

Entry for GIZ Gender Competition 2022 for Internal Gender Mainstreaming

The Working Group on 'Gender-Transformative Approaches in Rural Development (GTA RD)'
of the Sector Network Rural Development (SNRD)



Who we are?

As part of the GIZ Sector Network for Rural Development (SNRD) Africa and the Sector Network Natural Resources and Rural Development Asia and the Pacific, the first working group in the GIZ on Gender-Transformative Approaches in Rural Development (GTA-RD) is committed to doing things differently. We want to shake up the status quo and shape gender-transformative development outcomes by placing women at the heart of what we do. As dedicated changemakers, we work towards gender-transformative change by “addressing the structural causes of gender inequality and gender-based discrimination, including the active engagement of men and boys in challenging gender norms and stereotypes”.

We see GTA as the most meaningful and effective way to achieve gender equality and women’s empowerment. In order to get there, we need to change persisting narratives about women and men, including gender norms and stereotypes, and foster greater appreciation for the contribution and work done by women in agriculture, which remains socially and economically under-valued.

For this purpose, the GTA-RD working group is based on three main pillars which address **corporate culture, gender competences and cooperation**:

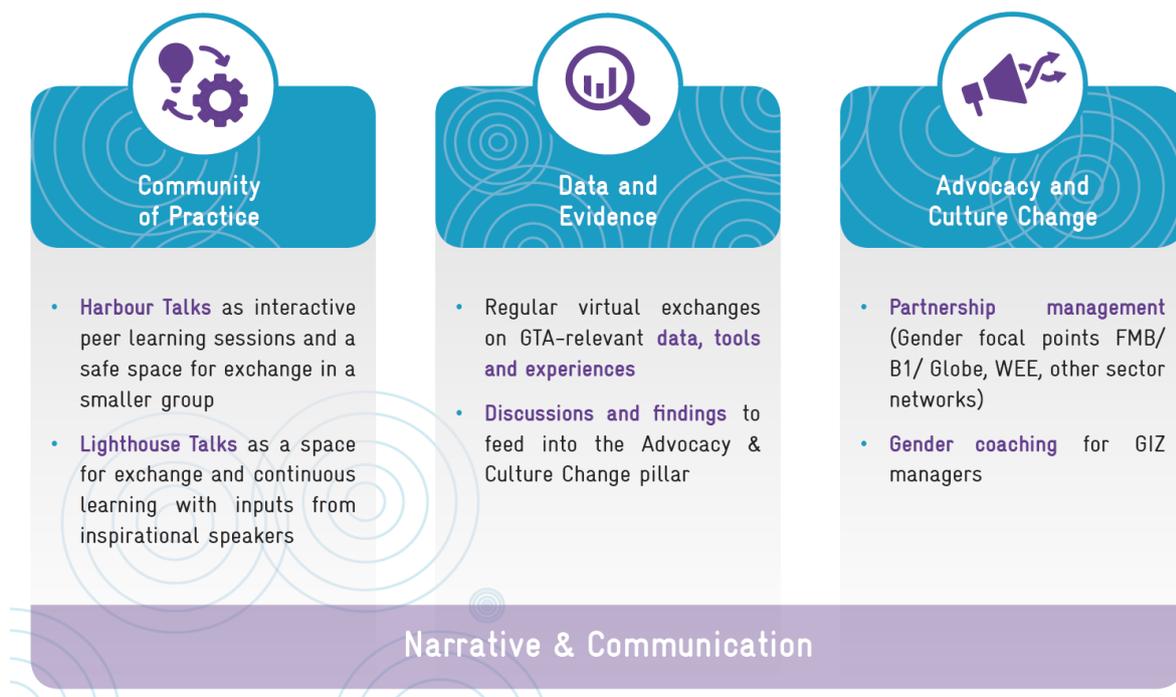
1. Community of Practice (CoP): To support our lifelong learning journey we want to facilitate exchange and stir up discussions. We offer innovative formats and aim to continuously engage our members as well as external guests. The CoP is open to all members of the GTA-RD working group and other interested colleagues within GIZ.

2. Data & Evidence: To prove that our project interventions are leading to transformative change and to ensure that projects benefit from evidence-based learning. What approaches and tools have proven successful and why? What data and experiences exist that can continuously inform and improve our project strategy?

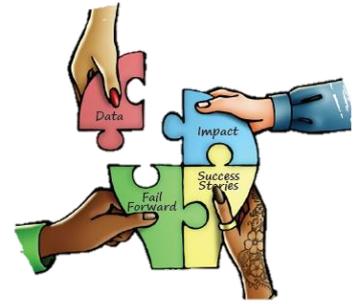
3. Advocacy & Culture Change: To channel insights, evidence and communication from all pillars with the aim of advocating for more emphasis on practical GTA within GIZ. The ultimate objective for us is to – yes! – inspire organisational culture change. In line with “shaking up the status quo” and doing things differently, we aim to enable more changemakers and to build strong partnership networks on GTA within GIZ and beyond through partnership management, networking aspects and more.

Bringing together motivated, curious and interested changemakers from different regions, divisions and projects has great power. To create a virtual space for networking and collaboration to provide a roof for and unleash this power, we have established a lively MS-Teams channel as “Sharing is Caring”. Since launching the working group in November 2020, we have grown our network to over 330 community members worldwide. The first face-to-face meeting took place at the hybrid SNRD Africa Conference 2021 in Accra, Ghana.

Through an inclusive consultation process during the past year, we have identified basic learning on GTA as one of the biggest challenges at the moment in the GIZ. Therefore, we developed the following tools and formats to enhance gender competence in the Sector Network and beyond:



Throughout 2021, the working group has offered two very well attended online Lighthouse Talks with an external guest speaker from the University of Bonn on the “Building Blocks of GTA”. Additionally, the Harbour Talks provide a safe space for peer learning and exchange. In the Data & Evidence pillar, regular calls promote continuous exchange and peer-learning on M&E tools and methods. In order to keep on improving as a learning community, we have reached out to peer learning experts to support us in integrating the peer learning perspective even more strongly in the Harbour Talks and our community as a whole.



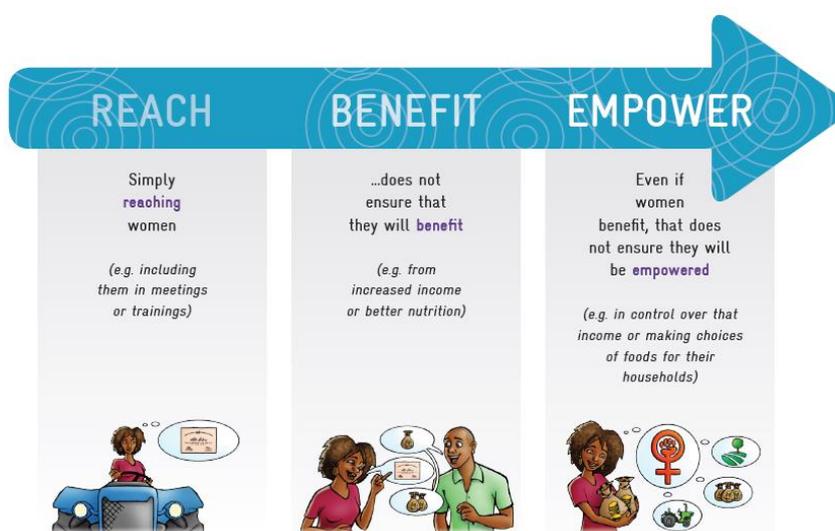
In terms of advocacy and culture change, the working group is piloting the “Gender is Boss Business” Coaching for Gender-Transformative Leadership! Since September 2021, 15 GIZ managers have embarked on a self-driven learning journey with experienced gender coaches to become gender-transformative leaders. The individual and group coaching intend to bring a shift in the thinking behaviour of the participants on how to address gender equality and empowerment, whatever the context is.

Overall, we are guided by a newly launched Narrative Guide, which serves as a sensitisation and advocacy tool. This guide supports our work and provides orientation on GTA and our aims and goals for the entire community and beyond.

After one year, we can confidently say we are a unique community and the first of its kind in the GIZ. Our success factor? Having a dedicated and committed Task Force with creative changemakers from all over the company! Yet we are only at the beginning of our changemaking journey as a young working group, and still need to address certain challenges. As a global community of practitioners, we need to become more inclusive, especially regarding language representation and diversity in representation. However, we believe we are well situated to keep improving and learning and thereby “shaping up the satus quo, shaping Gender-Transformative Change”!

Understanding Gender-Transformative Change

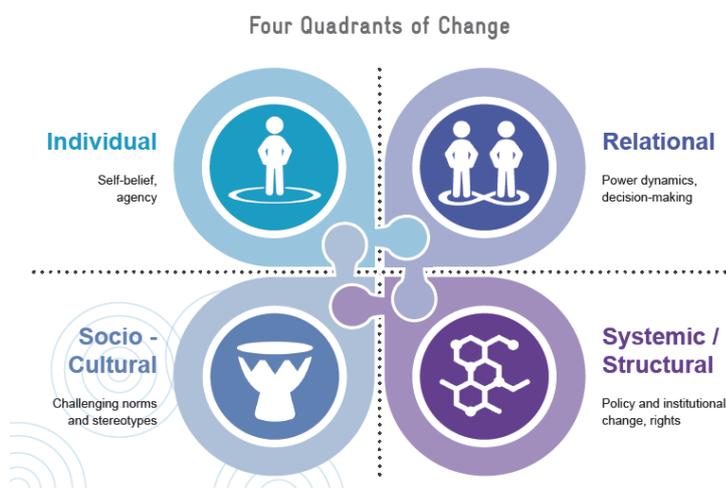
Reach-Benefit-Empower



From the initial project planning phase, we need to ensure that activities not only reach (e.g. including women in workshops or training) but also benefit (e.g. in-cresed income) and empower (e.g. expansion of choic-es and decision-making power) women. Going “beyond business as usual” means that our results matrices and indicators should track more than the basic reach

level (e.g. 30% women trained). Anchoring GTA and a focus on empowerment in the initial project design is the best way to ensure commitment and success in the implementation stage. Beyond this, any project – with or without a GG2 marker – has the possibility to incorporate GTA and aim for empowerment. We acknowledge the complexity of empowerment both as a concept and a goal. For us, the different levels of empowerment are best explained by four quadrants of change:

- The individual quadrant concerns personal empowerment, incl. self-belief and agency
- The relational quadrant concerns interpersonal relations, often connected to the household level, incl. power dynamics and decision-making power
- The socio-cultural quadrant concerns overcoming harmful gender norms and stereotypes
- The systemic or structural quadrant concerns an enabling environment for empowerment, incl. policy and institutional change that strengthen women’s rights



All four quadrants form part of a holistic change process (i.e. gender-transformative change). This framework recognises that individual agency alone does not lead to sustainable change and that the other quadrants need to be equally addressed to achieve empowerment.