

## **GG1 Programme/Project Category**

### **Unbeatable Gender Equality Approaches by the “Sustainable Employment through Agribusiness” (AgriBiz) Programme in Ghana.**

Promoting gender equality and especially empowerment of women is central to the AgriBiz programme. Many of its measures have yielded tremendous results towards bridging the gender gap!

AgriBiz is a 3-year programme implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) in partnership with the Ghanaian Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. The programme is funded by BMZ and co-financed by the European Union. AgriBiz started in April 2021. The European Union-co-financed: “Market Oriented Agriculture Programme in North-West” (MOAP-NW) which began since 2017 was integrated into AgriBiz.

The programme works at improving the conditions for creating productive employment in micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in the agribusiness sector in Ghana and promotes equal opportunities for everyone, regardless of their gender, sexual orientation or gender identity.

The programme has been collaborating with organizations of like interest in supporting female led agribusinesses through skill development training to improve their employability potential.

Additionally, AgriBiz works with both private and public partners to address the challenges that affect thriving women and youth in agribusiness. Addressing these challenges makes them competitive and poised to be engaged in and/or to create sustainable job opportunities especially for themselves, and others in agribusiness and other related sectors.

Measuring the improvement of gender equality and especially the empowerment of women is well documented and is part of the result matrix. It is integral part of the monitoring and evaluation system and systematically recorded.

#### **Intervention 1:**

#### **Women in the driving seats - Tractor Training in Ghana: An approach to promote equal opportunities in a male dominated sector.**

Over 600 applications were received from women all over Ghana for the skill development training. Due to technical reasons, AgriBiz could only support the training of 12 applicants in the four-week training programme on the operation and management of tractors. The training boosted the employability

potential of these industrious women and in less than one month after the training, all 12 women got employed by commercial farms in Ghana.

It is undebatable that the training has changed the norm in agricultural mechanization because the field is male dominated in the Ghanaian context. The Agricultural Extension Services Directorate of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA) reports that only 10% of over 2,500 participants trained so far at its Agricultural Mechanization Service Enterprise Centre in Ghana are female.

In total, 194 females have been trained in tractor operation, and management since 2018 through the cumulative effort of AgriBiz and the Agriculture Technical Vocational Education and Training for Women (ATVET4W) initiative of



*Figure 1: A group of excited graduates from the “Women in Agricultural Mechanization Training”*



*Figure 2: A proud female tractor operator on the driving seat*

GIZ, in collaboration with the Agricultural Engineering Services Directorate of the MOFA. Other private partners in this collaboration are *Agro Kings Limited* and the *Adidome Farm Institute*.

The training was a win-win-win intervention because, AgriBiz enhanced the employability potential of the female tractor operators whereas Agro-Kings had competent female tractor operators to promote the growth of their farming business. Agricultural Engineering Service Directorate promoted the Government of Ghana’s agricultural

mechanisation strategy through this collaborative effort.

Overall, competence-based training is key to ensuring gender equality. All the trained women got employed. Furthermore, they are better positioned to start their own farming or tractor service business as well.

## **Intervention 2: Financial Inclusion for Persons with Disabilities, especially women, through the Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs)**

Access to finance for individuals and people engaged in agriculture is often a challenge. This affects greatly persons with disabilities and even more challenging for women with disabilities in rural areas who are mostly engaged in primary agricultural production. Being able to access finances enhances their ability to purchase agro-inputs and service to support their main livelihood activity. A promising solution is the Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs).

AgriBiz in partnership with 5 NGOs supported the establishment of over 200 VSLAs within the programme's operational area in the rural North-West area of Ghana. This measure has promoted financial inclusion especially for these vulnerable groups.

One excellent example is the "Gbengbe group" of 29 women and 1 man of the Lawra District in Ghana. Gbengbe is a remote locality close to the border between Ghana and Burkina Faso. Many of the women of this group have disabilities (Fig. 3) but are empowered financially through the VSLAs initiative of the programme to sustain their livelihood.



*Figure 3: Women with Disability empowered through VLSA*

These often-marginalized people now have access to finance with favorable group-determined interest rates through the VSLAs. Hitherto, they would have encountered tremendous challenges in accessing financial services.

## **Intervention 3: Female entrepreneurs in the agribusiness – Capacity building for young women in 15 African Countries**

AgriBiz supports female entrepreneurs in the agribusiness sector through an agribusiness transformational programme known as ["Ignite"](#).

Ignite is an agri-business accelerator model for African young women in agribusiness. The programme is in response to the challenges of young female agripreneurs including inadequate technical know-how, market access limitations and a lack of mentorship.

The programme is designed to support aspiring female entrepreneurs in the agri-processing and agricultural services sector. It is an avenue for participants to build their capacities, receive toolkits, relevant resources and be part of a community of like-minded peers.

With the support of GIZ, a total of 120 women from 15 African countries were trained, coached and mentored by seasoned agribusiness experts in 2020.

35 participants of the 2020 batch of igniters are Ghanaian female agripreneurs.

Henry Fordi of the NGO Guzakuzi stated: "In 2020 and 2021, Guzakuzi was privileged to have GIZ (AgriBiz) onboard as an important sponsor for the Ignite-Programme. Within these two years most women owned small businesses were struggling due to the Covid – 19 pandemics. Together, the NGO Guzakuzi and GIZ amplified the voices of these young African women in Agribusiness by equipping them with tools and resources to build and sustain their agribusinesses and provided them with a community to turn to in these difficult times. To GIZ - AgriBIZ -, we say thank you and we look forward to more fruitful partnerships."



Figure 4: A graduate of the Ignite programme receiving her certificate

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Contact:

### **Sustainable Employment through Agribusiness (AgriBiz)**

with the European Union funded component

### **Market Oriented Agriculture Programme North West**

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