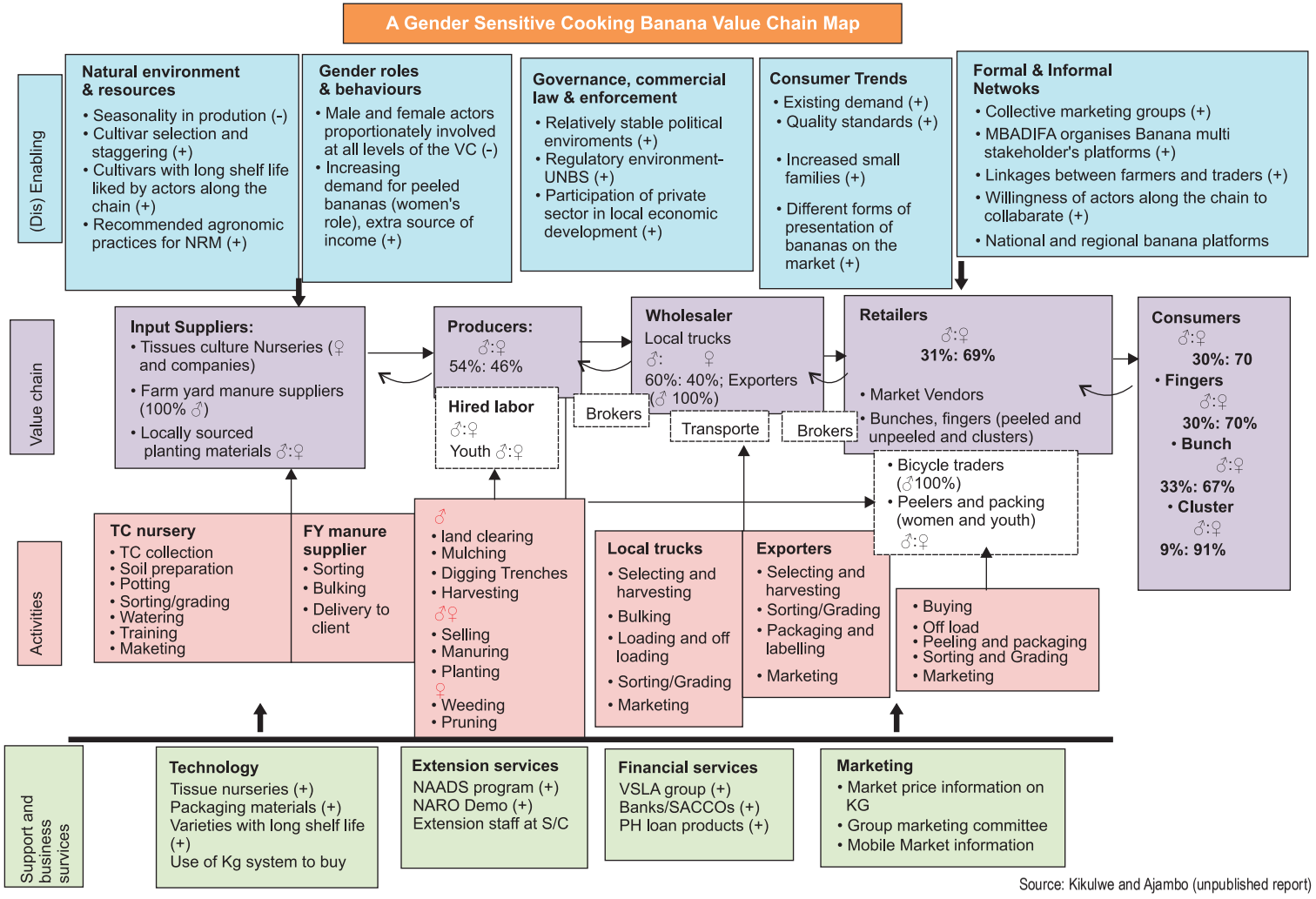
**Step 3 Identify chain supporters:**

- Who are the important actors outside the chain?
- Which services do men and women get within the chain and how?

**Step 4 Identify opportunities and constraints for women:**

- What potential opportunities can female and male chain entrepreneurs seize in a quest to improve chain performance?
- What constraints are women and men likely to face in this regard?
- What potential strategies can be employed to overcome these constraints for the different gender categories?

*Figure 4 : Example of a gender sensitive cooking banana value chain map*




Source: Kikulwe and Ajambo (unpublished report)

## Gender mapping of the incubator programme

*(Netsayi N Mudege)*

Brief description:

This tool can be used to map and monitor the involvement of women in the incubator programme. The incubator can use the tool to flag areas that may need strengthening in terms of gender. The incubator can also use the results of the tool to raise awareness on gender issues/ inequalities with partners and stakeholders, and help to shape reflections on strategies to bridge the gender gap.

Purpose:

Identifies where men and women are located in the incubator programme in order to address any bottlenecks and issues related to unequal participation of men, women and youth in the programme.

Uses a gender lens to determine if the incubator environment (physical, business, policy, social, etc.) promotes participation of women and youth.

**Step 1 Mapping governance structures**

Using sex-disaggregated data collected from routine monitoring, an incubation manager can create a database mapping the involvement of men and women in the incubator programmes.

Governance structures

- Are women involved as incubators and mentors? Yes/No
- Are women present at the level of decision-making and governance in the incubator consortium and individual incubators? Yes/No

Specify the number of men and women involved, and what they do.

If women or youth are under-represented in the governance structures, this may mean that their interests are not represented adequately. The incubator manager may need to develop strategies to groom women to take on higher level decision-making roles. Strategies could involve actively identifying women who can take on higher level decision making positions or mentoring and building the capacity of identified women and youths who can then take on positions in the incubator management structures.

**Step 2: Mapping of incubatees**

- Who are involved in the incubation programme as incubatees (by sex)?
- What types of agribusinesses are incubatees involved in (by sex)?
- Who is graduating from the programme (by sex)? Who is failing to graduate (by sex, and age)?

Make men, women and youth visible by specifying the number of men and women involved, and what they do. At this step if you realise that (for example) a higher proportion of women

and youth are failing to graduate you may need to dig deeper to understand if they have specific needs that are not being met by the programme, resulting in lower success rates. If you can identify these needs you can then develop relevant strategies to address them.

**Step 3: Job creation opportunities after graduation**

- What types of jobs are created for men, women and youth?
- Who is benefiting from jobs created by incubated businesses (men, women and youth)?
- Do incubated businesses have employee retention plans to suit the needs of men and women employees?
- Which level of employment are the different employees located by sex and age?
- What is the gender and age representation at higher-level jobs in these businesses?

Depending on the signed incubation agreement, incubator managers can get this information from graduates of the incubation programme as part of routine monitoring. Information should be presented in a sex-disaggregated manner.

This tool can help incubator managers to identify areas of underperformance in terms of gender integration, as well as potential strategies that can be used to improve performance. . For example, training programs for employers of the incubatees could advocate equal representation of female and male staff as one way of ensuring that women obtain the required skill-sets for the job.

## Actor analysis tool

*Source: Vanderschaeghe and Lindo, 2003*

This tool enables profiling of the various actors/stakeholders in the agribusiness incubator with an aim of understanding the type of actors at the various levels, women involvement, decision making ability and impact of the selected job/enterprise on their livelihoods.

**Table 5: Actor Analysis Matrix**

| Typology | Socio-economic characteristics of the category | How are women involved? | Decision-making ability by women? | Impact on the lives of men and women |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ABI Board of Directors | | | | |
| Management | | | | |
| Employees of the incubator | | | | |
| Incubatees | | | | |
| Employees of the incubatees | | | | |

## The gender-based constraints analysis tool

*Adapted from Terrilon, McEwan, Mayanja (2013):*

Brief description:

This tool can be used as a follow up of the VC gender mapping tool. It enables deeper analysis and understanding of the constraints impeding female and male entrepreneurs from participating in and benefiting from an identified market opportunity. After identifying the constraints, strategies to address the constraints are developed. These strategies can then be mainstreamed into the business plan.

Purpose:

It provides insights into the constraints faced by entrepreneurs in different gender groups when running their businesses along the different nodes of the value chain.

It enables the identification of actions that can be undertaken to address the constraints.

**Use in VCD:**

This tool is best used after a market/business opportunity has been selected. It enables the business incubator management to realise that, while the opportunity may be good for both male and female entrepreneurs, different strategies may have to be employed to allow optimal participation and benefits for the various gender groups. The information obtained from the analysis forms crucial sections of the business plans, which, if implemented, could lead to gender-sensitive businesses and innovations.

**Step 1 Actor/Entrepreneur mapping:**

**Contextualise the gender-based constraints in the value chain** – Table 1, below can be used in this step.

**Table 6: Matrix for identification of gender based constraints**

| Entrepeneur by chain node | Description of activities under each node of the market chain | Roles and responsibilities | | | Constraints that limit access to, and control of resources for each activity | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | M | F | Y | Male | Female | Youth |
| **Input supply** | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| **Production** | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| **Processing** | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| **Marketing** | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |

**Step 2 Degree of responsibility for activities**

For each activity, the incubator management team needs to probe to find out the degree of responsibility for each gender category. The table can be filled out in a participatory manner but with guidance from incubator management. For example, column three could be filled out using the codes below:

X: Low responsibility; XX: Medium; XXX: High

Alternatively, one can decide to use percentages as a measure of the degree of responsibility.

**Step 3 Identify constraints entrepreneurs face under each activity:**

In this step, the incubator's management and its stakeholders brainstorm on the constraints men, women and youth face (or are likely to face), such as those that hinder access to and control of resources. The constraints are filled out in Column 4 of Table 1.

**Step 4 Analyse the constraints:**

In this step a critical analysis is done to ascertain the cause and effect of gender-based constraints. It is important to understand causes and consequences of a constraint because this enables actors to address the root cause as opposed to symptoms.

**Table 7: Matrix to identify potential actions to address constraints at various nodes of the market chain**

| Gender based constraint(s) | Cause of constraint | Consequence | Actions to address constraint |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Input supply** | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| **Production** | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| **Processing** | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| **Marketing** | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

To enable prioritisation of the constraints to address, one could use a scoring/weighing method to assess the gravity of consequences so identified e.g. x, xx or xxx to designate the degree of intensity. In a participatory manner, the incubator manager guides stakeholders in the identification of criteria to use in prioritisation, for example, contribution to the agribusiness incubator vision/business opportunity, equitable resource allocation, enhancing partnerships in the chain etc.

**Step 5 Formulate actions to address the constraints:**

Potential actions to counter the constraints are identified and prioritised at this stage. This table has to be filled out for all gender categories.

**Considerations when using the tool**

It may be important to separate the youth category into female and male entrepreneurs, depending on the type of chain and socio-economic setting. For example, if access to machinery and equipment is a constraint, usually female youth face more constraints than male youth in accessing it.

## The Risk/Benefit analysis matrix

*Lindho, Mayoux and Terrilon*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Overview:** | Who: | Facilitators |
| | When: | Phase 2 and 3 |
| | Preparation: | One day |
| | Duration: | Half a day |

**Brief description:**

The risk-benefit matrix is a useful participatory assessment tool to quickly assess the effect of implementing a business opportunity on female and male entrepreneurs. The tool helps to ensure that business opportunities do not exert a negative impact on either female or male entrepreneurs.

**Purpose:**

Selecting a business opportunity bares/ exposes the risk of having negative impacts on some actors, especially those who are less visible, or have no voice. This tool enables the agribusiness incubator management and stakeholders to perform an ex-ante and post-ante analysis on the positive and negative effects of a business opportunity on entrepreneurs. This analysis is performed during business planning and after the businesses have been operational for a while. It enables the identification of strategies to address the negative effects and decide whether the opportunity is worth pursuing. The tool can also be used for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

**Use in Agribusiness incubation:**

Measures and assesses the possible or actual risks and benefits of a business opportunity to different entrepreneurs in the value chain who may desire to enroll for business incubation. It considers the relevant dimensions such as amount of work, income, social position or market position.

It analyses risks and benefits differentiated by gender. It reflects on underlying causes and solutions for more gender equitable outcomes and, by doing so, creates awareness of the possible gender bias of the business opportunity.

Assists in planning for potential actions to overcome identified negative impacts and increase benefits.

Helps in screening business opportunities (economic viability, inclusiveness) to enable decision makers to choose one that has more benefits for vulnerable groups, including women. It therefore helps to promote inclusive businesses.

**Step 1**

Identify entrepreneurs, disaggregated by sex, for each node of the market chain and place them in the vertical axis of the matrix.

**Step 2**

Choose the criteria for evaluating the effect of the opportunity and place them in the horizontal axis of the matrix.

Examples of criteria in the matrix:

- ***Time and work***: This refers to changes in workload and work quality, tasks and skills required (skilled versus unskilled, formal education, training), and labour capacity (do people need to be hired or can members of the household or the actual business do it?)
- ***Income and control of resources***: This refers to changes in the income and control of resources such as land, machinery & equipment, and credit.
- ***Social position***: This refers to changes in social position and gender relations as a result of the value chain upgrading.
- ***Market position***: This refers to changes in the economic power position between value chain actors as a result of chain upgrading strategy.

Categories in the matrix can be adapted to specific situation and needs. Other relevant categories can be health, food security, etc.

You can use different colours for positive and negative changes.

**Step 3** Fill in the matrix with the participants/chain actors through a participatory process (ideally, use the tool with actors you work with) using the following questions:

In the planning phase of the chain upgrading strategy:

- How will your future participation in the value chain change your work and the skills needed to do it? How will it affect your time use and the time you have for other activities?
- How will it change your income? How will it change the control of your income or other resources?
- How will it change your social and gender relations within the household and value chain?

Some questions to deepen the discussion and facilitate the proposal of actions:

- Who is benefiting and who is losing due to chain upgrading?
- Do we notice differences between changes in the lives of men and women? What are the causes?
- To what degree are these changes desired?
- How can the negative impact be minimised? How can obstacles or negative factors be dealt with?
- What actions can be taken to overcome negative impact?

Let the stakeholders answer the questions in groups. Hand out a copy of the matrix, which each group completes with initial help and monitoring from the facilitators.

The groups are formed to match the different nodes in the chain or gender criteria (men and women in separate groups).

Each group presents its completed matrix in a plenary session. The incubator manager helps the groups to highlight the most important positive and negative changes.

**Step 4:**

**Analyse and discuss the information obtained**

Information obtained in the workshop should be analysed. The results can be used to improve the business opportunity and to monitor and/or assess its impacts.

**Considerations when using the tool**

It is recommend to have two facilitators with the ability to probe further into the first answers given, ensuring that women's voices are not overpowered.

The tool can also be used with one type of value chain actor. The different categories on the vertical axis can be men, women, household and other actors/community.

**Table 8: Example of risk-benefit analysis matrix**

Risk-Benefit assessment for vine root producers in Gem and Ugunja, Kenya

Key: Black = positive effects. Red = negative effects

| *Actors* | *Work* | *Income* | *Social /Market Position* | *Other* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Male vine producer** | Male, trained, contribution to farm labour, high quality vine production | Increased incomes, increased power control on household resources | Diverted attention, household conflicts over resource control | Status of sweet potato as a poor man's crop elevated |
| **Female vine producer** | Added responsibility apart from the general household chores at initial stages | Increased incomes-living standards improved, investment in other development projects | Elevated status-can be leaders, power to control/ lead, empower/involve other women<br>Female displacement, | Increased household food security<br>Women can use smaller roots and leaves from the vine plots for food,<br>Women displaced-not able to cultivate other food crops, diverted attention |

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## Acronyms and abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| AAIN | African Agriculture Incubation Network |
| CAADP | Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program |
| CSR | Corporate Social Responsibility |
| DANIDA | Danish International Development Agency |
| FARA | Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa |
| CIP | International Potato Center |
| MSE | Micro and Small Enterprise |
| PPP | Public-Private Partnership |
| R&D | Research and Development |
| SACCO | Savings And Credit Co-operative |
| SME | Small and Medium Enterprise |
| SRO | Sub-regional Research Organization |
| UniBRAIN | Universities, Business and Research in Agricultural Innovation |
| UNIDO | United Nations Industrial Development Organization |
| VCD | Value Chain Development |

# About FARA

The Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) is the apex continental organization responsible for coordinating and advocating for agricultural research-for-development. (AR4D). It serves as the entry point for agricultural research initiatives designed to have a continental reach or a sub-continental reach spanning more than one sub-region.

FARA serves as the technical arm of the African Union Commission (AUC) on matters concerning agricultural science, technology and innovation. FARA has provided a continental forum for stakeholders in AR4D to shape the vision and agenda for the sub-sector and to mobilise themselves to respond to key continent-wide development frameworks, notably the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP).

**FARA's vision**: Reduced poverty in Africa as a result of sustainable broad-based agricultural growth and improved livelihoods, particularly of smallholder and pastoral enterprises.

**FARA's mission**: Creation of broad-based improvements in agricultural productivity, competitiveness and markets by continental-level strengthening of capacity for agricultural innovation.

**FARA's value proposition**: Strengthening Africa's capacity for innovation and transformation by visioning its strategic direction, integrating its capacities for change and creating an enabling policy environment for implementation.

FARA's strategic direction is derived from and aligned to the Science Agenda for Agriculture in Africa (S3A), which is, in turn, designed to support the realisation of the CAADP vision. FARA's programme is organised around three **strategic priorities**, namely:

- **Visioning Africa's agricultural transformation** with foresight, strategic analysis and partnerships to enable Africa to determine the future of its agriculture, with proactive approaches to exploit opportunities in agribusiness, trade and markets, taking the best advantage of emerging sciences, technologies and risk mitigation and using the combined strengths of public and private stakeholders.
- **Integrating capacities for change** by making the different actors aware of each other's capacities and contributions, connecting institutions and matching capacity supply to demand to create consolidated, high-capacity and effective African agricultural innovation systems that can use relative institutional collaborative advantages to mutual benefit while also strengthening their own human and institutional capacities.
- **Enabling environment for implementation**, initially through evidence-based advocacy, communication and widespread stakeholder awareness and engagement and to generate enabling policies, and then ensure that they get the stakeholder support required for the sustainable implementation of programmes for African agricultural innovation

Key to this is the delivery of three important results, which respond to the strategic priorities expressed by FARA's clients. These are:

> **Key Result 1**: Stakeholders empowered to determine how the sector should be transformed and undertake collective actions in a gender-sensitive manner
>
> **Key Result 2**: Strengthened and integrated continental capacity that responds to stakeholder demands within the agricultural innovation system in a gender-sensitive manner
>
> **Key Result 3**: Enabling environment for increased AR4D investment and implementation of agricultural innovation systems in a gender-sensitive manner

FARA's development partners are the African Development Bank (AfDB), Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, BMZ (The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)/ Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD), the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), the Department for International Development (DFID), the European Commission (EC), The Consultative Group in International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), the Governments of the Netherlands, Nigeria and Italy, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) and UT Bank (Ghana). The World Bank.

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Key Stakeholders: