

Green Innovation Centres for the Agriculture and Food Sector (GIC), Zambia
Challenging negative gender and social norms through gamification.

Colleagues involved / Category;

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**GIZ Gender Competition 2024:
 Challenging negative gender and social norms through gamification.**

1. Promoting gender equality

In Zambia, women tend to have less access to and control over key agricultural resources and income compared to men despite women’s high labor contribution to productive activities. Furthermore, women are less integrated into markets and have therefore less access to production and market information.

The Green Innovation Centres for the Agriculture and Food Sector project (GIC) in Zambia has implemented several interventions to promote gender equality and to address the above challenges. For example, in 2020, a comprehensive gender study which sought to identify gender-based constraints in the dairy, groundnut and soya beans value chains as well as undertake gender sensitive value chain mapping was undertaken. Using the results of these interventions, the so called “Gender Game” was developed for use at the farmer level. The game seeks to challenge negative gender and social norms while encouraging the adoption of positive behavior change practices that lead to gender equality and social inclusion.

The project has since used the game to raise awareness on existing gender-based constraints, how they can be addressed and what the potential benefits would be. So far, over 200 farmers have been introduced to the game and continue to use it within their chiefdoms. While the game is often used as a stand-alone training material, it has also been proven to be effective in other trainings as an energizer or team building tool. The specific short, medium- and long-term impacts expected include among others:

- Positive mindset changes among the 137,000 farmers that are targeted by the project.
- Increased access to markets for 68,500 women that are targeted under the project. This is because the game challenges social norms that limit women’s mobility which can allow them to access good markets for their produce.
- Increased collaboration between project partners and faith-based organizations to influence social behavior change such as reducing alcohol abuse which is responsible for Gender Based Violence (GBV) and child neglect.

How to play

The goal is to be the first player to overcome the constraints as well as use recommendations to make one’s way to 100. To start playing, players roll a dice and move that number of spaces on the board (life-size/ large size, approximately 5m by 3.5m). If a player lands at the bottom of the ladder (box having a recommendation to address a specific gender-based constraint), they should read and move to the top of it (box with the positive potential result) which should also be read. If they land at the head of a snake (box having a gender-based constraint), they need to read the content then slide down to the bottom (box having the negative consequence of the gender-based constraint) which should also be read. While the goal is to get to 100, players get to discuss the different gender-based constraints, recommendations, and their respective results or consequences. In so doing, everyone gets sensitized in an educative and fun way.



Figure 1: The gender game (large versions on page 2 & 3)

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Figure 3: The GIC Zambia gender game being introduced to partners in the Eastern Province of Zambia.



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2. Gender as a quality feature of our work

The GIC Zambia gender game is widely appreciated by GIZ clients, partners and commissioning parties. This has been shown by the requests that have been received from partners to have the game exhibited during events. One such event was the Care International learning event on [locally led adaptation to climate change which was held in May 2023 at Radisson Blu Hotel in Lusaka, Zambia](#). The GIC project was specifically requested to showcase the gender game since it also brings out climate related gender based constraints. The event was attended by a wide range of local and international partners who greatly appreciated the innovative approach of gamification employed. The game has also been exhibited during the BMZ's Partners4Change conference in Berlin and the 2023 SNRD conference in Senegal.

Within the GIZ in Zambia, several projects i.e., Promotion of agricultural finance for agri-based enterprises in rural areas (AgFin), Food and Nutrition Security for Enhanced Resilience (FANSER), Decentralization for Development (D4D), and Partnerships for Prevention of Gender-Based Violence in Southern Africa (PfP) have already used or planning to use the game in their activities. The GIC project is therefore happily overwhelmed by the positive response from internal and external stakeholders and would like to continue promoting the use of the game as a tool for not only challenging negative gender and social norms but also providing solutions to the challenges.

3. Implementing feminist core principles

The feminist core principles of the German federal government are reflected in the transformative nature of the GIC gender game itself. It is an uncommon way of delivering information to small-holder farmers. Above all, it is inclusive as it also allows for people of low literacy to play it. For example, where there are some people who are unable to read, a facilitator or peers can read for them and explain. The gender game is not only available in English but also in local languages, i.e., Nyanja and Tonga so as to ensure social inclusion. The content of the game also challenges existing gender and social causes of inequalities such as the branding of men as uncontested heads of households.

Beyond the use of the game, the GIC project in Zambia project has increased collaboration with women's organizations through a trilateral collaboration with District Women Development Associations in Lundazi, Katete and Chipata districts. Sensitization of partners in regard to holding meetings or trainings closer to homesteads to avoid long distance travel away from home, a challenging task for women. The project also aims to provide child care services through making considerations for transport refunds and per diems for care takers who accompany nursing mothers while they are in trainings.

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4. Cooperation

The gender study, whose results were used to develop the content of the game, was undertaken in a participatory manner in close collaboration with implementing partners and small-holder farmer cooperatives in eastern and southern Zambia. The uniting factors in this endeavor were the shared goals of alleviating hunger and poverty among small-holder farming households, in particular the women who are the most vulnerable. In the conceptual stage of the game, the GIC project gender focal point worked with the GIZ FANSEER project communications advisor to develop the concept of the game and initial lay-out. A consultant supported with graphic design work. The process of development was highly iterative and involved other GIZ colleagues and partners. The uniting factor in this process was the shared goal of ensuring gender equality by addressing the many gender related challenges that were identified in the 2020 GIC Zambia gender study. For the GIC implementing partner, Community Markets for Conservation (COMACO), the incentive for collaboration on this topic was the need for dedicated gender capacity building material that would also be used even after the GIC project has ended.

The major challenges encountered in this work have been as follows;

- Identifying the best entry points for the introduction of the game. Gamification being a fairly new concept to some farmers, it has been challenging to find the best way of engagement.
- Coordinating the collection of inputs from colleagues and partners amidst competing tasks. This is due to limited time allocation to gender related tasks i.e., gender focal point working on gender at 30%.
- High cost of printing the life-size game (5m x 3.5m).

The key success factors were as follows;

- Adapting an existing game that people are already familiar with.
- Gender focal point active participation in SNRD Africa Working Group on Gender Transformative Approaches (GTA) allowed for easy collection of feedback from like-minded colleagues and sharing of ideas.
- Gender focal point participation in GIZ capacity building measures on gender e.g., mentorship, trainings, coaching etc.
- Use of giant size/ life size of the game allowed for more interaction among players.
- Working with strong partners that have well organized structures on the ground.

Figure 3: Female farmers playing the GIC Gender game and discussing the gender based constraints encountered.



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Here, the different positions taken by the players are a clear demonstration of how gender-based constraints influence one's position in society. For example, the two women who are far right (ahead of everyone) faced fewer constraints than the one woman who is standing far left. By demonstrating this, people get to understand the negative effects of gender-based constraints among many other issues that get to be discussed during the session.