



ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT & FOOD SECURITY

VAM GENDER AND MARKETS BRIEFING #7

EMPOWERING WOMEN IN WEST AFRICAN MARKETS CASE STUDIES FROM KANO, KATSINA (NIGERIA) AND MARADI (NIGER)

KEY MESSAGES:

- In the region, women predominantly manage most farming activities for growing vegetables such as okra, peppers and tomatoes. They are also involved in growing grains and cereals such as rice, beans, maize, millet, onions and groundnut.
- In northern Nigeria and in southern Niger, activities such as the husking of rice, processing of maize into flour and the roasting and preparation of groundnuts into groundnut cakes or cookies are heavily women-dominated.
- Ownership of farmlands in Nigeria is predominantly male. Even when women operate in a farming collective, they often rent land from male landowners - sometimes under unfavorable or restrictive conditions. In the Maradi region of Niger, many women farming on a small scale do own land, but some are landless and must work as laborers for other villagers.

Multiples challenges faced by women

Women in northern Nigeria face similar problems as men in agriculture and value chains specifically in the areas of access to capital, credit/loans and equipment for mechanized farming; harvesting; transportation; processing and storage. However, these challenges are structurally more difficult for women to overcome and there are significant barriers to improving agricultural productivity that are specific to women. These barriers include literacy, childcare and household time management, poor and/or unequal representation in the leadership, as well as mixed gender market groups and associations.

Women in many villages in both northern Nigeria and southern Niger may not always benefit from technical support or access to credit beyond their village mutual savings. Women also face serious social pressures and some of those who are engaged in trade report that they face resistance from male counterparts to their efforts of expanding commercial activity.

A number of comparative contrasts stand out: technical state advisory support to farmers is more developed in Nigeria, and includes at least in each Local Government Area, specific provision for women advisers. The Kano commercial economy offers a larger scale trading arena than

Maradi could offer; the federal system provided Nigerian states with resources and service delivery capacities that local authorities in centralized Niger could not access.

By contrast, in Niger, food security and the design of policies and programmes to specifically address rural poverty appears to have a higher priority than in Nigeria and the country has one of West Africa's most comprehensive national systems for local level data collection and crisis risk monitoring.

In the Maradi region in Niger, 64% of the women surveyed have never attended school

In Niger, 78% of the women surveyed report that they cannot rent lands

In northeast Nigeria, women own only 4% of land

<p>PROVIDE TRAINING ON FARMING AND CONSERVATION TECHNIQS</p>	<p>PROMOTE LAND OWNERSHIP AND COMMUNITY GARDENS</p>	<p>IMPLEMENT PROGRAMMES FOR TRAINING AND FUNCTIONAL LITERACY</p>	<p>SUPPORT WOMEN'S COOPERATIVE AND FARMERS WITH A QUOTA SYSTEM</p>	<p>INCORPORATE SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS</p>
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TAKING ACTION

After identifying needs across the different communities, it is required to support farmers by giving advice on equipment, crop conservation, processing and marketing of the agricultural products. Literacy programs (French, English and Hausa) are also needed and should provide financial knowledge, basic accounting, technical and management training as well as farming and processing techniques.

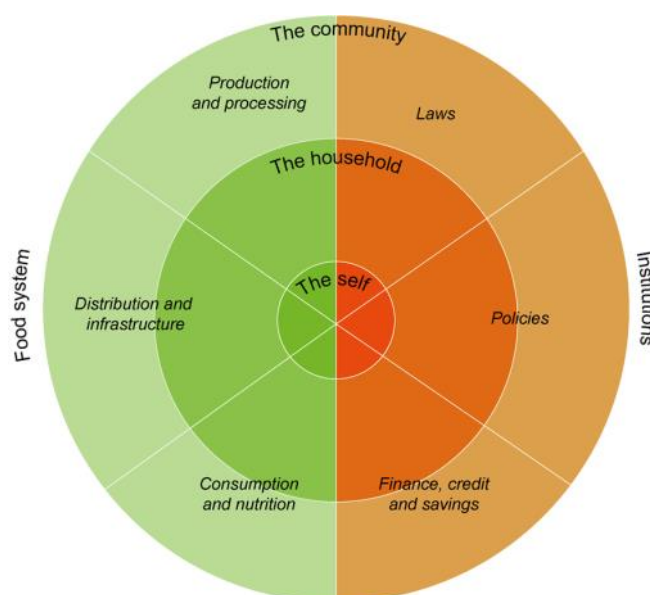
Access to land remains a challenge and promoting women's land ownership while encouraging the creation of women's community gardens are ways to alleviate the uncertainty caused by unstable land leases. This would help to diversify nutrition, improve food security and increase women's abilities to earn independent cash incomes.

WFP and other food security actors should implement a quota system especially targeting women traders for local purchase of food supplies. Partnering and supporting women cooperatives and farmers would allow women to be more land secure and to access agricultural inputs such as seeds, fertilizers and pesticides.

Supporting alternative initiatives such as engaging community media to promote women's leadership and promoting social network analysis will enhance positive social change while helping WFP to better understand social ties and dynamics.

Finally, encouraging both Nigeria and Niger to draw lessons from and strengthen food security monitoring systems will provide valuable information that can assist in the design and oversight of longer term development programs assisting women in agriculture.

GRAPH 1 : FACTORS AFFECTING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN MARKETS



Sources: World Bank (2012), WFP (2017), Gnisci (2016), Oxfam

TO GO FURTHER :

Gender and Market Initiative: Empowering West African Women through Market-based Food Assistance : <https://resources.vam.wfp.org/node/106>

FOR THE LATEST INFO ON NIGERIA & NIGER:

<http://www1.wfp.org/countries/nigeria>
<http://fr1.wfp.org/countries/niger>

SOURCE(S) :

WFP REPORT, 2017. Empowering Women in West African Markets Studies from Kano, Katsina (Nigeria) and Maradi (Niger).

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Photo page 1: WFP/Rein Skullerud