



Balancing Benefits

The Challenge

Agriculture addresses a basic need: food and nutrition security for a population expected to reach 9.1 billion by 2050. It offers essential commodities, environmental services, and social goods that facilitate economic development, industrialisation, and diversification.

Women represent half the agricultural labour force, producing a large portion of the world's food crops. Households rely on women as caregivers, but also as farmers and food producers along the agricultural value chain. Yet, women in agriculture and rural areas have less access to productive resources and less control over benefits accruing from their labour.

This gender gap exists for many commodities such as dairy, livestock, coffee, cocoa, cassava, rice, as well as assets such as inputs and services, land, education, extension and financial services, and technology. The gender gap persists because of inequitable gender norms and relations, leading to asset ownership and decision-making authority remaining largely with men while women typically stay behind in reproductive roles in the household.

Our ambition

SNV aims to promote equity in agricultural decisions, entrepreneurial opportunities and benefits including income share between men and women in farming communities and agri-businesses.

The opportunity

Closing the gender gap in agriculture and empowering women to take active roles and ownership of decisions would generate significant gains for the agricultural sector, the broader economy and society as a whole. Research shows that if women had the same access to productive resources as men, they could increase yields on their farms by 20–30%, which could raise the total agricultural production by 2.5–4%. This additional food has the potential to take 100–150 million people out of hunger (FAO, 20112). Increasing women's share of family incomes contributes more to household food and nutrition security. Furthering women's entry to and success in business whilst encouraging a supportive business environment enhances success and equity of opportunity for all women in agribusinesses.



Equitable relationships between men and women and a more socially enabling environment



Household Dialogue

Employing individual and household awareness sessions using radio and other media to catalyse discussions on the key issues that underlie gender inequality: lack of decisions, ownership and income share commensurate with labour productivity. These sessions are complemented by profiling men and women who have excelled in giving space to women in decisions, asset ownership including labour saving technologies, and increased family income share for women.



Grow women's business

Supporting women to gain entry into high value businesses in the chain through the business development cycle, supporting them to acquire and own business assets to increase resilience of women businesses, and enhance capacity in order to promote success of women business.



Women in leadership

Enhancing women's capacity for business leadership, mentorship and support, and strengthening associations of business women to influence the enabling environment (policies, strategies and legislation) and raise their bargaining power to increase women's agro-business market share and position. This also includes assessing and increasing female leadership in e.g. cooperatives, chambers of commerce, associations of value chains and federations of industries influencing labour roles and responsibilities, decision-making processes and asset ownership.



Gender-responsive market systems

Identifying and implementing market incentives that propagate gender equity in market opportunities, analysing gaps and promoting gender friendly market policies, awareness campaigns on positive market triggers for women inclusion in institutional environments, and processes to attain gender equality.

Balancing Benefits in Agriculture

SNV's "Balancing Benefits in Agriculture" is a transformative gender approach applied across multiple solutions, integrating food, nutrition and climate resilience.

Underscored by the essential principle of ensuring equal opportunities for all actors in agriculture it explicitly aims to change gender norms and relations in order to promote more equitable relationships between men and women, and a more socially enabling environment.

The solution specifically empowers women to take an active role and where possible, ownership of decisions around productive resources and assets including labour saving technologies.

It supports increasing women's share of family incomes; enhancing women's entry and success in value added businesses; and influencing business environments to support women in agri-business and enhance equity of opportunity.

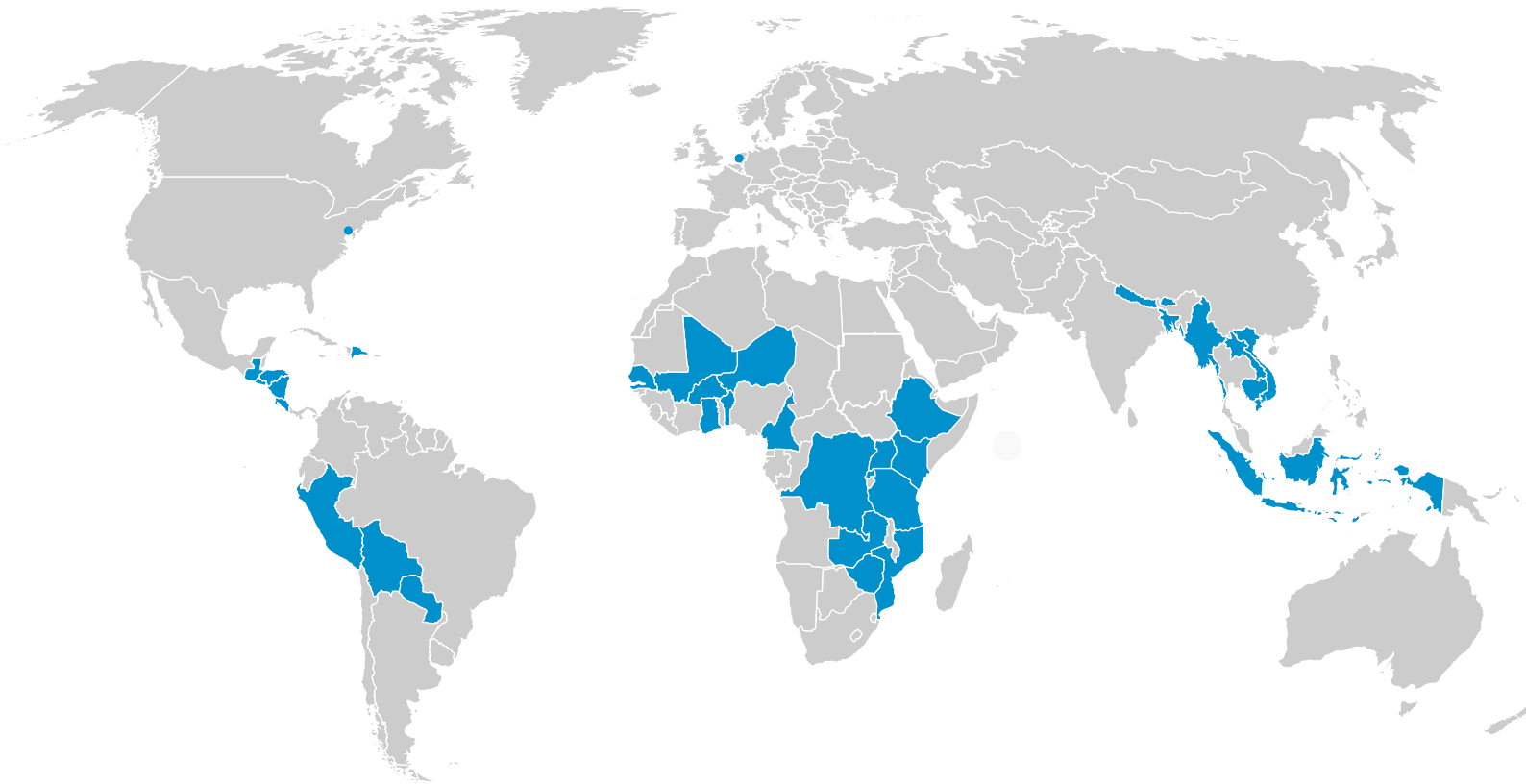
Our programmes include:

- > **In DR Congo**, 2,500 women increased cassava yields from 3 to 10 tons/hectare, and 20 women led SMEs, were enabled in the purchase of mobile processing units creating 60 part time jobs for women.
- > **In Ghana**, SNV brokered the upgrade of processing equipment for 5 shea butter producer cooperatives, comprising 250 women. This resulted in increased incomes of 50% and 10% improved cost efficiency. It also led to workplace quality, safety and hygiene improvement at the processing centres providing the women with enhanced labour conditions.
- > **In DR Congo**, upgrading and up-scaling strategies in non-timber forest products (NTFP), medicinal & aromatic plants livestock & milk, apiculture & natural dye value chains to integrate strong opportunities and support for women entrepreneurship benefited 2,000 women; including 300 women led agro-enterprises through which 600 jobs were created, contributing to poverty alleviation, food and nutrition security and female empowerment.

- **In Kenya**, SNV strengthened the capacity of pastoralists (mostly women and youth) in six counties in good agricultural practices of sustainable fodder production and established three co-operatives of women camel milk producers as entry points for service provision to improve camel milk production and increase profitability. This resulted in 25,000 livestock keeping households having improved access to fodder and 1,000 women-led households empowered through more profitable milk trade.
- **In Cameroon**, SNV increased profitability of NTFP products through production techniques, price negotiation skills and market access. The project concerned 50 NTFP small and medium size enterprises of about 18,000 women.
- **In Tanzania**, SNV is influencing change in patriarchal attitudes and behaviours plus capacity and voice building to empower 25,000 women smallholder farmers and women producer associations in the rice value chain.
- **In Uganda**, by understanding barriers which prevent women from optimizing returns from sunflower production SNV supported the PKWI cooperative with 1,500 women to effectively deliver agricultural services from within the communities, making it easier for more women to participate. As a result yields, income and their influence have increased.
- **In Nepal**, SNV's High Value Agriculture Project (HVAP) contributes to reduction of poverty and the vulnerability of women and men in hill and mountain areas of the Mid-Western Development Region by improving income and employment opportunities and the ability to respond to market demand and opportunities based on marketing agreements with private agribusiness. The project applies a gender and social inclusion strategy and develops tools and methodologies which have a positive gender impact through women's empowerment and advances in women's literacy.
- **SNV's Climate Smart Agriculture multi-country project in Asia** (Laos, Cambodia, Nepal and Bhutan) recognised the need to promote gender equality in agriculture to contribute to sustainable production and food security. Through promoting and supporting opportunities for women, SNV is developing farmers' capacity to adapt to the negative effects of climate change and build climate resilience in the agriculture sector. Application of unique gender approaches and methodologies to ensure equal access to resources influence balancing of incentives and benefits in key value chains and make women's voices heard in decision-making at all levels.

Our Partners

DGIS, EKN, EU, UN, IFAD, CG Centres, USAID, ACDI/VOCA, Comic Relief, DFID, BMGF, Sundial Brands & others



SNV is a not-for-profit international development organisation, working in Agriculture, Renewable Energy, and Water, Sanitation & Hygiene. Founded in the Netherlands in 1965, we have built a long-term, local presence in more than 30 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Our global team of local and international advisors works with local partners to equip communities, businesses and organisations with the tools, knowledge and connections they need to increase their incomes and gain access to basic services – empowering them to break the cycle of poverty and guide their own development.

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