



Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Accelerator

Full design document

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List of acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AfDB	African Development Bank
AFS	Agrifood systems
AGRA	Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa
AoW	Area of Work
APAARI	Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions
AR4D	Agricultural research for development
AWARD	African Women in Agricultural Research and Development
CA	Comparative advantage
CARE	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere
CG	CGIAR
CNA	Capacity and needs assessment
CSA	Climate-smart agriculture
CSO	Civil society organization
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FARA	Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
FHI 360	Family Health International
FLW	Food, land and water
FLWS	Food, land and water systems
GESI	Gender equality and social inclusion
GREAT	Gender-Responsive Researchers Equipped for Agricultural Transformation
GT	Gender-transformative
GTA	Gender-transformative approach
GYSI	Gender, Youth and Social Inclusion
HER+	Gender Equality Initiative
HLO	High-level output
IA	Impact assessment
ICAR	Indian Council of Agricultural Research
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IP&LC	Indigenous peoples and local communities
KALRO	Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization
MEL	Monitoring, evaluation and learning
MELIA	Monitoring, evaluation, learning, and impact assessment
NARES	National agricultural research and extension systems
NARS	National agricultural research systems
R4D	Research for development
SAPLING	Sustainable Animal Productivity for Livelihoods, Nutrition, and Gender Inclusion
SDG	Sustainable development goal
SEARCA	Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture
SI MFS	Sustainable Intensification of Mixed Farming Systems
Science Program	Science Program
STIBs	Sociotechnical innovation bundles
TOC	Theory of change
TVET	Technical and vocational education and training
UN	United Nations
VSS	Voluntary sustainability standards
WEAI	Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index
WFP	World Food Program
YPARD	Young Professionals for Agricultural Development

1. Executive Summary

To address the pressing global challenges and megatrends in gender and social equality within food, land and water systems (FLWS) under a changing climate, CGIAR recognizes the need to invest in a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Accelerator. This Accelerator has a dual mandate: to co-develop impactful, scalable solutions, and to drive systemic change within CGIAR and its partners. These two tracks — solutions and change — are intertwined and mutually reinforcing to achieve common goals through evidence-based policy engagement, capacity sharing, and promotion of gender-responsive innovations and institutions.

The Accelerator's core mission is to lead strategic and innovative research that advances gender equality, opportunities for youth, and social inclusion (henceforth 'GESI') across CGIAR's FLWS Portfolio. Research is carefully prioritized to ensure it is relevant, impactful and beneficial for moving the entire CGIAR system and its partners forward towards the CGIAR Impact Area on 'Gender equality, youth, and social inclusion'. By focusing on areas where CGIAR has leading advantage in FLWS, the Accelerator seeks to fill critical knowledge gaps across the entire research-for-development (R4D) continuum, from co-creating and testing solutions to mapping and synthesizing evidence and learning on key GESI themes. Importantly, this research does not replace existing GESI research within individual CGIAR Programs. Instead, the Accelerator collaborates and leverages the Science Programs, Scaling Program and other Accelerators to further advance shared ambitions and enhance overall impact.

To support the scaling of social and technological CGIAR innovations, the Accelerator provides essential evidence-based guidance on creating pathways for inclusive and responsible scaling. In addition, the Accelerator serves as a global hub for GESI resources within FLWS. It curates a comprehensive and up-to-date Resource Hub: the 'go-to' place for outputs, evidence, methods, metrics and innovations in this field.

The Accelerator also plays a vital role in building an enabling external environment for GESI research within FLWS. By harnessing high-level support, fostering strategic partnerships, and influencing global discourse through effective communication and engagement, the Accelerator builds and sustains global coalitions and networks. These efforts aim to accelerate the impact of GESI at scale, and to continue influencing the global discussion on gender equality and youth engagement.

Internally, the Accelerator is instrumental in advising CGIAR's senior management, nurturing an ambitious and strategic GESI vision, and driving and ensuring coherence across GESI research within the CGIAR Science Programs (Science Programs), Accelerators and Centers. It provides a collaborative and inclusive space where — through knowledge sharing and communities of practice — different Programs and Centers can align their efforts, strengthen cohesion, and enhance networking and social learning.

Moreover, the Accelerator is dedicated to strengthening the GESI capacities of all CGIAR researchers and partners. It advocates for the development of incentives and accountability measures that embed GESI into CGIAR's 'DNA', ensuring that gender equality, opportunities for youth, and social inclusion become fundamental components of CGIAR's mission and operations.

In summary, the CGIAR Accelerator is designed to comprehensively tackle gender and social equality challenges within FLWS. Through innovative research and evidence-based solutions, science-policy engagement, partnerships and coalition building, resource curation, and capacity sharing, it seeks to create lasting change and to position CGIAR as a global leader in accelerating social equity in FLWS.

2. High-level vision in response to challenges and megatrends

2.1. Challenges and megatrends

Multidimensional inequalities in FLWS are deep-rooted, widespread, and projected to grow over the next decades.ⁱ Current inequalities are being exacerbated by a convergence of interrelated crises — a polycrisis — encompassing climate change, environmental degradation, geopolitical instability and changing consumption patterns.

The recent UN Women Snapshot highlights that the global cost of failing to invest in basic skills for women and in gender equality is \$10 trillion a year.ⁱⁱ For FLWS, this translates to a gender gap in farm productivity and wage gap which if closed would reduce the number of food-insecure people by 45 million.ⁱⁱ If it is not, climate change will continue to grow this gap: for every 1° C increase in long-term average temperatures, women farmers lose 24% more of their income than men. Further, in agriculture-dependent low- and middle-income countries, heat waves and floods cost women-run households US\$53 billion more per year than male-headed households. Women are losing 8% more of their income (US\$37 billion), when temperatures surge and 3% more (US\$16 billion) when floods hit.ⁱⁱⁱ

Addressing gender disparities and social inequalities is not only a human right, but also a means to tackling the other megatrends that hinder the achievement of resilient FLWS, as also recognized by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The need for transformation to achieve just and sustainable FLWS is urgent and critical.

Social inequalities and gender disparities in FLWS — across intersecting dimensions of gender, age, socioeconomic status, and ethnic, among others — represent a “wicked problem” that is systemic, complex and deeply entrenched. As such, solutions must be comprehensive, multi-actor, multi-sectoral, and evolutionary, rather than narrow or isolated.

2.2. High-level vision

The Accelerator’s vision is a world *where gender equality, opportunities for youth, and social inclusion drive transformation toward equitable, sustainable and resilient FLWS*. A world where all people — regardless of their social position within FLWS — collaboratively design, access and benefit from innovations that strengthen their resilience, and enable sustainable FLWS and thriving livelihoods — especially in low- and middle-income countries.

The Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator catalyzes targeted research on gender equality, opportunities for youth, and social inclusion through equitable partnerships with decision-makers, practitioners, researchers, and civil society to identify solutions to tackle the deep-seated and growing inequalities in FLWS. The Accelerator drives the agenda of the world’s largest international AR4D body (CGIAR) and FLWS research ecosystem toward achieving real impact for women in all their diversity, youth and socially excluded groups — including IP&LC, disadvantaged castes, ethnic local communities, and people with disabilities — by placing them and their priorities at the heart of research in CGIAR and thus FLWS. The Accelerator’s objective is to support the empowerment of these groups as agents of change in FLWS by ensuring that CGIAR co-designs, generates and delivers workable solutions.

The work of the Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator directly contributes to achieving the SDGs, particularly SDG 5 on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls — both an end and a means for achieving all the other SDGs. The Accelerator will directly contribute to CGIAR’s ‘Gender equality, youth and social inclusion’ Impact Area, and indirectly to the other four Impact Areas. It contributes to CGIAR’s vision by “ensuring greater social equality”^{iv} within sustainable and resilient FLWS.

The Accelerator does not work in isolation but works closely with the Science Programs, Accelerators and Centers to ensure that FLWS innovations developed by CGIAR are co-designed with women, youth, and socially excluded groups, where relevant, to generate impactful, equitable solutions and ensure their adoption.

2.3. What is new in this Accelerator?

The Accelerator builds on successful CGIAR and partner research on gender-just and inclusive FLWS, and expands the scope, approach and ambition of this work based on evolving trends and the implications flagged in the ISDC megatrends report.^v The report highlights the need for research that examines the drivers of deep-rooted inequalities in FLWS and their feedback loops with other negative FLWS outcomes, to enhance adoption of CGIAR innovations by women, particularly from IP&LC.

Learning and building on the gender work of CGIAR through Centers, CGIAR GENDER Impact Platform and HER+, the Accelerator's Area of Work (AoW) 1, *Accelerating Solutions for Impact*, identifies impactful **scalable solutions** to lift systemic barriers of gender equality specific to FLWS under a changing climate. AoW2, *Accelerating Change*, examines the **systemic conditions** unique to FLWS that can hinder implementation of these solutions and seeks to create enabling conditions for sustainable change and impact.

All research moves beyond simple dichotomies to address intersectional inequalities (based on gender *and* age, socioeconomic status, and/or others), a need that is globally recognized in this field, and still underdeveloped in FLWS. The Accelerator's attention to agency and power within agriculture in AoW1 complements its focus on the structural causes of inequality and institutions, and reflects the maturity of CGIAR research in this area, because it considers the interplay of agency and structure that enable gender equality in FLWS.

AoW1 moves the work to "*what works*" by co-creating and testing solutions, with and through the CGIAR portfolio, while AoW2 concentrates on "*how to make it work*" by transforming systems and capacities. It is also important to note that identifying solutions and changing systems is not done in isolation, but by working with and through the whole CGIAR portfolio, and specifically through Science Programs and other Accelerators who are investing in gender and social inclusion research. This leadership of the research agenda and co-creation amplifies any investments.

Further, it is also important to note that the two AoWs are not mutually exclusive, but intertwined and mutually reinforcing. The solutions developed under AoW1 inform the strategies for change employed by AoW2, and the enabling environment fostered by AoW2 enhances the impact and sustainability of the solutions implemented under AoW1.

The ISDC report also highlights the need for a stronger focus on opportunities for youth to create profitable career paths in FLWS. The Accelerator heeds this call by integrating a sub-AoW called 'Youth thrive' under AoW1. In line with the ISDC report, this work explores opportunities with digital technologies and adoption and scaling of technologies, and is conducted *with* youth from co-design through to implementation and scaling. Similarly, and as recommended by the ISDC, the Accelerator embraces an approach that puts women, IP&LC, youth, and other socially excluded FLWS actors as central actors across the entire research process, starting with priority setting and co-design.

3. Use-Case-based prioritization

The Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator adopts a Use-Case prioritization strategy that aligns with the dynamic and interconnected nature of research in the Science Programs and Accelerators. The approach emphasizes the practical application and impacts of research outputs across CGIAR.

Prioritization allows the Accelerator to identify research and work that leads CGIAR and partners towards a more comprehensive and ambitious agenda on gender equality, youth engagement and socially excluded groups. To ensure the agenda does not become too diffuse, the Accelerator will take the lead in identifying the Use-Cases, based on the following touchpoints: (i) filling evidence gaps (based on the previous portfolio), (ii) contributing to the (sub)areas of work identified, and (iii) where working together and across 2–3 Science Programs and Accelerators makes sense and contributes to enhanced learning (such as understanding the gendered impacts of emerging technologies).

As described in Sections 4 and 6, the Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator develops high-level outputs that are the focus when implementing the Use-Case Prioritization method. These innovations are developed, validated and piloted in two AoWs: AoW1 *Accelerating Solutions for Impact* and AoW2 *Accelerating Change*. The intention is to: (i) accelerate impact by developing innovative scaling solutions with Science Programs, Accelerators and partners; (ii) foster cross-case analysis that generates lessons for future research and scaling; and (iii) transfer experiences and adapt innovations across Science Programs and Accelerators.

A **workflow method** (Diagram 1) illustrates the collaboration with Science Programs and partners. Following the successful implementation of this approach in the CGIAR Initiative on Excellence in Agronomy, each Use Case starts with due diligence, ideation and partnership agreements; moving on to design, validation, piloting and scaling; with stage gates included along the workflow. Most Use-Case innovations will take over two years to move through the workflow. However, the timeline depends on the nature of the innovation, the partnerships, and the context of an innovation's validation and piloting. Due diligence, ideation and partnership agreement processes begin during the Inception Phase for the first set of Use Cases. Other Use Cases are added as and when needed, or when a Science Program/partner identifies a demand for a particular innovation.

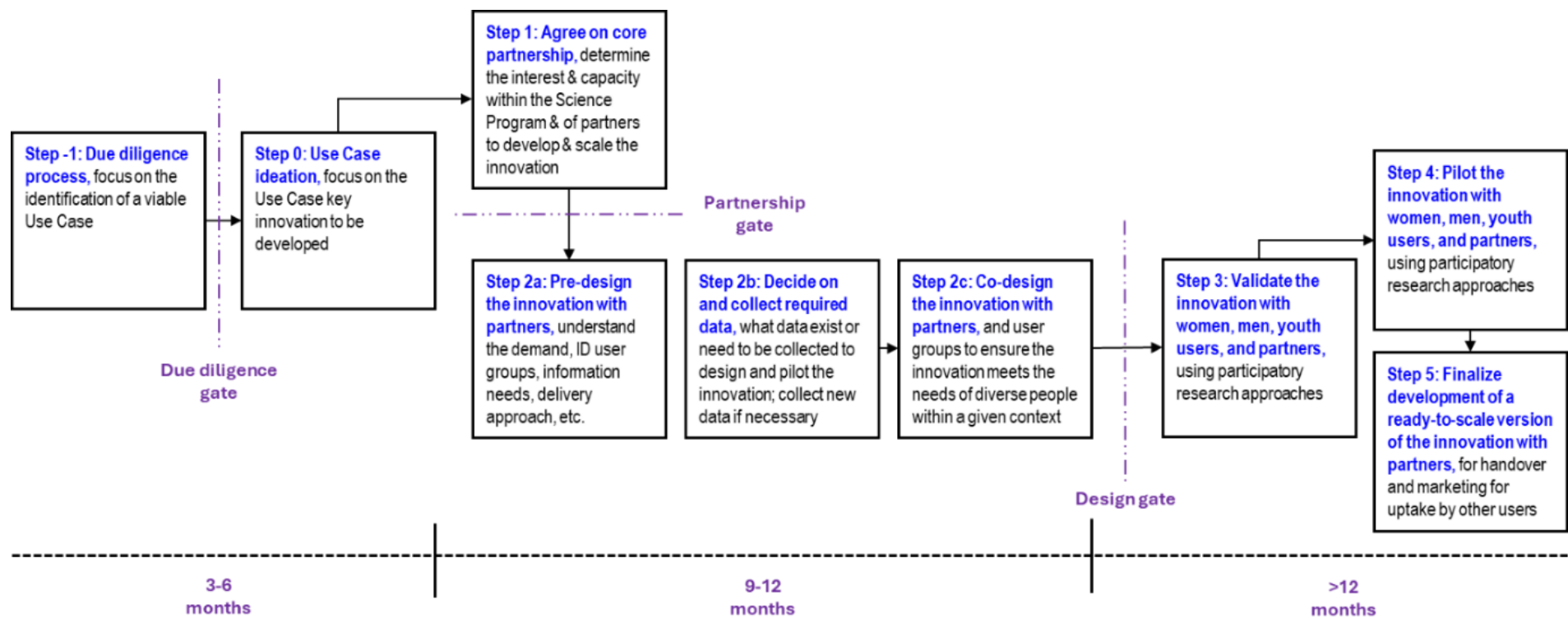


Diagram 1. Use-Case Workflow for Science Programs and Accelerators when developing and scaling Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator innovations

The Accelerator systematically collects demand for Use Cases from Science Programs, Accelerators and other stakeholders. The GENDER Science Exchange (Oct. 1–3, 2024),^{vi} with gender researchers from across CGIAR, will be the first space to gather information on needs, ideas and potential Use Cases. Prioritization for Use Cases will be based on the following criteria:

1. **Impact.** The ability of the Use Case to significantly accelerate the goals and objectives of CGIAR, the Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator, and to help a particular Science Program to contribute to greater gender equality, opportunities for youth and social inclusion outcomes.
2. **Demand and appropriateness.** High demand by a Science Program and partners for the Use-Case innovation; and a clear understanding of the potential user groups, disaggregated by gender, age and other social characteristics. The Science Program is familiar with the development challenge and the suitability of the innovation to address it.
3. **Innovativeness.** The ability of the Use Case to produce something novel and to have significant impact through its use beyond the life of the Use Case. Priority will be given to Science Programs that are interested in pushing the boundaries of knowledge and technology, and transforming FLWS to be more gender equal and inclusive of youth and socially excluded groups.
4. **Scalability.** The ability of the Use Case to develop something that is scalable across other Science Programs, within other contexts and, ultimately, taken up by users outside CGIAR.
5. **Potential for meta-analysis.** The potential of the Use Case to be part of a cross-case analysis and shared learning across Science Programs.
6. **Potential for institutional change.** The potential of the Use Case to influence institutional change across CGIAR.
7. **Equity.** An equitable distribution across commodities and systems, rather than only geographical area.

The Use Case approach used by the Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator will help accelerate the impact of innovations via cross-disciplinary and cross-regional knowledge exchange and collaboration, and building a portfolio instead of independent projects. Scaling innovations by using the Use-Case approach and via a generic Use-Case workflow, means that Science Programs and Accelerators operating collaboratively (instead of alone) will contribute to greater gender equality, opportunities for youth, and social inclusion outcomes. Working closely with Science Programs, Accelerators and Centers while developing innovations will deliver greater efficiencies in resource use, and ensure the outputs that the Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator develops have global relevance and transferability outside the gender and youth research community.

4. Comparative advantage

The Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator's strength derives from CGIAR's significant experience on gender and inclusion research on FLWS, across its 14 research Centers worldwide. CGIAR comprises over 120 scientists whose research focuses on the nexus of GESI and FLWS — a specialization that remains scarce in the FLWS ecosystem. These researchers, who are embedded in larger CGIAR research teams, are at the cutting edge of their field, exploring the range of critical themes in this area across commodities, landscapes, and geographies. Because of this, it has also been able to embed gender and inclusion issues and metrics into crop breeding; livestock healthcare systems; soil, water and tree management; and agriculture policies in significant and meaningful ways.

CGIAR has deep partnership networks for implementation and research, and under the CGIAR GENDER Impact Platform, convenes the largest global network of gender in FLWS researchers. CGIAR's gender and inclusion research responds to strong demand from governments and other FLWS stakeholders to develop innovations and policy solutions that can achieve the socioeconomic, food security, and environmental goals set out in the SDGs in a concerted and efficient manner. Several global programs address social inequalities experienced by women, youth, IP&LC and otherwise socially excluded groups. However, few organizations conduct research on the nexus of FLWS and social inequality, with the depth of expertise held by CGIAR gender researchers.

As such, CGIAR's gender and social inclusion scientists work with:

- CGIAR agronomists, breeders, nutritionists, climate scientists, and scientists focusing on areas such as livestock, fish and aquaculture, forests, biodiversity and general agriculture.
- Advanced education and research institutes.
- NGOs and community organizations.
- National agricultural research and extension services (NARES).
- Private-sector actors.
- Government ministries across FLWS-relevant sectors.

These partnerships enable the design of relevant bundled (socioeconomic and technical) innovations that support food and nutrition security, poverty reduction, environmental health, and climate adaptation and mitigation goals while also advancing gender equality, social inclusion and resilience outcomes for women, youth and socially excluded groups. This approach distinguishes the Accelerator from other organizations working on gender and social inclusion, such as: (i) universities that often lack integrated gender and agriculture or FLWS programs as well as the local presence and the mandate to meet government demand for innovations and policy; (ii) UN agencies that provide technical assistance on gender and inclusion to governments, but lack research expertise to fill key data gaps and develop and test innovations; and (iii) international NGOs that deliver gender and inclusion programs at scale, but seldom experiment and publish their evidence as public goods available to all.

The Accelerator identified 12 high-level outputs (HLOs) for achieving its objectives in eight sub AoW across two AoWs. These sub AoW (see [Section 6](#)) concern: (1) fostering equitable and inclusive norms, (2) supporting pathways to empowerment, (3) promoting equitable resource access and resilient livelihoods, (4) amplifying voice and influence, (5) supporting youth's capacities to thrive, (6) building gender and inclusion methods and metrics, (7) leveraging evidence for engagement, and (8) capacity strengthening. The HLOs span five categories: innovation design (2 outputs), innovation testing and scaling (5 outputs), tool and methods development (4 outputs) and capacity sharing (1 output) (see Appendix 4 for more detail).

CGIAR's success is based on its human, physical and social capital; and on strong incentives to deliver the promised outputs.

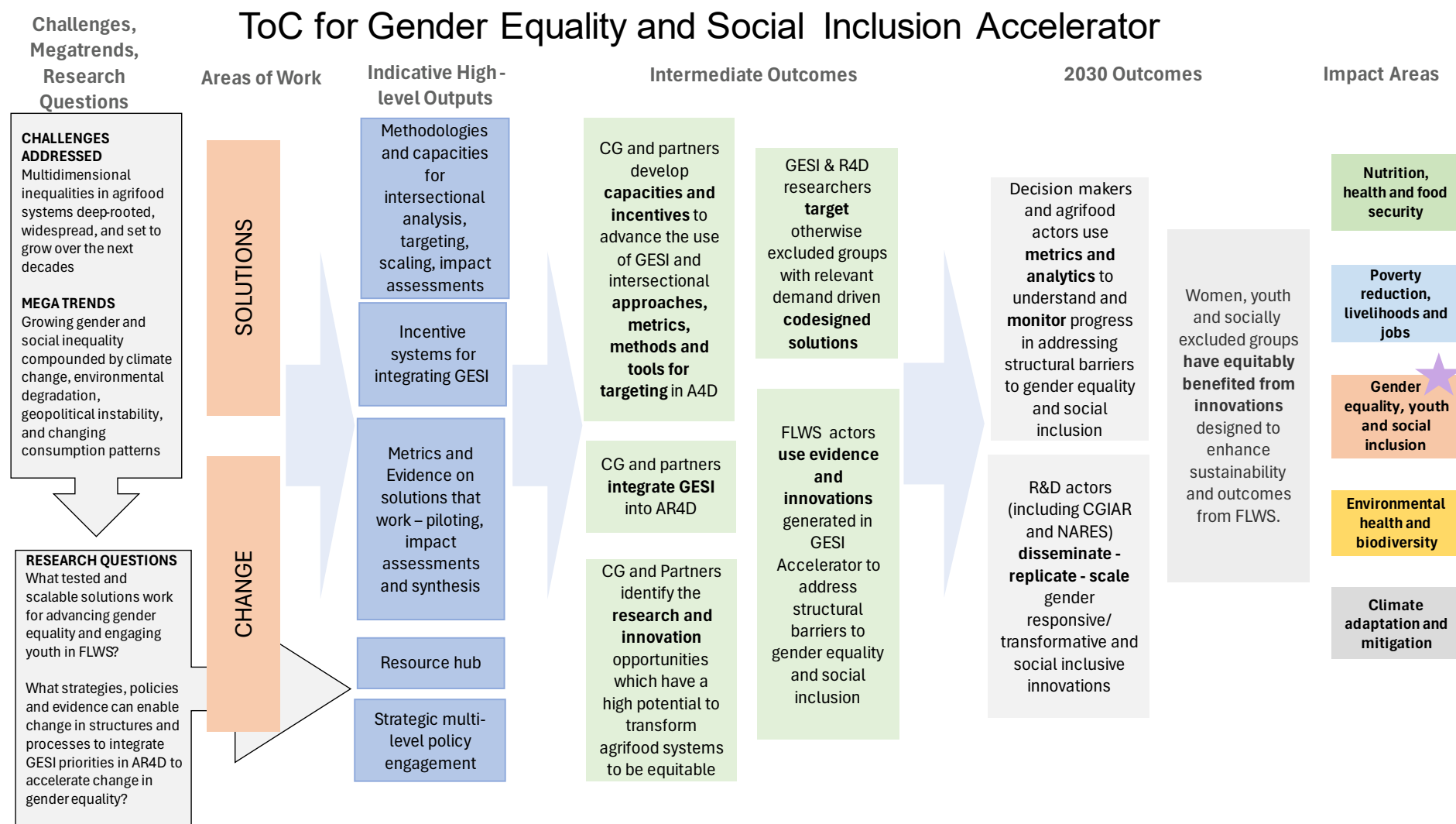
- **Human capital.** CGIAR boasts a multidisciplinary team of sociologists, economists, anthropologists, demographers, geographers, political scientists and crop scientists — all with expertise in gender equality, social inclusion and/or youth research in low- and middle-income countries. CGIAR researchers have a strong and sustained presence across countries and regions, carrying out projects in close partnership with governments, NGOs, women's organizations, and other FLWS stakeholders. CGIAR has the right capacities and in-country presence to develop and coordinate comparative research yielding large and rigorous datasets and evidence, and to create

innovations and policy solutions that genuinely meet the demands of many kinds of user groups across national and global contexts.

- **Social capital.** The Accelerator has a global network and deep relationships with partners and stakeholders across the world. These partnerships span the global (e.g., United Nations (UN) agencies, World Bank), regional (e.g., Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa, Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), etc.), national (e.g., governments, NARES, farmers' federations), and local (e.g., women's organizations, youth groups) levels. These relationships are the foundation of cross-learning and knowledge exchange among partners at multiple levels. CGIAR has a track record in leading projects that deliver cutting-edge, quality research that generates real development impacts. This proven capacity stimulates demand among governments and global organizations for research that will yield concrete, equitable solutions to FLWS challenges.
- **Physical capital.** The CGIAR Centers' research stations house the Accelerator's social and biophysical scientists. The laboratories and long-term field experiments are crucial for developing gender- and youth-responsive crop varieties, animal breeds (including fish) and agronomic solutions that are socio-culturally-politically relevant across these study sites and locations. Researchers innovate with scale-appropriate mechanization to relieve women's drudgery and enhance productivity.
- **Incentives.** The CGIAR Impact Area on 'Gender equality, youth and social inclusion' demonstrates institutional buy-in for research in this area. Several CGIAR Centers include gender and inclusion as part of their strategy and encourage this research through institutional incentives and support. CGIAR is motivated and well-placed to lead groundbreaking research across FLWS, to become the global clearinghouse and 'go-to' place for GESI resources.

In sum, CGIAR excels in multidisciplinary research on gender and inclusion in FLWS. It sustains and nurtures strong and longstanding partnerships and networks, with partners who provide complementary strengths. As a 'neutral broker', CGIAR brings together different stakeholders, from the grassroots to governments and the private sector, to co-design innovations and policy solutions to accelerate gender equality and social inclusion in FLWS.

5. Program-/Accelerator-level theory of change (TOC)



CGIAR's ability to deliver on an inclusive and just food system is limited by significant challenges that require change in agricultural research processes. FLWS innovations are often developed with little or no attention to social inequalities, treating women and men as homogeneous groups. Ignoring complex social issues may exacerbate inequalities and prevent some FLWS innovations from achieving their full potential of benefits for end users.

To catalyze change and empower women and youth as partners and drivers of equitable FLWS solutions, FLWS actors (including CGIAR, national governments, and other AR4D partners) must: (a) adopt a socioecological system framework^{vii} to identify solutions to guide interventions towards key leverage points in the multiple systems (social, economic, technological and governance) that feed into inclusive and just FLWS and result in transformation and empowerment; and (b) ensure FLWS actors are equipped with the tools, methods and evidence required to enhance the access and adoption of innovations, measures and technologies that promote the resilience and livelihoods of women, particularly from IP&LC, youth, and otherwise socially excluded groups.

These ambitions are reflected in the Accelerator's 2030 outcomes, namely that: (i) AR4D actors in FLWS disseminate, replicate, and scale socially inclusive, gender-responsive, and transformative innovations, while (ii) FLWS decision-makers and actors use metrics and analytics to understand and monitor progress in addressing structural barriers to systemic inequalities. These outcomes assume that the actors in question are: (i) motivated to respond to their constituencies and donors and committed to advancing GESI through AR4D; and (ii) willing and able to change their attitudes, behaviors, practices and institutional frameworks.

Gender and inclusion research in CGIAR Centers and the CGIAR Initiatives (in particular, the Gender Equality Initiative (HER+) and the GENDER Impact Platform) form the core of two AoWs. The two AoWs build on the significant demand and momentum created through these research initiatives, strong partnerships formed, lessons learned, and evidence gathered, which offer a solid foundation upon which the Accelerator's outputs and outcomes in this portfolio can be identified and generated.

The Accelerator's two-pronged approach is reflected in its two AoWs. In AoW1, the Accelerator tests **Solutions for Impact** that take a socioecological systems approach by bundling innovations to respond to the differentiated needs and challenges faced by women, youth, IP&LC and otherwise socially excluded groups. For example, women may derive more benefit from a new irrigation technology if it is bundled with training, financing, marketing of the produce, and if the users are organized as a mutual-support group.^{viii}

In AoW2, the Accelerator fosters structural **Change through Evidence** across the FLWS ecosystem. This is achieved by engaging with FLWS actors to use evidence from research to set policies, set priorities and define solutions for delivery and scaling; and by sharing capacities to conduct quality GESI and youth research while tracking impacts.

A core principle of the Accelerator is the co-design of solutions and their implementation in a participatory manner. Building on experiences from the past portfolio, AoW2 expands work on targeting, demand signaling, and evidence synthesis and facilitation of uptake. The joint identification of innovations will lead to solutions and form a basis for developing metrics to assess impact, and for building capacity to take up solutions and create positive feedback loops for learning and adjustment.

The two AoWs address these overarching research questions:

- What are the most effective and scalable solutions for advancing gender equality and engaging youth to deliver on inclusive and just FLWS?
- What evidence, strategies and policies can enable structural change to drive integration of GESI in AR4D organizations and catalyze equality in FLWS?

The Accelerator's major outputs include:

- Co-developed and tested solutions to advance GESI and youth engagement to catalyze inclusive FLWS.
- Solutions to support women's empowerment and resilience in FLWS under a changing climate.
- Increased understanding of youth's role in FLWS by CGIAR and partners.
- Advanced methods for intersectional analysis that enable effective targeting and scaling of FLWS solutions.
- Metrics and toolkits to capture GESI and youth outcomes and impacts in FLWS.
- Large datasets and analytics, and decision-support systems to enable evidence-based strategic planning and policymaking for equitable and resilient FLWS.
- Enhanced capacities to use and scale GESI approaches, methods and solutions for FLWS transformation.
- Institutional structures and incentives that facilitate GESI inclusion in AR4D.

The Accelerator aligns the priorities of both AoWs with national, regional and global demands.

Partnerships are key to accelerating change and reaching the Accelerator's 2030 and intermediary outcomes. Within CGIAR, working with the Science Programs (Science Programs), the Scaling Program and the Accelerators will require an iterative relationship where the Science Programs contribute to the thematic AoWs of the Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator; while the Accelerator contributes methodologies, evidence, tools, approaches, best practices, and more, to raise the ambition of the Science Programs on GESI and drive a coherent CGIAR-wide GESI research agenda.

Beyond CGIAR, the Accelerator harnesses high-level support, fosters strategic partnerships, and influences global discourse to build an enabling external environment for GESI in FLWS research through effective communication and engagement. It builds and sustains global coalitions and networks to accelerate the impact of GESI initiatives on a broader scale.

The Accelerator works closely with bilateral projects, United States Agency for International Development Innovation Labs, German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) programs, among others, to advance positive GESI outcomes in FLWS. Relevant research and outcomes is also driven by strong engagement with research networks like FARA and its sub-regional organizations, Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI), Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA) and National agricultural research systems (NARS) like Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, Uganda National Agricultural Research Organization, Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO), and Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research.

Moreover, the Accelerator engages with national governments and multilateral organizations to understand their information needs in support of evidence-based policymaking and program design, and their preferences for accessing this evidence. The Accelerator's work with global partners — such as World Bank, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), IFAD, Asian Development Bank (ADB), African Development Bank (AfDB), and Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) — builds on previous successful engagement, such as collaborations on the Status of Women in Agrifood Systems and the Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition. With its presence across multiple Centers and connections to a broad spectrum of actors, the Accelerator is poised to continue to influence agricultural innovation to become more inclusive.

Through engagement with these partners, the Accelerator:

- Develops new methods and metrics to advance and measure changes in gender equality, and the inclusion of IP&LC, youth and socially excluded groups.
- Develops analytics and decision support systems to inform policy and program design and gain the ability use evidence and data.
- Collaborates with capacity development organizations to build human and social capital in CGIAR and partner organizations to enable them to use the new approaches and metrics developed.
- Nurtures communities of practice around GESI and youth, incorporating agricultural universities and research networks globally (e.g., Cornell University, Royal Roads University, Makerere University, GREAT, AWARD, AIT, SEARCA, FARA, APAARI).
- Identifies what works, where, for whom, and under what conditions as well as cost-effective GESI solutions for FLWS — in partnership with research organizations with a strong background on impact assessments, such as J-PAL, the Africa Gender Innovation Lab, and Airbel Impact Lab.
- Synthesizes evidence and communicates it to target audiences, including through Evidence Explainers, infographics, and other innovative and strategic communication products, to inspire and enable other organizations to scale these solutions for equitable FLWS.
- Engages with global policy processes such as UNFCCC, CBD and United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification to provide evidence-based recommendations and strategies.
- Monitors and manages evidence uptake to facilitate scaling.
- Supports change in CGIAR institutional frameworks to systematically address gender equality and social inclusion when setting research priorities, defining partnerships and making decisions with partners to ensure intentionality on GESI in technology design, delivery and scaling.

6. Areas of Work

6.1. Introduction to Areas of Work

Progress on reducing hunger has stalled, as healthy diets become less affordable and trade regimes deteriorate amid a polycrisis of climate, conflict and health risks, and others. These challenges place a disproportionate burden on women, youth, socially excluded people and IP&LC, and many of the inequalities they face are growing.^{ix} Forty-three percent of agrifood workers are women, but their pay, labor rights, and control over resources are worse than men's.^x Climate change has disrupted indigenous food production, and an additional 34 million people in 25 countries are now acutely food insecure.^{xi} Progress toward social justice, equality, peace and global prosperity is undermined when large segments of the world's population are marginalized in FLWS. Yet FLWS themselves can be a source of solutions.

CGIAR research from HER+, the GENDER Impact Platform, SAPLING, Ukama Ustawi, and others, has achieved such results as strengthening women's access to agricultural technologies, testing bundled livelihood interventions to strengthen poor women's resilience to climate shocks, enhancing women's voice in local reforestation committees, improving measurement of women's empowerment, identifying restrictive social norms in FLWS markets, and more.

The Accelerators within CGIAR are programs in thematic areas (gender and social inclusion, digital innovations, capacity building/sharing) that interface with the rest of the Portfolio to catalyze transformation toward more sustainable and inclusive food systems. The three Accelerators share the following characteristics:

- **Centers of excellence (practices, methods, approaches, external advocacy):** Accelerators emphasize the standardization and dissemination of best practices, methodologies and approaches, ensuring that cutting-edge techniques are developed and consistently applied across the Science Programs, Accelerators and Centers.
- **Leading the research agenda (think tanks):** While Science Programs focus on conducting research and generating science and evidence, Accelerators prioritize setting and leading the research agenda in their specific domains, guiding the future direction of CGIAR's portfolio in those areas and collaborate with Science Programs, Accelerators and Centers to have a whole-of-portfolio approach.
- **Capacity building:** Accelerators focus on building capacity by increasing the skills and competencies within Science Programs, Accelerators and Centers. This includes training and development programs that equip scientists in Centers teams to effectively implement the methods and practices evidenced/promoted by the Accelerator.
- **Solutions delivery:** Accelerators deliver scalable, demand-driven solutions in their domains, responding to the needs of the Science Programs and other Accelerators, and translating research into practical applications that can be deployed across the Programs.

In the Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator, two AoWs will catalyze equitable transformation in FLWS:

1. **Accelerating solutions for impact:** Finding solutions — through research with partners — that lead to gender equality, and opportunities for youth and social inclusion in FLWS.
2. **Accelerating change:** Building a conducive environment to engage, disseminating and scaling solutions, sharing capacity to support adoption, and adaptively learning from engagement with FLWS actors to help solve new or more complex development challenges.

The AoWs are mutually reinforcing and collaborate actively with each other and with the Science Programs, other Accelerators, and Centers. To this end, the Accelerator has a strategic leadership and management unit, which also takes responsibility for supporting CGIAR in accelerating progress towards the Impact Area on GESI. This overarching unit provides continuity to the roles of the GENDER Impact Platform in: (a) fostering global critical thinking; (b) building internal capacity; (c) advising management on the prioritization, design and implementation of Science Programs and Accelerators, and bilaterally funded projects; and (d) amplifying CGIAR's external profile and voice.

Building upon the experiences of the GENDER Impact Platform, the Accelerator continues advising CGIAR Senior Leadership, by becoming a senior advisor to the Global Leadership Team and joining the Science Leadership team. The Accelerator advises senior leadership on creating conditions for people to excel at GESI research in CGIAR — such as by providing incentives for gender-responsive research and impacts on gender and inclusion; building gender-research teams in Centers; and adopting practical and fit-for-purpose monitoring and reporting guidelines, strategies, and accountability frameworks.

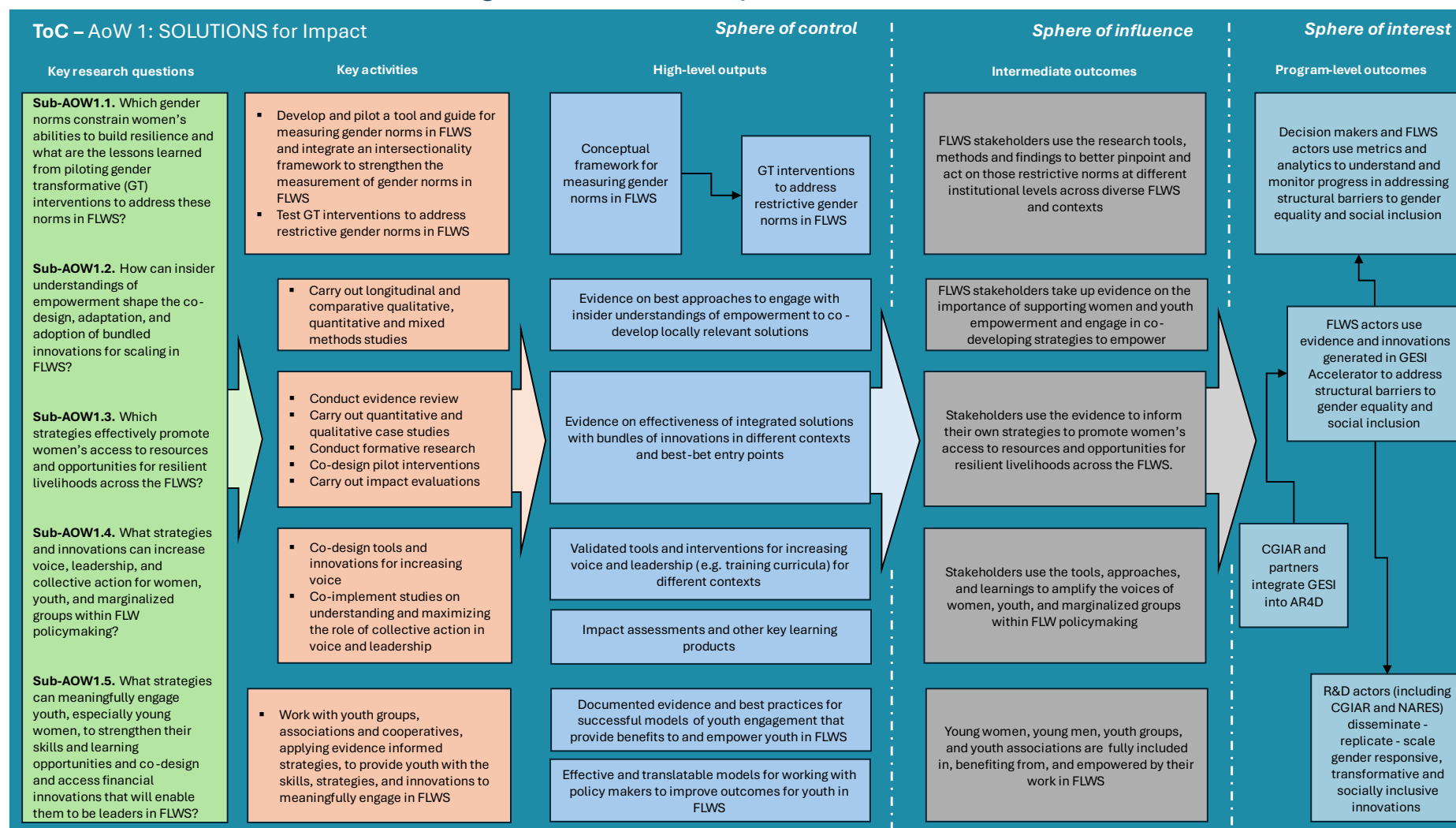
The Accelerator also emphasizes that although there are two AoWs of work, they do not function in a linear fashion and acknowledges that its remit is for co-creation with iterative steps with GESI working in diverse teams at multiple levels. For instance, strengthening community resilience requires entirely new pathways and approaches than innovation-bundle scaling; this will be explored as well.

The Accelerator takes a social inclusion lens, which “seeks to address the structural factors and processes that result in inequality and marginalization; and refers to a multidimensional, relational process of improving the ability, opportunity and dignity of individuals and groups — including the otherwise disadvantaged and marginalized people — to take part in society. [Social inclusion] is based on the premise that every person is instrumental in transforming their societies.”^{xii}

Efforts to develop just and resilient FLWS for current and future generations require engaging with and creating opportunities with **young women and men** in all their diversity. Young people face barriers in FLWS, ranging from exclusion from governance, poor access to cash and other resources, and the frustration of trying to make a prosperous living from food and farming. Their aspirations, opportunities and constraints are shaped by changes in education, in gender norms and others, and digital innovations, among other shifts. The Accelerator will create conditions that enable young people to pursue their aspirations and drive positive change in FLWS.

IP&LC also face unique challenges, including historical land expropriation, assimilation policies, land privatization and limited recognition of their customary land rights. Indigenous women and youth face additional discrimination. These challenges undermine traditional land and food systems — forests in particular — and erode indigenous farming practices that support soil health and food security.^{xiii} In South-Asia, **caste** heightens social differentiation, hampering marginalized-caste people’s access to land, labor and livelihood opportunities. Globally, mental and physical health challenges due to disability are commonplace, affecting 16% of the world’s population^{xiv} and severely restricting farming choices and capacities to build viable agrifood livelihoods in LMICs.^{xv}

6.2. Area of Work 1: Accelerating Solutions for impact



Accelerating Solutions builds on a conceptual framework that surfaces four dimensions of inequality, which was further developed by CGIAR and partners to frame an understanding of inequalities in food systems in the lead up to the UNFSS.^{xvi} The framework identifies four types of changes from the individual to the systemic level needed to achieve gender equality in FLWS, which must be pursued in concert to significantly transform FLWS.

The Accelerator focuses on these change areas, which are reflected in AoW1's sub-AoWs, namely: at the individual level, the changes needed to achieve gender equality in FLWS require redressing unequal power relations by **increasing women's empowerment** and **promoting equitable access to and control** over FLWS resources throughout the entire life cycle of a person, from youth to old age. Yet, these changes alone cannot transform food systems, because disadvantage stems from deep-seated social structures. As such, FLWS will be transformed only by **fostering equitable and inclusive norms** and **policies** that provide a conducive environment for empowerment and equity, while **amplifying the voice and influence** of women, youth and socially excluded groups.

As such, *Accelerating Solutions* comprises the following sub-AoW:

- 1.1 Fostering equitable and inclusive norms.
- 1.2 Supporting pathways to empowerment and resilience.
- 1.3 Promoting equitable resource access and resilient livelihoods.
- 1.4 Amplifying voice and influence within FLWS institutions.
- 1.5 Youth thrive.

These sub-AoWs are already informed by a rich body of gender research in CGIAR, including under HER+, SAPLING, Market Intelligence, SI MFS, Livestock, Climate and Systems Resilience, SeedEqual, From Fragility to Resilience, and the GENDER Impact Platform.

Accelerating Solutions builds on this research and its key lesson that, although change in each of the abovementioned areas is essential, achieving a deep and lasting transformation requires coordinated progress across all areas, including changing the norms and policies that sustain inequality at multiple scales of FLWS.^{xvii} Furthermore, this research has shown that emerging opportunities — such as digital innovation, financial inclusion and climate action — are not gender-neutral, and may even disadvantage women or other groups if not intentional about overcoming systemic and individual gender inequalities related to norms, resources, agency and voice.

Together with partners' and CGIAR's Science Programs, *Accelerating Solutions* co-develops and inclusively scales integrated solutions that challenge the multiple dimensions of inequality, overcoming inclusion challenges specific to, for instance:

- Climate change adaptation and mitigation.
- Agricultural technology design and use.
- Breeding and genetic innovations.
- FLW value chains and market systems.
- Natural resources management, such as of water, biodiversity and landscapes.
- Livestock, fisheries and aquaculture.

CGIAR's gender research has shown that integrated solutions that promote new agricultural technologies — while addressing norms that hinder gender-equal access and adoption of these technologies — can help reduce the gender productivity gap. Moreover, research shows that, in general, women are more vulnerable than men to the shocks of climate change, but that greater access to resources, technologies, knowledge and financial services can improve women's climate resilience. Ensuring equitable social norms and an equal voice in climate discussions, negotiations and solutions are also crucial.^{xviii} Removing the structural barriers

facing women and other groups in farming, forestry, fishery, aquaculture, livestock and value chains contributes to greater equality, improved resource management, better livelihood opportunities, and improved diets — thus strengthening resilience capacities.^{xix}

The *Accelerating Solutions* sub-AoW on **youth** livelihoods co-designs solutions to lift barriers and create the opportunities that youth want in FLWS. Engaging youth requires researchers to think outside the realms of farming, fields and production. For instance, digital technology related to agricultural information, markets, credit, or value addition may draw youth into agriculture. But how can we ensure that these innovations are inclusive and sustainable?

Accelerating Solutions expands beyond a gender focus to address other intersecting axes of marginalization and exclusion. This intersectional approach considers how people's social characteristics interact to shape the constraints and opportunities they face in FLWS. A social inclusion approach ensures that otherwise excluded groups like people with disabilities, IP&LC, people of lower caste and vulnerable tribal communities take part in designing the solutions that shape their lives and livelihoods. For instance, the Accelerator builds on CGIAR's experience in supporting land tenure for IP&LC, co-designing socio-technical innovation bundles (STIBs) with Scheduled Castes and tribes in India, and ensuring social inclusion in climate finance — among others.^{xx}

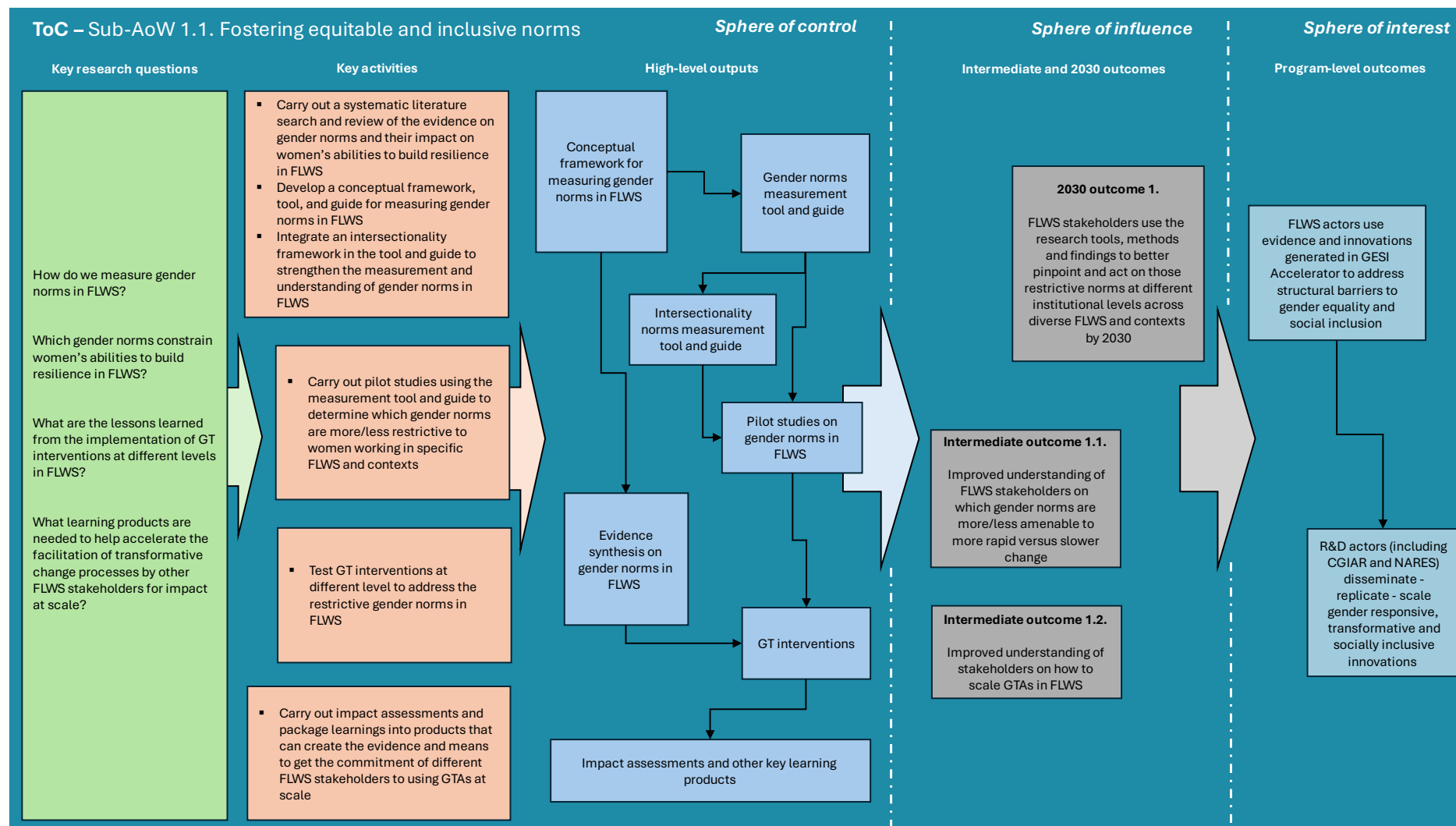
***Accelerating Solutions* addresses the following overarching research question:**

Which integrated solutions, implemented under which conditions and contexts, can accelerate a transition toward just and resilient FLWS that deliver gender and social equality and inclusion, and other desirable FLWS outcomes?

Accelerating Solutions conducts solution-oriented research on gender dynamics, norms and inclusion in the context of FLWS. It co-designs and tests interventions that help make FLWS more just and resilient, while partnering with other Science Programs and Accelerators to develop integrated solutions for specific AR4D domains across FLW sectors.

Accelerating Solutions, in collaboration with *Accelerating Change* (AoW 2), creates tailor-made tools and standardized metrics that enable conceptually sound, accurate and consistent measurement of gender equality in institutions, power relations and agency. This will be the basis for co-designing and refining tools to measure progress toward gender equality, empowerment and inclusion objectives; and commitments and targets in institutions, policies, programs and projects amid the new reality of polycrisis.

6.2.1 Sub AoW 1.1. Fostering equitable and inclusive norms



Social norms are a group's informal rules for behavior, upheld by sanctions when violated. These informal social institutions are context-specific and influence behavior at all levels — individual, household, community and organizational. Gender norms are the subset of social norms that define appropriate behavior for women and men. Gender norms can dictate and reinforce inequalities in FLWS, limiting the capacities of rural women to improve their livelihoods.^{xxi,xxii} This creates gender inequalities in agricultural development outcomes. Restrictive gender norms must be addressed to develop inclusive FLWS and to meet many of the SDGs. However, few studies examine the impacts of gender norms on men's and women's abilities to leverage FLWS, and such work currently lacks coherent conceptual framing to guide the measurement of gender norms in FLWS. However, research is crucial for designing, piloting and scaling gender-transformative approaches (GTAs) to enhance equality in FLWS.^{xxiii}

To fill these gaps, HER+ carried out an evidence synthesis on gender norms in FLWS,^{xxiv} developed a conceptual framework for measuring gender norms,^{xxv} and supported multi-stakeholder co-design processes to pilot a novel quantitative gender norms assessment tool in Nigeria and Tanzania.^{xxvi} The SAPLING Initiative also developed a tool to assess gender norms in livestock systems.^{xxvii} The GENDER Impact Platform partnered with the Joint Program on GTAs^{xxviii} and HER+ to develop guidelines^{xxix} on how to measure gender-transformative change and changes in gender norms. HER+ recently started designing and piloting gender-transformative (GT) interventions with partners using the evidence base generated, and a set of leverage points and levers^{xxx} identified via stakeholder consultations in Nigeria and Tanzania. The SAPLING Initiative studied how gender norms on masculinity impacted nutrition security; it demonstrated that gender-accommodative approaches are less efficient than transformative ones in improving women's access to animal vaccines.^{xxxi}

This sub-AOW addresses the following key research questions:

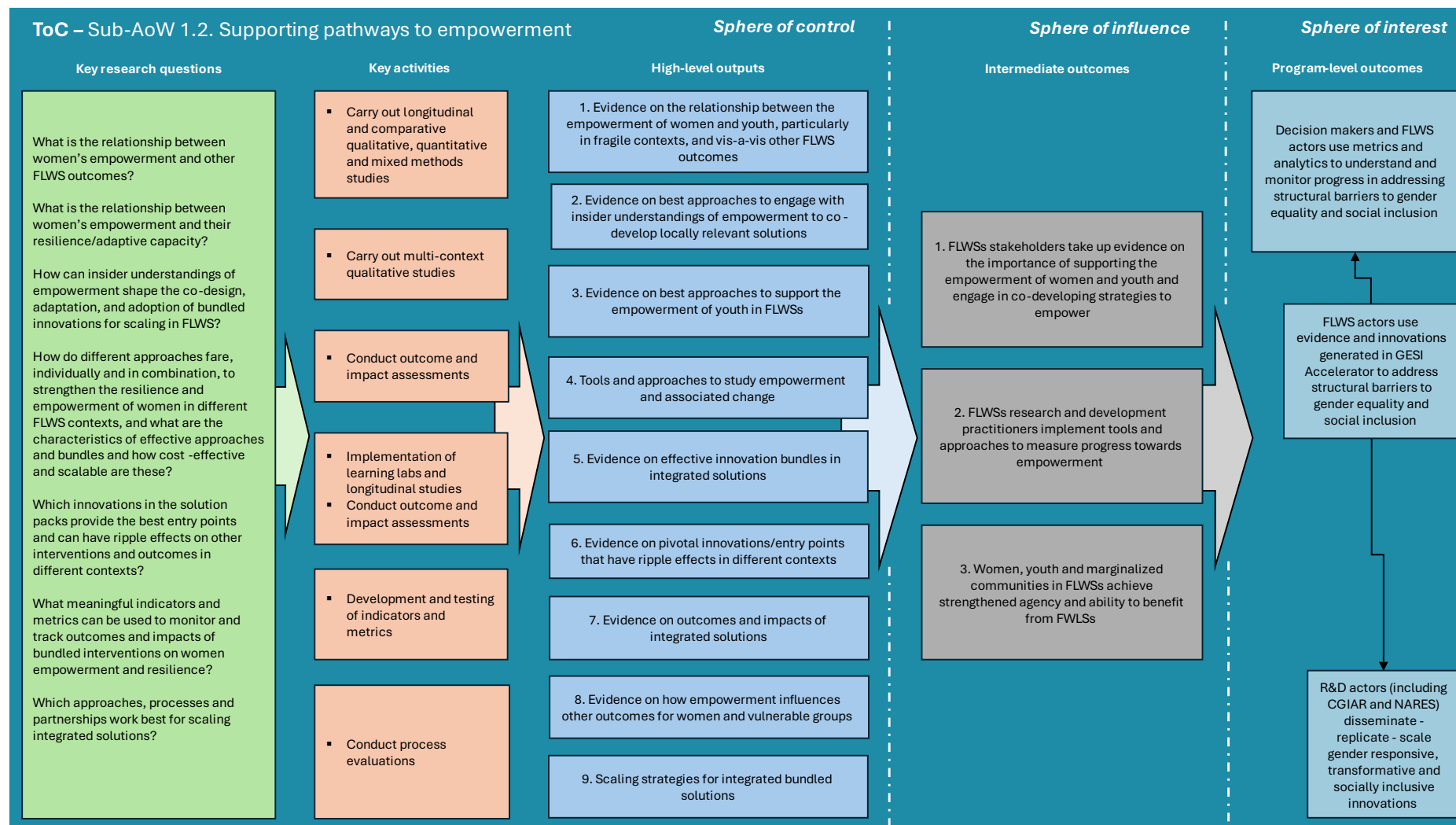
1. How do we measure gender norms in FLWS?
2. Which gender norms constrain women's abilities to build resilience in FLWS?
3. What are the lessons learned from the implementation of GT interventions at different levels in FLWS?

The Accelerator works with Science Programs and partners outside CGIAR (e.g., FAO, in-country NGOs) to validate and test its tools and approaches in different contexts, by providing technical support and synthesizing lessons for broader uptake by FLWS stakeholders. The Accelerator uses an intersectionality framework to strengthen the gender norms measurement tool; and to study how norms for gender intersect with those for youth, and ethnic, caste or religious groups to create or maintain unequal agricultural development outcomes. It also explores the most restrictive norms (especially harmful masculinity norms that prevent women from engaging in and benefiting from FLWS), how to change them at scale, and the best approaches for transformative change in FLWS.

The Accelerator uses this evidence to attract greater commitment from FLWS stakeholders who will use these research tools, methods and findings to better pinpoint and act on those restrictive norms at different institutional levels across diverse FLWS and contexts by 2030 (2030 Outcome 1). This work will improve stakeholders' understanding of which gender norms are more amenable to change (Intermediate Outcome 1.1) and help determine how better to scale GTAs in FLWS, including what preconditions are needed for scaling GTAs (Intermediate Outcome 1.2).

Achieving these outcomes assumes: (1) gender norms are amenable to change in the shorter term for targeting by stakeholders; (2) changes in gender norms occur fast enough to keep stakeholders motivated while implementing GTAs; (3) GTAs bring about gains in productivity, food, nutrition and economic security to increase their use by stakeholders; and (4) tools and learning products are developed to accelerate implementation of GTAs by stakeholders. The use of strategic communication targeting FLWS stakeholders is critical to ensuring these outcomes are achieved via increased understanding of GTAs and confidence in their use.

6.2.2 Sub AoW 1.2. Supporting pathways to empowerment



Women's empowerment is both an end and a means for achieving a just FLWS transformation. The empowerment of women, who are at the heart of FLWS, is needed to allow FLWS to develop to its full potential and support progress toward gender equality. CGIAR developed widely-used tools for measuring changes in empowerment (WEAI and others), yet there remains a need to further capture local concepts of empowerment, including their relational nature and psychological dimensions, as well as resilience. The concept of *resilience*, as applied by diverse FLWS actors, remains ambiguous. Evidence shows that technical innovations to increase productivity and adapt to climate change in FLWS can ^{xxxii}increase women's empowerment. However, these have met with low adoption by women compared to men, mainly because the technologies are introduced without the complementary innovations also needed to address the social and institutional barriers that women face.^{xxxiii}

In response, the GENDER Impact Platform, HER+, SAPLING and other gender research in CGIAR have worked extensively on developing methods and metrics for measuring women's empowerment in FLWS. They have studied the relationship between empowerment and other FLWS outcomes, and piloted bundled social and technical innovations that support the empowerment of women in FLWS.^{xxxiv} HER+ developed an evidence map^{xxxv} of the impacts of STIBs on women's empowerment in FLWS; an interactive map and dashboard^{xxxvi} with data, tools and 1,865 socioeconomic datasets that facilitate bundling; and a framework^{xxxvii} to identify, prioritize and co-design STIBs. It has facilitated learning labs (multi-stakeholder platforms to address complex challenges with integrated solutions)^{xxxviii} for STIBs through inclusive, participatory,^{xxxix} context-specific^{xl} and demand-driven processes. Results show higher productivity,^{xli} food security and resilience capacity among women and men STIB users than among non-users.

This sub-AoW addresses the overarching research question:

Which integrated, scalable and cost-effective solutions can advance women's empowerment and resilience in FLWS, and how can they be scaled?

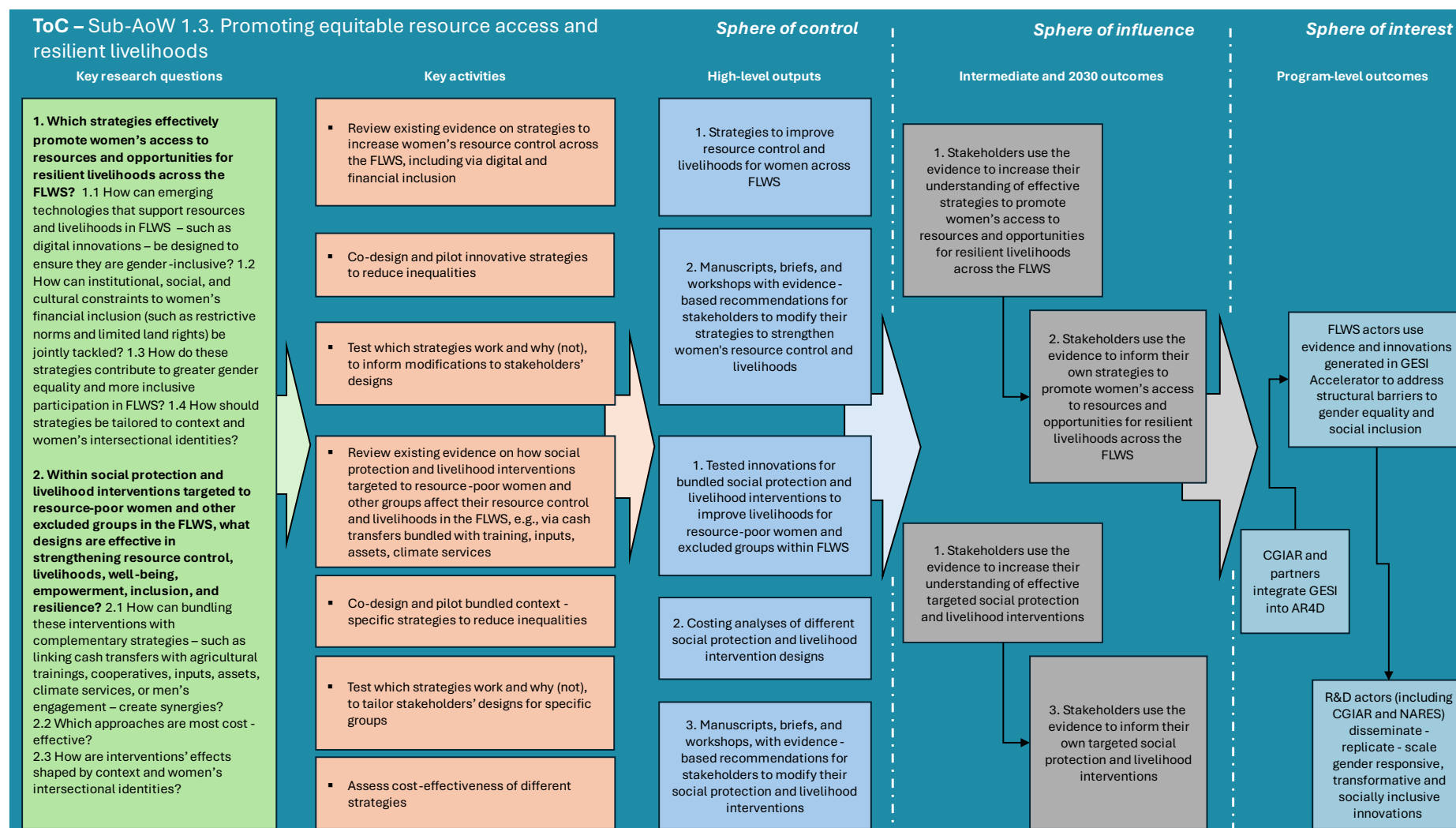
Specific questions include:

1. How can insider (*emic*) understandings of empowerment shape the co-design, adaptation, and adoption of bundled innovations that can be scaled in FLWS? What is the relationship between women's empowerment, adaptive capacity to climate shocks, and resilience in the face of economic, environmental, conflict and health stressors?
2. Which metrics can help to meaningfully monitor the outcomes of bundled interventions on women's empowerment and resilience?
3. Which are the most effective ways (approaches, processes and partnerships) for scaling integrated solutions?

The sub-AoW addresses these questions with impact assessments and evaluations across contexts. Mixed-method, longitudinal studies in long-term learning labs reveal pathways toward empowerment and resilience. Evidence syntheses and case studies, quasi-experimental research, and cross-regional analyses shed light on what works — why, where, for whom, and how to strengthen women's empowerment and resilience. A large and rapidly growing dataset collected using the WEAI and its derivatives — as well as other measures of empowerment, combined with other FLWS data (some spatially explicit, big data) — allows for an analysis of the relationship between empowerment and other FLWS outcomes.

This sub-AoW collaborates with other AoW1 sub-AoW to test integrated solutions in different contexts, and track outcomes in existing and new STIB learning labs with select Science Programs. It aims to initiate one longitudinal study and one long-term learning lab in each of the climate change–agriculture–gender hotspots identified under the GENDER Impact Platform per region.^{xlii} It also engages actively with Small Island Nations of the Pacific — the region most vulnerable to climate change — which have high levels of malnourishment, gender inequality and little data on GESI. It also develops strategies to scale solutions and pilot them beyond Science Programs and CGIAR.

6.2.3 Sub AoW 1.3 Promoting equitable resource access and resilient livelihoods



Inequitable access to resources^{xliii} constrains full participation in FLWS, reinforcing inequalities and undermining resilience. For women across FLWS, resource constraints restrict livelihood opportunities, productivity and investments. Unique structural inequities are faced by resource-poor women and other socially excluded groups — including youth, IP&LC, and people living in fragile contexts. Addressing these constraints will accelerate poverty reduction; improvements to nutrition, health, well-being and economic empowerment; and adaptation to climate change and other compounding risks.

Evidence-based solutions are needed that address gender-based and other disparities in access to finance, productive assets, natural resources, information, services, and agricultural and other technologies. Approaches must strengthen women's resources and livelihoods across FLWS, while also harnessing social protection (and related) approaches that address resource-poor women's and other excluded groups' unique constraints.

HER+, the GENDER Impact Platform, other Initiatives and bilateral work have shown that when women control^{xliv} resources and their livelihoods,^{xlv} this can drive gender equality and FLWS participation. Key questions remain around whether emerging technologies that strengthen resources and livelihoods in FLWS — such as digital solutions^{xlvi} — are gender-inclusive.^{xlvii} Women's financial inclusion is still a key domain of inequitable access.^{xlviii} HER+ and partners have demonstrated that social protection^{xlix} and livelihood interventions^l targeting resource-poor women in FLWS can promote/improve their asset ownership,^{li} livelihoods,^{lii} diets,^{liii} health,^{liv} sustained poverty reduction,^{lv} and climate resilience^{lvi} (mitigating harm from drought^{lvii} or flooding^{lviii}) and may increase their adoption of sustainable land management technologies.^{lix} This work also shows that context^{lx} and intersectionality^{lxi} shape effectiveness, and bundled interventions^{lxii} create synergies for gender equality^{lxiii} and resilience.^{lxiv}

Building on this foundation, this sub-AoW co-develops solutions with partners to address the following research questions:

1. Which strategies effectively promote women's access to resources and opportunities for resilient FLWS-based livelihoods? This includes strategies to make emerging digital and agricultural technologies gender-inclusive; and to foster financial inclusion and access to resources through women's self-help groups, including fisheries and forest-user groups.
2. What social protection and livelihood interventions are effective in strengthening resource control, livelihoods, well-being, empowerment, inclusion and resilience of resource-poor women, youth and social excluded groups in FLWS? This entails testing innovative bundled interventions (such as linking cash transfers with agricultural training, inputs, assets, climate services, men's engagement, and social inclusion interventions), and assessing their cost-effectiveness.

Recommendations draw on evidence from impact evaluations, case studies, formative research, cost analyses, and reviews. Outputs including manuscripts, briefs and workshops will engage stakeholders (governments, UN agencies, NGOs, financial institutions, donors, academics) on recommendations for future programming.

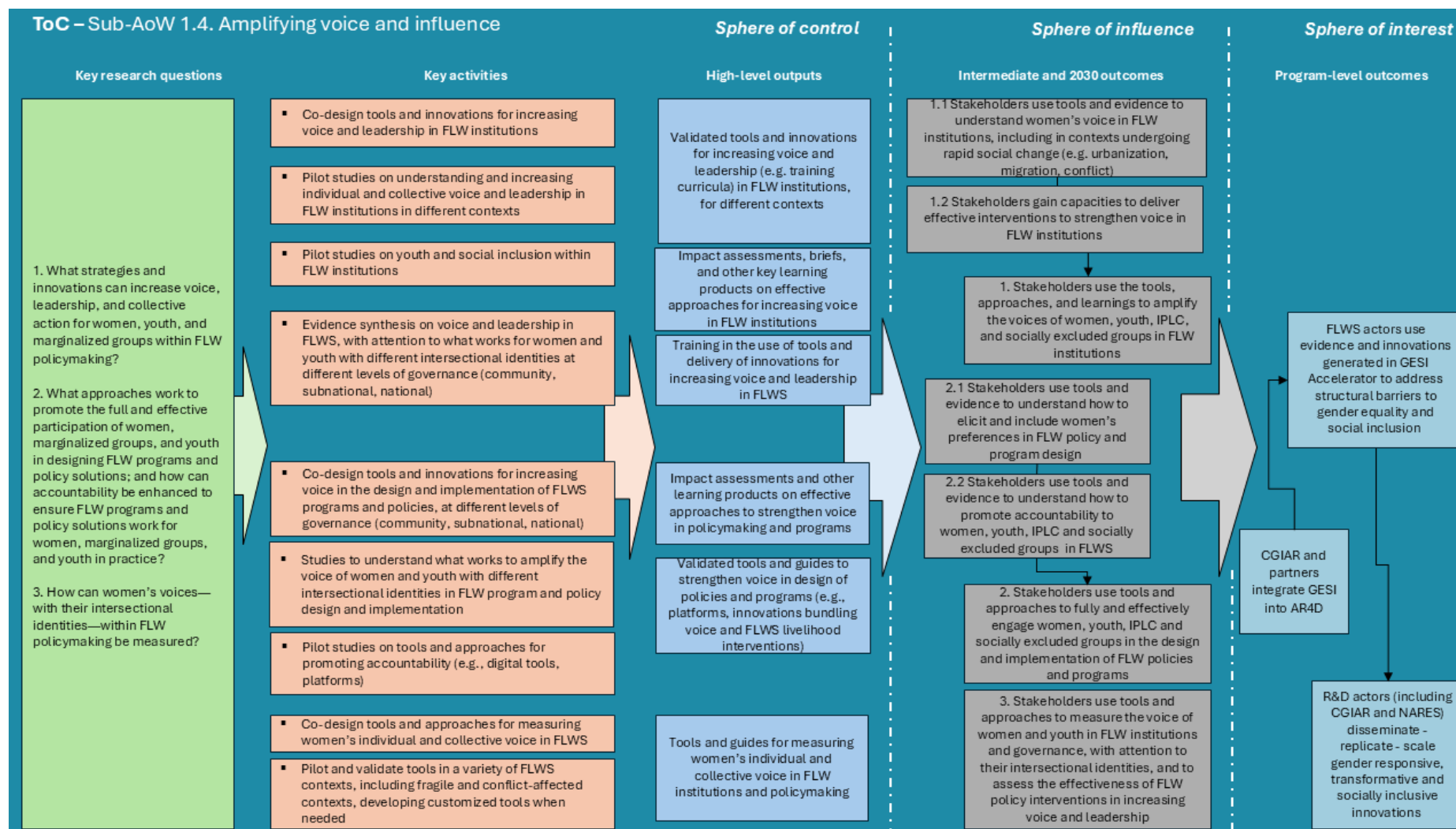
Policy reforms, program re-designs, and strategy revisions are key processes for impact. Since these processes vary a lot for each stakeholder, the sub-AoW intermediate outcome is instead that the stakeholders use this evidence to increase their understanding of effective strategies and interventions to strengthen women's resources and livelihoods. At least two steps are needed: (1) generate more evidence on the effectiveness of innovative strategies, co-developed with stakeholders to ensure relevance and ownership; and (2) help stakeholders to understand how the evidence implies modifying their own strategies and interventions.

Intermediate outcomes rely on several assumptions: (1) rigorous analysis will build credibility of research findings; (2) longstanding relationships and co-developed research will promote buy-in; (3) relevance of research for stakeholders' own programs will encourage uptake; and (4) demand for this evidence exists, because stakeholders recognize that their programs can

strengthen resources and livelihoods for women and socially excluded groups — advancing objectives of multiple SDGs.

2030 outcomes are that stakeholders use the evidence to inform their own strategies and interventions to strengthen women's resources and livelihoods. Moving from intermediate to 2030 outcomes assumes additionally that: (5) timelines, political economy, continuity of actors, and funding create opportunities for stakeholders to act on their increased understanding, including through policy reforms, program re-designs or strategy revisions.

6.2.4. Sub AoW 1.4. Amplifying voice and influence within FLW institutions



Amplifying the voices and leadership of women, youth, IP&LC, and socially excluded groups is key to catalyzing equitable solutions to the polycrisis facing FLWS.^{lxv, lxvi} Yet, women are only 26.9% of parliamentarians worldwide^{lxvii} and, in sub-Saharan Africa, are 10 percentage points less likely than men to speak at community meetings.^{lxviii} Women are less likely to be represented in farmer organizations and cooperatives,^{lxix} resource (e.g., forest, fisheries, water) user groups, and in most FLWS governance structures.^{lxx}

Few studies document how to increase women's voice and leadership in FLWS governance. Yet such research is key for ensuring that FLWS policies address women's needs, deliver improved and more equitably distributed FLWS benefits, and transform unequal power relations.

To contribute to filling these gaps, HER+ produced:

- Evidence syntheses on barriers and opportunities for enhancing women's voice in community FLWS governance.^{lxxi}
- Innovative approaches for increasing and assessing women's voice and leadership in public settings.^{lxxii}
- A conceptual framework^{lxxiii} and new measurement tools^{lxxiv} for assessing women's voice in FLWS governance (e.g., WEAGov).

This research found that women's advocacy training increased women's voice in Nigeria, and that increasing the share of women in forest-user committees in Malawi increased women's influence. Research by SAPLING found that women's leadership and agency in collectives was related to their ownership of assets and access to extension services, highlighting the need for integrated solutions.^{lxxv} Other foundational research has examined how shocks affect women's voice^{lxxvi} and other barriers to women's voice and influence.^{lxxvii}

This sub-AoW continues research on enhancing women's voice in key FLWS processes, including through skills training, institutional designs, and programs that boost women's participation, leadership and influence within agricultural livelihood interventions.

This sub-AoW addresses innovative research to address these research questions:

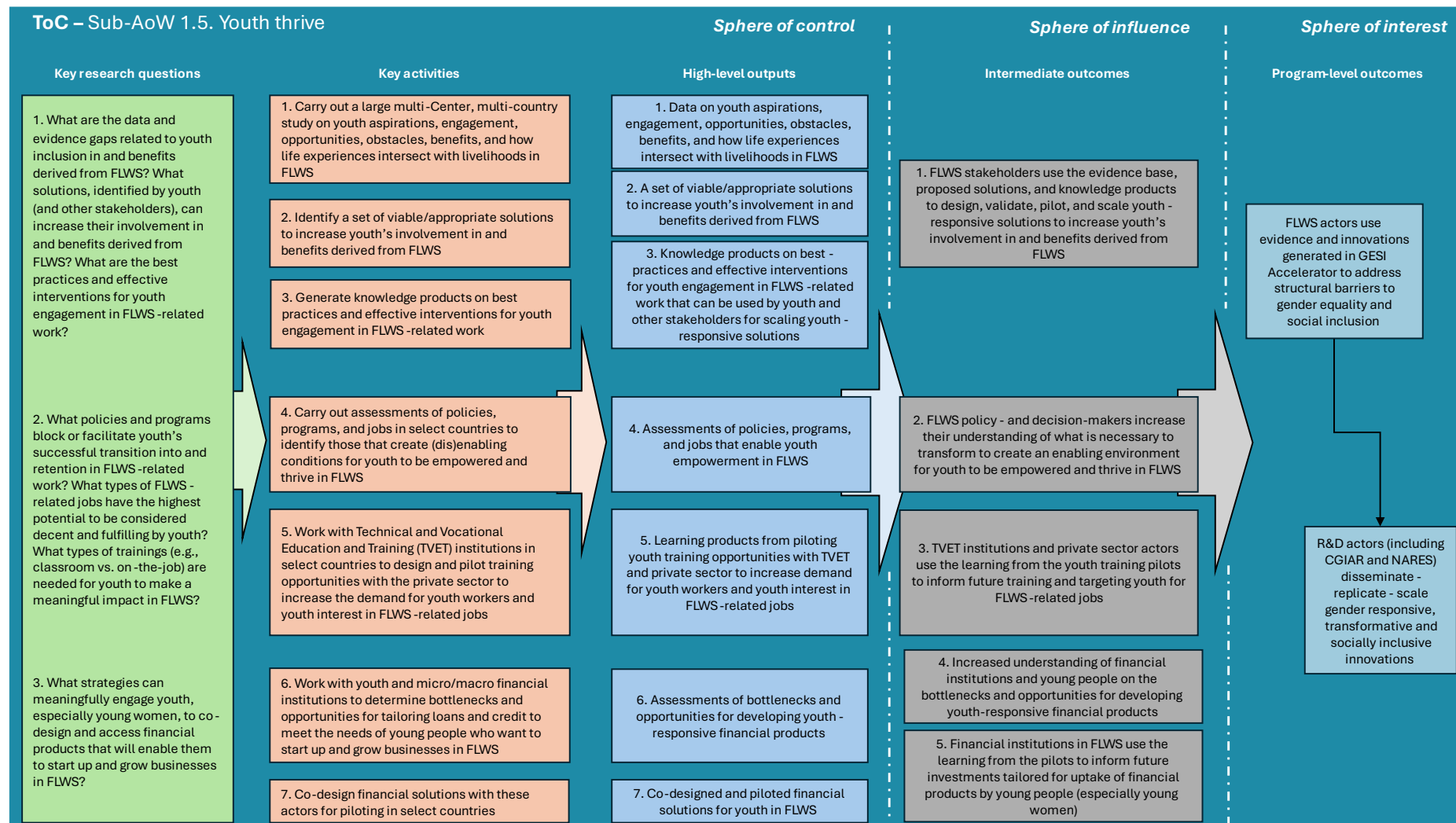
1. What co-designed strategies and innovations, developed in response to demand from government ministries and CSO partners, are effective for amplifying women's leadership, voice and influence in FLW institutions? This includes exploring solutions for women, youth, IP&LC and other socially excluded groups; engaging a broader range of FLWS actors to improve their receptivity to women's leadership; developing effective approaches for supporting women's (individual and collective) leadership in FLWS; and investigating approaches to protect women's voice and influence in settings experiencing high rates of climate-induced migration or conflict. This work is pursued with bilateral projects and with other Science Programs (e.g., Science Program on Food Frontiers and Security, for work in fragile settings, Science Program Multifunctional Landscapes for work on collective action, and Science Program Animal and Aquatic Food Systems for livestock and fish).
2. Which inclusive participatory approaches and technical solutions promote the full participation of women, youth, IP&LC and other groups in designing FLW policies, programs, and appropriate accountability mechanisms for FLW policy implementation? This work considers the role of digital tools and platforms in the design and implementation of equitable FLW policies, and in supporting deliberative processes and enabling environments for women's influence. Key goals are identifying effective ways to bundle approaches that can increase women's voice and influence, such as through STIBs and social protection. This work is pursued in partnership with other Science Programs (e.g., Science Program on Innovative Institutions and Policies, the Accelerator on Digital Transformation) that are testing equitable solutions to specific FLWS challenges.

3. How can the (individual and collective) leadership, voice, and influence of women, youth, IP&LC and socially excluded groups within FLW institutions and policymaking be measured? This sub-AoW improves measurement tools for women's leadership and collective agency in FLWS decision-making, and co-designs capacity-sharing innovations to support the use of these tools. There is strong demand from partners to extend these tools to the subnational and individual levels, incorporate other dimensions of marginalization, and develop versions that work for youth and in fragile settings.

High-level outputs in this sub-AoW include innovations such as platforms, training guides and implementation manuals for supporting the voice and leadership of various FLWS actors, MELIA studies to identify effective interventions for strengthening voice, policy briefs and journal articles to support evidence-based, inclusive policy processes, and measurement tools for assessing women's influence in FLWS governance. Intermediate outcomes include awareness and use of these co-designed tools and evidence by FLW ministries, NGOs, CSOs, and private-sector institutions.

Expected 2030 outcomes are that stakeholders who have been involved in the co-design of these innovations use the evidence and tools to support inclusive policy processes, policies and programs, and to assess the effectiveness of their approaches for enhancing gender equality and social inclusion in FLWS. Achieving these outcomes assumes that: (1) there is a will and commitment among stakeholders to actively partner in co-design processes and to invest in the solutions generated; (2) capacity sharing to support uptake is effective and fit-for-purpose; (3) women, youth, and socially excluded groups are interested in participating and influencing decision-making processes.

6.2.5. Sub AoW 1.5 Youth thrive



Feeding future generations will depend on a vibrant food system that requires engaging the youth today to achieve this goal. Youth are gradually exiting traditional agricultural livelihoods for other opportunities, leaving behind an aging agricultural workforce. Complex political and environmental crises impact young women and men across the world. Improving opportunities for these young people will give them a better future, while also improving food security, reducing poverty, and building environmental resilience. A just transformation can only be sustained if the challenges that young people face are addressed, and if youth have the chance to be active participants in transforming FLWS. Few current investments create solutions to address the interests of youth in FLWS. The ones that do exist lack strategic direction rooted in a strong evidence base. Most have focused on developing youth entrepreneurship skills,^{lxxviii} with much less effort put into conducting research to better understand the opportunities and barriers facing young people and how their social positions (based on gender, socioeconomic status, stage in life, education and more) shape their prospects and aspirations in FLWS.

Under the *Youth Thrive* sub-AoW, the Accelerator lays the groundwork for a strategic youth research agenda. CGIAR's research on youth is relatively limited to date, but includes, for example, multi-country studies on youth aspirations under agro-ecology, the SI MFS Initiative research on sheep fattening in Ethiopia, studies on youth engagement in the aquaculture sector in many African countries through the Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation (TAAT) project,^{lxxix} and the GENNOVATE project.^{lxxx} The GENDER Impact Platform's investment in developing a position paper on youth in AR4D is especially relevant to guide future research in this area. CGIAR's rich body of research on gender in FLWS provides a solid foundation for addressing how age intersects with important social identities — such as gender, socioeconomic status, geography and marital status — to shape agricultural development opportunities and outcomes.

This sub-AoW addresses the following research questions:

- 1) What are the data and evidence gaps related to youth inclusion in and benefits derived from FLWS? What solutions, identified by youth (and other stakeholders), can increase their involvement in and benefits derived from FLWS? What are the best practices and effective interventions for youth engagement in and empowerment through FLWS-related work?
- 2) What policies and programs block or facilitate youth's successful transition into and retention in FLWS-related work? What types of FLWS-related jobs have the highest potential to be considered decent and fulfilling by youth? What types of training (e.g., classroom vs. on-the-job) are needed for youth to make a meaningful impact in FLWS?
- 3) What strategies can meaningfully engage youth, especially young women, to co-design and access financial products that will enable them to start and grow businesses in FLWS?

The high-level outputs under this sub-AoW include the generation of data on youth aspirations, engagement, opportunities, obstacles, benefits, and how life experiences intersect with livelihoods in FLWS. This is via a large, multi-Center, multi-country study, conducted in collaboration with Science Programs using a shared methodology. The study will consult youth and other stakeholders across different contexts about appropriate solutions to increase youth involvement in and benefits derived from FLWS. Another output is knowledge products on best practices and effective interventions for youth engagement in and empowerment through FLWS-related work, that youth and other stakeholders can consult when scaling youth-responsive solutions. The Accelerator will assess policies, programs and jobs in selected countries to identify those that create (dis)enabling conditions for youth to be empowered by and thrive in FLWS.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions in low- and middle-income countries hold great potential for equipping youth with knowledge and skills required

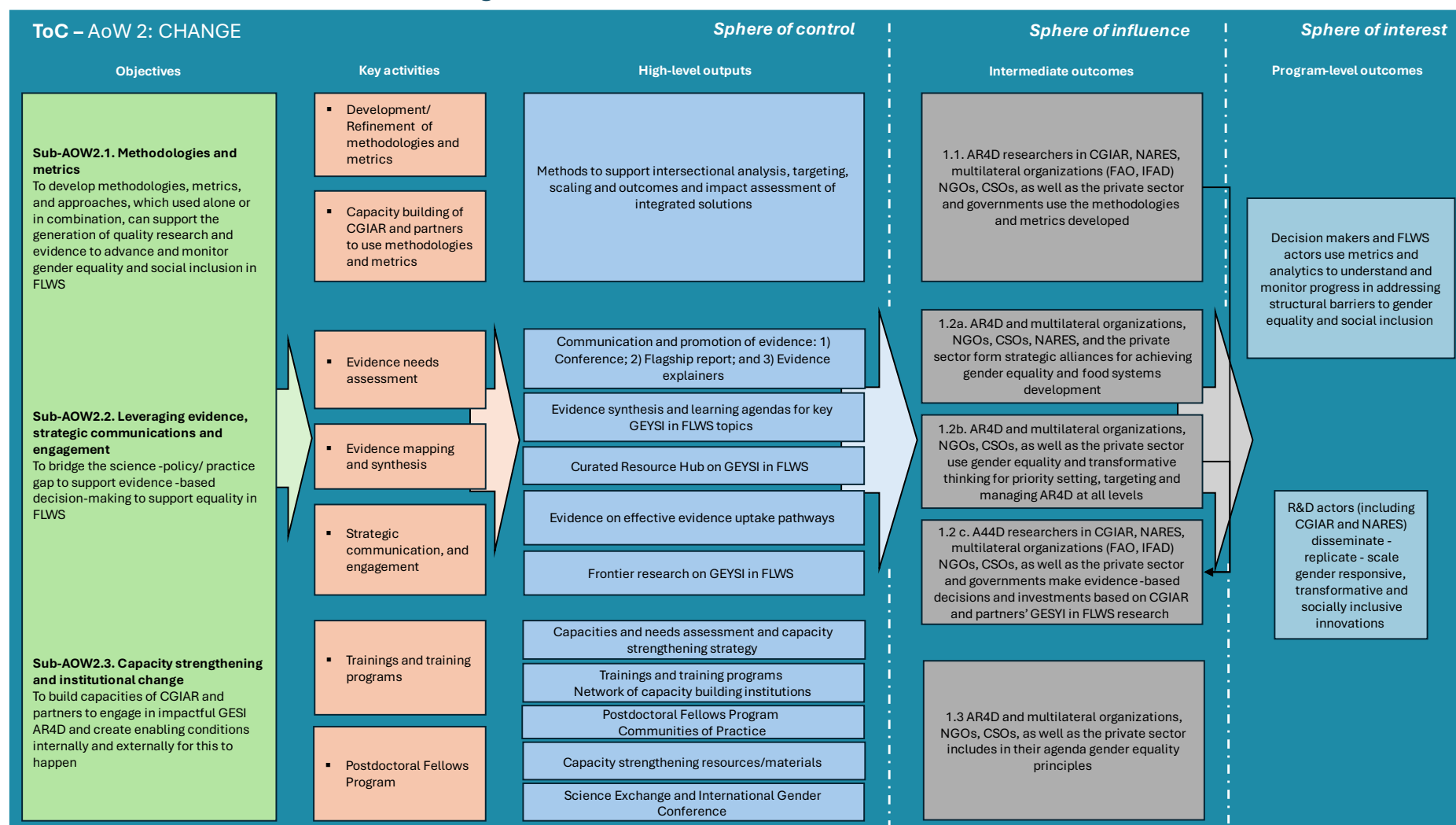
by the private (and public) sector. The Accelerator will explore this potential in selected countries, and work with TVET institutions to design and pilot classroom-based and on-the-job training opportunities with the private sector to increase the demand for youth workers and increase youth interest in FLWS-related jobs. Lastly, the Accelerator will work with youth and micro/macro financial institutions to determine bottlenecks and opportunities for tailoring loans and credit to meet the needs of young people (especially young women) who want to start and grow businesses related to FLWS. Through this process, the Accelerator will co-design financial solutions with these actors for piloting in selected countries.

All of these outputs are pursued in partnership with global FLWS actors such as IFAD, FAO, AfDB, ADB, World Food Forum, and the Institute of Development Studies. The team also partners with young people in FLWS and their associations (e.g., Young Professionals for Agricultural Development), and national and local youth associations. CGIAR's established partnerships with these actors, its global footprint, and track record in research on inclusion and on creating a conducive research environment will allow rapid progress in this area.

Through these partnerships, the Accelerator will achieve the following intermediate outcomes: (i) FLWS stakeholders use the evidence base, proposed solutions and knowledge products to design, validate, pilot and scale youth-responsive solutions to increase youth's involvement in and benefits derived from FLWS; (ii) FLWS policymakers and decision-makers have a better understanding of what is necessary to transform to create an enabling environment for youth to be empowered by and thrive in FLWS; (iii) TVET institutions and private-sector actors use the lessons from youth training pilot programs to inform future training and targeting of youth for FLWS-related jobs; (iv) researchers and partners have increased understanding of financial institutions and the bottlenecks and opportunities for developing youth-responsive financial products; and (v) financial institutions in FLWS use lessons from the pilots to inform future investments tailored for uptake of financial products by young people (especially young women).

The innovative sub-AoW of *Youth Thrive* looks to become the leader in research on youth by facilitating the co-design of evidence-based, youth-responsive solutions in FLWS with partners.

6.3. Area of Work 2: Accelerating CHANGE



The AoW *Accelerating Change* builds on CGIAR's gender and youth work of past decades: the demand created, and the strong partnerships formed to deliver, as a system, on gender equality and social inclusion. Its premise is the principle that to catalyze change requires all people to be equipped with the right evidence, tools and methods required to optimize programs for increased access to, and adoption of, resilient and equitable innovations, policies and capacity sharing.

In other words, *Accelerating Change* focuses on creating conducive conditions for rigorous, solution-oriented GESI research by engaging with gender researchers, CGIAR and FLWS actors, and amplifying the influence and use of this research among relevant end users to contribute to wide-scale impact on gender equality, social inclusion and meaningful opportunities for youth in FLWS. Building on the work of the GENDER Impact Platform, it seeks to:

- Elevate CGIAR's gender-in-FLWS research agenda and its transformative potential.
- Facilitate synergies among gender researchers and other scientists, in CGIAR and beyond.
- Develop methods, metrics and analytics for gender and inclusion in FLWS.
- Strengthen capacities for equitable and inclusive research.
- Improve conditions for such research and its uptake in an evolving global FLWS.
- Engage in strategic multi-level policy discussion within FLWS.

Since its inception, the GENDER Impact Platform has played a pivotal role in guiding the CGIAR system in establishing and reporting on gender and inclusion goals, and mechanisms for achieving them. This sub-AoW continues this effort.

This work has three interlinked sub-AoWs:

1. Methods and metrics.
2. Leveraging evidence, strategic communications and engagement.
3. Capacity strengthening and institutional change.

The cutting-edge methods, metrics and tools developed by the Accelerator are used by CGIAR and partners to generate high-quality evidence on gender, inclusion, and opportunities for youth in FLWS. This is then tailored to policymakers, practitioners, donors NARS partners, and other researchers, and shared with them in a targeted manner so they can use these approaches and evidence to set research and investment priorities as they work to support equitable and inclusive growth and development. These approaches and evidence are reinforced with capacity sharing to underpin conducive conditions for gender and inclusion research on FLWS. This leads to a system-wide change in which impactful gender-responsive AR4D becomes routine within CGIAR and beyond.

6.3.1 Sub AoW 2.1 Methods and metrics

Conceptual clarity and robust methods generate quality gender research by adhering to four key attributes: relevance, scientific credibility, legitimacy and effectiveness. Shared methods and metrics enable tracking progress toward GESI and facilitate the large-scale generation of data for evidence-based national and global decision-making. The Accelerator supports CGIAR researchers and partners to develop this clarity, inspire critical thinking on gender in FLWS research, and provide robust and innovative methods for quality research and outcomes on gender equality and inclusion.

Integral to this is developing the gender targets and indicators that Science Programs, Accelerators and Centers will deliver by making the metrics and tools available, and having

the resources and support mechanisms in place. *Accelerating change*'s ambition is as a global leader in this area of indicators and metrics, because this has been a much-neglected area of work and can leapfrog big programs to document and show substantial impact (see also [section 8.2](#)).

Building on the work of the GENDER Impact Platform — including the metrics developed to track the Gender Equality, Youth and Social Inclusion Impact Area — this sub-AoW advances both innovative and established qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods and metrics to accelerate change in FLWS policies and programs. The methods cut across thematic areas, Science Programs and projects. Developing and promoting collective assessments, best practices, methods and standards for gender research reduces transaction costs, increases the reach of the methods, and plays to CGIAR's strength in generating global public goods that respond to the demands and needs of multiple countries and contexts. This sub-AoW continues to use the GENDER Impact Platform Resource Hub as a space for sharing tools and methods, , so that researchers can build on the body of work that CGIAR researchers and partners have developed.

Work also continues to scale women's empowerment indicators that are methodologically sound and rigorously validated, including the WEAI suite of quantitative and qualitative tools and methods. Since its launch in 2012, WEAI has been taken up by research Initiative s across CGIAR and its partners and applied in 62 countries.^{lxxxix} This has generated comparative, policy-relevant evidence on the relationship between women's empowerment and other development outcomes, as well as the programs and approaches that facilitate women's empowerment. Further scaling requires continued investment in supportive services to ensure that researchers have the capacity to collect, analyze and communicate these kinds of WEAI results. They also need resources to apply WEAI tools to research areas that have not yet applied women's empowerment measures.

The overarching research question addressed by this sub-AoW is:

Which methods, metrics and approaches, and in what combinations, can support the generation of quality research and evidence to advance and monitor impacts on gender equality, youth and social inclusion in FLWS?

Gender research has historically produced a wealth of data and approaches, but developing meaningful *and* practical measurements has been a challenge. Analyses often miss context-specific social processes and intangible impacts. The sub-AoW develops and refines frameworks, methods and tools for understanding how gender intersects with age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity and caste (and so on) to shape people's experiences and opportunities. This enables CGIAR and partners to target investments where they are most needed and to understand the needs and demand for science and agricultural innovations. This sub-AoW also fosters critical reflection on knowledge production and agency in the research process to enable co-design, citizen science and transdisciplinary approaches; and to place those most directly affected by the deep-rooted problems afflicting FLWS at the center of the research process.

New methods and metrics will include:

- Frameworks and implementation to guide CGIAR about how to impact gender equality, youth and social inclusion.
- Indicators to guide impact assessments.
- A case for collecting gender-disaggregated data as a basis for impact assessments.
- Improved methods for working with youth in FLWS.
- Advances in conceptualizing and measuring resilience as relevant for GESI.
- Integrated measures to understand the outcomes of bundled interventions on gender equality, inclusion and other outcomes in FLWS.

Methodological progress on gender-responsive scaling and on scaling GESI innovations continues, building on CGIAR's efforts in this area. The Science Programs, Accelerators, Centers and partners will be primary boundary partners to pilot, adapt, refine and adopt the methods and metrics.

6.3.2 Sub AoW 2.2: Leveraging evidence, strategic communication and engagement to inform policy and implementation

Catalyzing a transformation towards FLWS that are sustainable, equitable, climate resilient, nutritious and productive requires evidence-based research, development and policy options. Investment decisions and policies are often poorly grounded in evidence, and while data and evidence generated over the years have filled some knowledge gaps, many remain. Research on gender in FLWS has provided many threads of evidence, but a concerted effort is needed to weave them together and develop a coherent body of evidence to influence policy and practice.

This sub-AoW plays a vital role in building an enabling external environment for GESI research within FLWS. By harnessing high-level support, fostering strategic partnerships, and influencing global discourse through effective communication and engagement, the sub-AoW builds and sustains global coalitions and networks. These efforts can accelerate the impact of GESI initiatives on a broader scale. The Accelerator also influences the global discourse on GESI through informing and training journalists about CG gender research and by engaging in global processes and coalitions to accelerate impacts in FLWS.

The sub-AoW builds on the GENDER Impact Platform's achievements of making CGIAR the go-to source for high-quality knowledge on equitable and sustainable FLWS. Evidence synthesis in this sub-AoW prioritizes gender equality, youth and social inclusion research emerging from Initiatives, bilaterals, Science Programs, Accelerators and other global research. The sub-AoW develops mechanisms to continuously assess and respond to demand for evidence and innovations from Science Programs, Centers and partners (global and regional organizations, NARES, CSOs and NGOs).

The body of evidence generated continues to be curated and shared through the Resource Hub created by the GENDER Impact Platform.^{lxxxii} Evidence is shared through key convenings, such as the GENDER Science Exchanges and the globally recognized international GENDER Conference — which has become a signature biannual event that spotlights gender in FLWS research of CGIAR and partners on the global stage and consolidates the network of gender in FLWS researchers. Moreover, a new periodic flagship report on key gender and inclusion themes related to FLWS and continued engagement in regional and international processes (e.g., Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme, UN Climate Change, UN Convention on Biological Diversity, Committee on World Food Security, Committee on the Status of Women) mobilize rigorous evidence to influence discourse and policies.

This sub-AoW identifies key evidence gaps to help prioritize research and evidence generation by co-creating Learning Agendas with partners on critical gender-in-FLWS themes, building on the GENDER Impact Platform's experience on gender and climate-smart agriculture (CSA).

Based on a sound understanding of the FLWS policy arenas, policy windows, and policymakers' evidence needs and engagement opportunities, the sub-AoW tests different pathways for context-specific evidence uptake, and tracks policymakers' use of evidence and outcomes in select countries. It identifies strategic alliances on key topics to enable broad and rapid change.

The sub-AoW communicates new evidence in a strategic manner to influence agriculture and natural resource management R4D policy and investments, that will define pathways for equitable FLWS transformations. Contributing to this effort are Evidence Explainers,

infographics, blogs and other products to communicate key evidence and opportunities for interventions and investments in an accessible manner to a wide audience.

This sub-AoW also identifies and initiates research in frontier areas based on partners' demands, allowing GESI science to move beyond what might fit squarely in a bilateral project or Science Program. For example, while great leaps have been made in big data, researchers have not generally used geospatial methods — besides the hotspot mapping^{lxxxiii} — effectively in GESI research and data visualization. Significant investments have been made in foresight exercises on food systems, but with little integration of gender or social dimensions, which often tend to be qualitative. Digital innovations hold great promise, but making artificial intelligence gender-responsive could revolutionize the way these innovations are used. Other examples include:

- Gender dimensions of precarity and informality (contractual work) in FLWS.
- Urbanization impacts on agricultural land and gendered livelihoods, particularly on members of landless households.
- Gendered impacts of land-use change on traditional knowledge systems.
- Post-human lens application to the study of FLWS.^{lxxxiv}
- The intersection of disabilities with GESI in FLWS systems.
- Engagement of primary and secondary schools to socialize positive norms in FLWS for the next generations.

6.3.3. Sub AoW 2.3: Capacity strengthening and institutional change

A core way of catalyzing change through the Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator is to strengthen the capacities of FLWS stakeholders to address gender and inclusion in their own work. GESI R4D knowledge and capacities differ across Centers; and among NARES, CSOs, development investors, influencers, policymakers, communities, and the private sector. The Accelerator is familiar with and responsive to their diverse needs.

Capacity sharing will transform FLWS by offering different options for capacity development designed for targeted groups of stakeholders, and innovative pathways for last-mile delivery of science and innovations with a GESI perspective. This includes and is outlined in the Capacity Sharing section ([section 9](#)): (i) training in and development of related resources, and (ii) knowledge sharing for social learning.

The sub-AoW supports the Science Programs and Centers in how to use the methods and metrics developed through the Accelerator, and acquiring capacities to deliver GESI research. Tailored capacity-strengthening support on gender is provided to key communities and roles within CGIAR, including MELIA specialists, communication officers, and senior leaders. As in previous years, the GENDER Conference also provides a privileged space for capacity strengthening through dedicated sessions and knowledge exchanges. In response to demand from NARES partners for strengthening gender integration in their research areas, this sub-AoW works with regional networks of NARES organized around FLWS themes (e.g., rice, bean, breeding, plant pathology networks) to support capacity strengthening on gender and social inclusion, and collective research on gender in relevant FLWS themes to foster 'learning by doing'.

This sub-AoW collaborates closely with the Capacity-Sharing Accelerator to build synergies, capitalize on best practices, and continue to develop the gender in FLWS training database initiated under the GENDER Impact Platform.

7. Boundaries and linkages with other components of the Portfolio

7.1. Boundaries with other components of the Portfolio

The Accelerator's core mission is to lead strategic and innovative research that advances gender equality, youth, and social inclusion **across the CGIAR Portfolio**. By definition, the Accelerator can only achieve this through close and sustained collaborating with **all** Science Programs, Accelerators, and **all** 14 CGIAR Centers.

In this collaboration, the Accelerator identifies research priorities and sets a strategic gender-in-FLWS research agenda to guide CGIAR's portfolio and accelerate its efforts towards the *Gender equality, youth and social inclusion* Impact Area. The Accelerator's role in research does not replace the research in Science Programs, other Accelerators and Centers. Instead, it strengthens the portfolio through innovative research on GESI that would not otherwise be done in the portfolio, and that is vital for catalyzing future research with Science Programs, other Accelerators and Centers. Examples include investments to develop guidelines for GTAs, or research on gendered time use across several commodities.

Working in collaboration with Science Programs, accelerators and Centers, the Accelerator identifies and co-develops solutions toward equality within FLWS research themes, based on the principles that:

- The research is relevant, rigorous and can inform significant segments of CGIAR and partners' portfolios.
- The research could not be done as effectively by another Science Program, Accelerator or Center; and avoids duplication.
- CGIAR has a track record in this area of research.
- The research fills critical knowledge gaps on co-creating and testing solutions, signaling demand, targeting, creating and improving metrics and methods, mapping and synthesizing evidence, and identifying knowledge gaps.

As the Science Programs and other Accelerators develop individual pieces of work on youth and gender, this Accelerator acts as a global clearinghouse for GESI resources in FLWS. It curates outputs, evidence, methods and metrics by maintaining an up-to-date Resource Hub to synthesize knowledge on GESI for global FLWS. The Accelerator influences discourse on GESI through gender-responsive communications and by building global coalitions to accelerate impacts in FLWS.

The Accelerator builds conducive conditions for GESI in FLWS research by building an enabling environment in CGIAR by, inter alia:

- Advising senior management on gender equality, youth and social inclusion in FLWS in CGIAR, and institutional conditions to enable this research.
- Facilitating an ambitious and shared vision and agenda on GESI in FLWS research in CGIAR.
- Ensuring coherence in gender equality, youth, and social inclusion research across the CGIAR Portfolio.
- Providing a collaborative space on GESI across Science Programs, Accelerators and Centers.

This enabling environment strengthens cohesion, networking, social learning and capacity among the CGIAR gender and youth research community. This environment is created through communities of practice and knowledge sharing, and with other CGIAR researchers and partners within the GESI space. This collaboration will ultimately advocate for incentives and accountability measures to make GESI a part of CGIAR's 'DNA'.

7.2. Linkages across the Portfolio and with external stakeholders

The Accelerator will co-create and use synergies with the Science Programs and Accelerators to optimize outcomes for CGIAR. This will dramatically change gender inequities, youth opportunities and social inclusion within FLWS.

The Accelerator has several clear entry points for collaboration:

- 1) Thematically aligning research questions and agendas.
- 2) Pushing the ambition of the Science Programs based on the research and knowledge of the Accelerator.
- 3) Providing capacity building that enables CG researchers to integrate gender into impact assessments and into research, to close gender gaps in FLWS generally.
- 4) Developing and agreeing on a set of baseline indicators to inform CGIAR.
- 5) Aligning and sharing outputs and outcomes.
- 6) Starting a program to share post-doctoral researchers between the Accelerator and the Science Programs.
- 7) Developing a competitive grant program with co-funding between the Accelerator and the Science Programs (possibly on research topics with the post-docs).
- 8) Supporting networks of NARS partners working with Science Programs to integrate gender in their thematic research areas.
- 9) Assessing and supporting the Science Programs and working with them to enhance their gender and youth work to help achieve the Science Programs' overall aims.

More importantly, to achieve impact and accelerate CGIAR's work on inequities, the Accelerator will use the use case-based prioritization mentioned in Section 3 to identify priority research areas and to develop a portfolio of research to contribute collectively to the gender equality, youth and social inclusion Impact Area.

Simultaneously, the Science Programs and Accelerators must develop clear gender implementation strategies, building on the gender and social inclusion section (see Section 11) of their proposals within their first six months of operation. Each Science Program must also design a work plan and commit resources to address gender intentionally in their research and delivery. The Accelerator will continue to work with each Center's gender teams, support the creation of a critical mass of researchers with gender capacities, and build on work with the established inter-Center network of Gender Research Coordinators.

Indicative areas of work that have been co-identified with Science Programs and Accelerators are mentioned below.

Climate Action (described in [Section 11](#))

Multifunctional Landscapes

The collaboration consists of research on:

- How to support and measure collective agency in the context of common property resources.
- How to change norms to accelerate equality and environmental outcomes.
- Youth aspirations, mobilities and livelihoods in the "living labs" of multifunctional landscapes.

The research is rooted in the principles of co-design and inclusive participation, which are central to both the Science Program and Accelerator. Co-investing in this research in the Science Program locations allows for larger, multi-location studies that can generate a broader and more impactful evidence base that will support the aims of both Science Program and

Accelerator. This will be done through the Science Program's AoW dedicated to "Fairness, gender equality, inclusion and opportunities for youth."

Policies

The Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator plans two areas of collaboration with Policies Science Program. First, we will coordinate to accelerate uptake of the Women's Empowerment Metric for National Statistical Systems (WEMNS), a survey tool to measure women's empowerment in nationally representative samples. This strengthens gender analysis in national statistical offices; informs how women's empowerment shapes national strategies (e.g., on agricultural transformation); and increases the availability of representative, comparable cross-country data on women's empowerment.

Second, scientists from both teams will coordinate to identify opportunities to strengthen and enrich gender and inclusion analysis in key areas of the policies Science Program research, including foresight modeling, market-led transformation, social protection, nexus policy gains, and political economy and governance. The Accelerator shares knowledge across all of these topics and anticipates collaboration and joint funding on selected topics.

Diets and Nutrition

The collaborative effort aims to improve access to safe, affordable, and nutritious diets for all, including women, youth and IP&LC seeking their own empowerment. By integrating GTAs, the Science Program could promote equitable food distribution within households and encourage diverse, healthy food choices for all. The collaboration improves food environments and market systems to ensure the availability and affordability of nutrient-rich foods, including native crops and local varieties.

Because the Science Program also works on social-protection mechanisms and community engagement, gender collaboration adds to that supportive environment. Such a holistic approach ensures that interventions are inclusive and effective, addressing the specific needs of diverse social groups and contributing to sustainable nutrition outcomes. Another potential opportunity is to support women's entrepreneurship in the food sector and understanding how to improve their decision-making about diets and nutrition.

Breeding for Tomorrow

The Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator is partnering with this Science Program, focusing on its gender strategy through the Breeding for Tomorrow's Science Program's 'Market Intelligence' and 'Accelerated Delivery' AoWs. This collaboration supports the Science Program in four ways: defining global indicators to evaluate the impact of gender-intentional varieties, using gender analysis to guide breeding priorities, analyzing institutional innovations for promoting gender analysis, and fostering transdisciplinary research to direct product development. Additionally, strategies will be piloted to encourage the participation of women and youth in seed production and enterprise. Co-funding gender specialists ensures alignment between areas of work in the Breeding for Tomorrow Science Program, and the Accelerator's *Accelerating Solutions* and *Accelerating Change* AoWs.

Sustainable Animal and Aquatic Foods Science

The Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator collaborates with the Sustainable Animal and Aquatic Foods Science (SAAFS) Program through its key AoW: Gender, Youth and Social Inclusion (GYSI). GYSI leads the strategic gender and social research of SAAFS and coordinates the integration of gender and social analysis across the other AoWs. GYSI strategic research focuses on increasing the empowerment of women, youth and groups seeking empowerment in animal and aquatic systems, for better livelihoods, particularly in fragile contexts. It conducts diagnostic research, develops and tests equity interventions on the ground, and contributes to creating packages of SAAFS technical and institutional innovations.

To conduct such research, GYSI will develop appropriate methods and tools that will be co-created and feed into the Accelerator. GYSI coordinates the integration of social and gender analysis across its AoWs: productivity plus resilient and low-emissions production systems, the ‘One Health’ approach^{lxxxv}, markets system and policy, and digital. The strategic and integrated work are interlocked in a continuous exchange of learning and innovations. Such learning and innovations on Animal and Aquatic Foods Science will accordingly feed into and learn from the Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator, given the mutually aligned work on equitable norms, empowerment, resources and livelihoods, and youth.

Scaling for Impact

The Scaling Science Program and the Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator have close ties in a shared agenda of ensuring a better understanding of the roles and impacts of gender and youth in the adoption and scaling of innovations. Both have also invested in research on responsible scaling methods — the implementation of which requires further refinement. The shared agenda of the Scaling Science Program and the Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator supports the CGIAR Strategy by strengthening community engagement and awareness through participatory approaches. These transformative approaches also address normative barriers and opportunities for innovation, as well as the adoption and dis-adoption of those innovations.

Food Frontiers and Security

The Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator and Food Frontiers and Security recognize a shared agenda to improve wellbeing for women, youth and socially excluded groups in fragile and conflict-affected areas of FLWS. We anticipate collaboration and co-design and testing of solutions that address socially restrictive gender norms, low empowerment, lack of access to resources, and limited voice and leadership. We will analyze barriers to gender equality, social inclusion, and youth engagement in fragile and conflict-affected settings; co-develop training manuals and tools to support women’s empowerment; and evaluate programs and policies that support women’s livelihood opportunities and voice in their communities.

8. Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning, and Impact Assessment (MELIA)

Detailed Accelerator MELIA plans will be developed during the Inception Phase, once system-level MELIA principles and indicators are further advanced — but are briefly outlined in this section.

8.1. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL)

The Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator is committed to strengthening CGIAR’s capacity to reach its outcomes and results and to measure the impact of projects and programs. Results-based management principles will be used to plan, monitor and evaluate the Accelerator investments to focus on achieving evidence-based AR4D results.

A results framework will be developed based on the Accelerator’s TOC, defining results (outputs, outcomes and impact), indicators, baselines, targets and means of verification. The AoWs, each with a MEL plan, will be guided by and aligned with the Accelerator results framework. The indicators of the Accelerator results will be formulated based on the specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound (“SMART”) principles. Results will be measured by quantitative and qualitative indicators, using various methods including partner surveys and in-depth document reviews.

Program-specific data (collected for results reporting) will demonstrate the extent to which GESI and intersectional approaches have been integrated into developing solutions for resilient and sustainable FLWS.

The MEL system of the Accelerator will be executed through three components:

1. **Joint annual programmatic reviews:** Activities and outputs will be monitored and recorded annually on a web-based platform. The Accelerator will embrace continuous critical reflection; review using the TOC; and use lessons learned for priority re-setting, annual planning and as input to reports. Joint annual reviews will involve implementation actors and the Accelerator leadership team, to recommend any required course corrections and re-prioritization.
2. **Mid-term study:** A mid-term study will be conducted in the third year to evaluate the progress toward outcomes. Adjustments for improvement will be made to the TOC and Accelerator implementation.
3. **Endline study:** An endline study will be conducted in the last three months of the Accelerator to determine the progress made in achieving program-specific outcomes and end-of-Accelerator outcomes. The endline evaluation will be used to judge the performance of the Accelerator against outcome indicators and targets.

The Accelerator will rely on two full-time MEL officers (senior and junior), a research fellow and the community of practice formed by the MEL officers from the participating Centers and target countries, especially to mainstream best practices across the bilateral projects mapped to this Accelerator.

8.2. Impact Assessment (IA)

The GESI IA strategy aims to put in place actions that:

- Deepen CGIAR researchers' understanding of women's, youth's and socially excluded groups' challenges in FLWS, accessing a robust knowledge base and the methods to address gaps.
- Foster collaborative research among experts in gender, IA, and other relevant fields to build capacity, exchange knowledge, and promote transdisciplinary approaches to address complex challenges related to gender and social inclusion.
- Enable CGIAR researchers to generate evidence that addresses knowledge gaps and informs effective solutions for gender equality, youth empowerment, and social inclusion.
- Promote the use of causal IAs and mixed-methods research designs, recognizing the complementary of quantitative and qualitative methods in addressing diverse research questions.
- Translate research into actionable knowledge for diverse stakeholders, including researchers, founders, implementers and policymakers.

Achieving this requires having a clear understanding of what the objectives of an IA are, and the strengths and limitations of different IA methods. The IA strategy will foster causal impact assessments, advocating for gold-standard experimental methods such as randomized controlled trials. While quasi-experimental methods can be employed based on specific research questions, their use must be grounded in validated assumptions, with minimal reliance on propensity score matching.

Finally, it is essential to understand the complementary roles of IA and MEL. Robust MEL systems are crucial for tracking progress on outputs, which inform and complement the results from IAs.

9. Capacity sharing

9.1. Training and development of resources

The Accelerator will strengthen capacity by leveraging and informing, rather than replicating the current capacity-strengthening activities of the Centers and Science Programs. The focus is on filling major gaps; and understanding key GESI concepts, TOCs, methods, and areas of relevance to the Science Programs. The Accelerator will assess the needs of gender researchers and non-specialists with a capacity and needs assessment (CNA), building on the GENDER Impact Platform's 2021 capacity and needs assessment^{lxxxvi} that informed the Platform's capacity-strengthening strategy. The new CNA will establish a baseline for the Accelerator and support the development of its capacity-strengthening strategy. The assessment's focus is on opportunities to strengthen capacities of social and biophysical scientists within CGIAR and of partners, including NARES. It also covers the enabling environment for GESI in FLWS research and practice.

The objectives and expected outcomes of these capacity-sharing activities will be tailored to different actors, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Competency framework for CGIAR researchers and partners

Accelerator roles	Actors	Key objectives	Key outcomes
Leading strategic GESI research	Gender researchers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase impact by collaborating with agricultural scientists and CGIAR leaders to influence the agenda of research programs. ● Remain up to date on new advances in the field of gender and development relevant to AR4D. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increased ability to influence the GESI research agenda and the design of research programs, including through own career progression. ● Information provided at scale to scientific collaborators and decision-makers. ● Contribution of advanced gender concepts, theories, methods and evidence to the field of GESI. ● Increased ability to accomplish CGIAR's mission and achieve system-level outcomes.
Driving CGIAR system forward	Senior leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understand the role leadership plays in creating and sustaining institutional change and how to exercise that role (e.g., accountability) to create a culture of gender-responsive AR4D. ● Move from commitment to action in enabling institutional change in integrating gender and equity into CGIAR research and Programs. ● Strengthen CGIAR and Center capacities to develop and engage with their gender strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ability to more effectively and efficiently draw on gender experts and gender research findings to create gender-responsive research and development strategies and programs. ● Improved gender-informed decision-making. ● Leadership of CGIAR and Centers to accomplish their mission and achieve GESI system-level outcomes.

Accelerator roles	Actors	Key objectives	Key outcomes
Accelerating progress toward CGIAR Impact Area on GESI	Biophysical science collaborators/senior researchers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Undertake effective interdisciplinary collaboration to achieve desired results throughout the AR4D project cycle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Generation of gender-responsive research without having to become a gender expert. ● Collaboration with gender researchers to identify and understand relevant gender issues throughout the R4D project cycle. ● Collaboration with gender researchers to ensure their work does not reinforce discriminatory structures and practices, but contributes to gender equality and social inclusion. ● Increased ability to accomplish CGIAR's mission and contribute to the Gender Equality, Youth, and Social Inclusion Impact Area to achieve equitable, sustainable impact.
Building conducive CGIAR conditions for GESI	Social science collaborators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Acquire a more sophisticated understanding of gender analyses and research. ● Call for and competently contribute to gender integration across project cycles. ● Enhance the quality of gender-integrated research. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Integration of gender and social inclusion across project cycle. ● Contribution to gender analyses and research on gender. ● Support for the project team in gender integration.

The Accelerator's capacity strengthening components include:

- A revival of the Postdoctoral Fellows Program that ran from 2014-2015 to bring gender-research capacity into the CGIAR system, which will require co-financing and co-supervision from the Accelerator and other Science Programs.
- Leadership training, coaching and mentorship for gender researchers from CGIAR and NARES, in collaboration with African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD).
- Basic and intermediate training for non-gender experts (social scientists and biophysical scientists from CGIAR and NARS), delivered by GREAT.
- A series of short-term courses on key gender-in-FLWS topics for gender researchers.

Efforts focus on working with a thriving group of gender researchers in CGIAR and partner institutes — including NARS — through courses, capacity-strengthening materials and a training repository. Dedicated investments will support NARS networks focused on FLWS topics and commodities (e.g., rice- or beans-focused networks, networks focused on plant pathology, breeding, aquaculture, and more) to strengthen their gender integration capacities and pursue collective gender-integrated research to inform their work.

The Accelerator will establish a network of capacity-building institutions — such as universities, research Centers, and CGIAR academies (like IRRI education, Dryland Academy, CIMMYT Academy) who can prepare the next generation of FLWS–gender researchers. The Communities of Practice (e.g. on gender transformative methods) will be channels for interactive knowledge sharing.

9.2. Knowledge sharing for social learning

The *knowledge sharing for social learning* function acknowledges the diverse strengths of different actors and promotes collaboration around GESI that reflects the principles of respect, mutual learning, and equitable partnerships. The aim of knowledge sharing is to efficiently respond to research gaps, encourage peer-to-peer learning, build synergies, and avoid duplication. Implementation includes GESI-focused knowledge-sharing events and channels which are interactive and interdisciplinary, including Communities of Practice such as on GT methods, the development of GESI capacity-strengthening resources, and their placement in the GENDER Resource Hub to facilitate researchers' access to resource materials (tools, frameworks, methodologies, online training).

Continuing the tradition of GENDER newsletters and listservs, the Accelerator shares the latest gender research findings across CGIAR and partners' networks. Building on the GENDER Impact Platform's annual convenings, an annual Science Exchange or an international GENDER conference will allow for several substantial capacity-strengthening efforts and for building and maintaining social capital among what has now become — under the leadership of the GENDER Impact Platform — the largest global network of gender-in-FLWS researchers. The convening will promote knowledge sharing; constructive peer review of gender research; and identification of synergies and complementarities across Science Programs, projects and organizations.

The capacity-sharing function will engage with various partners and alliances to address prevailing capacity gaps and the learning objectives of different actor groups. Primary partners for co-developing and delivering capacity-strengthening activities and institutional capacity sharing include: the GREAT program on interdisciplinary gender-responsive approaches to crop improvement, seed systems and agronomy; the AWARD program on institutional cultures and strengthening the leadership capacities of women scientists; the specialized groups such as the MenEngage Alliance; the UN Women Training Centre; and universities that offer training on gender research in agriculture. Global leaders in relevant GESI research and practice will be invited to share new and current thinking on GESI-related issues with CGIAR and partner scientists, to inject dynamism, integrate new theoretical approaches and developments, and stimulate innovative thinking and cross-fertilization of ideas across institutes and fields.

10. Gender and social inclusion

The Accelerator focuses on gender and social inclusion.

11. Climate change

Climate change vulnerabilities, impacts and adaptive capacities differ according to gender and other intersectional identities. Adaptive capacities depend on complex climate–society interactions. Structural barriers aggravate gender inequalities and worsen women's vulnerability to climate change.

Overcoming gender inequality in FLWS is critical for climate-resilient development.^{lxxxvii} Women are often powerful change agents. Women's strength and resourcefulness under adverse circumstances build resilience in households and communities.^{lxxxviii} The active engagement of women in political arenas and decision-making is essential for achieving climate-resilient FLWS,^{lxxxix} and that active engagement can be amplified through targeted investment.

Adaptive capacities depend on context-specific, complex climate–society interactions. Mitigation measures must account for these dynamics to effectively support equality goals, and to minimize harm to people (e.g., free and informed consent processes). Adaptation measures — such as CSA and forest landscape restoration — may still lack sufficient gender-

responsiveness to address the underlying issues that cause inequities in the face of climate change. Adaptation measures also often lack consistent integration with gender and social difference in private, public and NGO spaces.

There is limited evidence on the intersectional and gendered outcomes of climate change adaptation measures — such young women's engagement with CSA, or providing climate finance to diverse people. Climate mitigation technologies and practices that address root causes of gender inequality have the potential to reduce women's labor burden, boost incomes, and create/protect more gender-equal relations in FLWS.

A GESI R4D approach must work toward social transformation at multiple scales, aiming to:

- Weaken deep-rooted structural barriers.
- Improve the incomes of smallholder women farmers and youth.
- Increase women's and youth access to productive skills, resources and services.
- Create conditions to increase agency in individual and collective decision-making at the household and community levels.

Promising strategies include:

- Using gender-responsive delivery models for technology integration and training.
- Choosing GTAs in forest and landscape restoration.
- Creating social safety nets.^{xc}
- Addressing harmful gender norms to support women's participation in and benefits from low-carbon agricultural value chains.
- Providing financial incentives for women-controlled renewable energies.
- Supporting women to access carbon markets and trading schemes that reward low-carbon agricultural practices.

The Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator proposes to bring about this transformational change and reimagine adaptation and mitigation in FLWS (e.g., CSA and forest landscape restoration) by undertaking the following:

1. Deliver gender-responsive adaptation and mitigation solutions that address root causes of inequality.
 - a. Identify research, development and policy options to increase the resilience of women, youth and other groups in the face of increasing heat stress in agriculture.
 - b. Amplify the role of women's collectives in accessing carbon markets and certification programs.
 - c. Catalyze meaningful engagement of women, youth, landless, and IP&LC in land- and ecosystem-conservation initiatives.
2. Facilitate investment in socially inclusive approaches to climate change mitigation and adaptation in FLWS.
 - a. Develop strategies to route climate finance to people in vulnerability hotspots.
 - b. Develop evidence-based strategies to mitigate the risk of gender-based violence and intimate-partner violence, which increase with climate change.
 - c. Promote evidence-based incentive mechanisms to increase women's control over renewable energy, such as solar-powered irrigation.
3. Standardize GESI-responsive data collection on climate change impacts across the CG and its partners.
 - a. Develop data systems that prioritize GESI-disaggregated data and use triangulation.
 - b. Generate evidence on the effect of transformative approaches on engagement, empowerment, and benefit sharing of carbon markets, REDD+, etc.

- c. Promote climate change–agriculture–gender inequality hotspot mapping to identify where inequities are growing. Use intersectional analyses to facilitate effective targeting. Develop and improve gendered vulnerability-assessment tools.
- d. Conduct impact assessments of climate adaptation and mitigation activities and technologies, with a focus on gender and social equality.

12. Risk management

Note: Risks will be finalized and mitigation actions will be developed as part of the risk management plan during the Inception Phase

A detailed risk assessment will be conducted during the Inception Phase when teams are in a better position to identify a complete set of risks and mitigation actions. A process for this will be developed by a Working Group, including the Risk Community of Practice and the Program Coordination Unit, Portfolio Coordination Team, and Digital and Data.

For the Accelerator’s design stage, five main risks have been identified:

Risk title (summarized statement)	Risk statement including potential event, sources, and consequences on objectives (see this PPT)
Risk 1: CGIAR is no longer a front-runner	Too few gender researchers in CGIAR Centers and partner institutions hampers CGIAR’s and Accelerator’s ability to carry out activities. This risk will be mitigated by hiring a select number of new gender researchers, by ensuring resources are available to deliver through professionalization of gender in CGIAR, and, by creating opportunities to maximize the number of gender researchers.
Risk 2: CGIAR loses its central role in AR4D	External partners in gender research may already be filling knowledge gaps. While the Accelerator will work to develop and share methods with individual CGIAR Centers, there is a risk that efforts could be duplicated, on either side. To mitigate these risks, the Accelerator will engage with partners inside and outside the CGIAR system and undertake a situation analysis.
Risk 3: Unsatisfactory evidence and assurance received	There is a risk that the broader AR4D ecosystem, including biophysical researchers within and outside CGIAR, will not value the evidence and outputs delivered and will not incorporate them into research portfolios and investments to achieve development outcomes. To mitigate this risk, the Accelerator will work closely with the partners, Science Programs, Accelerators and Centers to understand and generate evidence that is demanded. The Accelerator will also hold annual conferences to share evidence and outputs gained.
Risk 4: Inadequate funding	Inadequate funding is available to deliver results and put into use the evidence generated. Donor interests might shift, de-emphasizing gender in the future. This will be mitigated by engaging with partners in resource mobilization and working across CGIAR, especially with Centers and Science Programs. Evidence generated on the returns to investment in gender research in agriculture will be used to mobilize resources.
Risk 5: Poor execution undermines capability	Ensuring delivery within a diffuse matrix structure where the system or Centers do not prioritize gender, or youth, can lead to poor execution of the work and mean that the Accelerator will not be able to deliver.

13. Funding sources

The Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator will drive accountability, transparency, complementarity and synergy across all sources and types of funding. Strategic and innovative research that advances gender equality, opportunities for youth, and social inclusion will be resourced in three main ways:

- i) Pooled funding to the Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator. Most of this funding will be from CGIAR donors that wish to designate funding specifically to the Accelerator.
- ii) Pooled funding supporting GESI research within Science Programs and Accelerators.
- iii) Bilateral funding for GESI research across the CGIAR Portfolio.

The pooled and designated funding to the Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator will support its core mission to lead strategic and innovative research that advances gender equality, opportunities for youth, and social inclusion across the CGIAR Portfolio. This includes collaborating with GESI research programs across CGIAR, which themselves are funded by both pooled and bilateral funds, to further shared ambitions and enhance overall impact.

An estimated 80% of the Accelerator's pooled funding is specifically designated by donors — including Gates, FCDO, Australia, USAID, EC/EU, Germany and Switzerland — who wish to support the development of impactful solutions and to drive systemic change towards positive impacts on gender, youth and social inclusion.

The current estimated base scenario for funding available to the Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator is USD 12,008,112, which will permit the Accelerator to build on the research and engagement portfolio of the HER+ Initiative and the GENDER Impact Platforms. Should the higher surge funding scenario materialize, the increased allocation of USD 13,049,819 would allow the Accelerator to fund and solidify emerging work on youth. Further budget ambitions to USD 16,000,000 would allow for the Accelerator to become equal partners and work closely with the Science Programs to co-develop research projects and finally leapfrog what CGIAR is doing on gender equality, youth opportunities and socially excluded groups, and support CGIAR in unlocking these areas to transform FLWS to be inclusive and just.

The issue of bilaterally funded projects and the link to the Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator will need to be explored further because there is still confusion among the people to define clear criteria tag gender and youth research. The Accelerator will help clarify this in future. This does not take away from the fact that it is the intention of the Accelerator to collaborate with bilateral projects whenever it can.

In the meantime, Table 2 over presents an overview of the **key known bilaterally funded projects** and programs that the Accelerator will coordinate with for selection of Use Cases, communication, capacity building and networking.

Table 2. Key known bilaterally funded projects

No.	Project/program title	Lead CGIAR Center	Funder	Duration (end date)	Expected 2025–30 funding (USD)	Relevant Program/ Accelerator AoWs if known
1	ASIA-AFRICA BLUETECH SUPERHIGHWAY PROJECT (COAST)	WorldFish	United Kingdom-FCDO-Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office	3/31/1930	\$43,270,534	
2	FTF BANGLADESH APC	IFPRI	USAID	2/8/2027	\$18,842,101	
3	MasterCard – WAEMU	AfricaRice	Mastercard Foundation	6/30/2029	\$14,509,582	
4	Climate-Resilient Aquaculture Systems for Africa	WorldFish	BMGF-Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	12/31/2028	\$11,178,972	
5	Roots Tubers and Bananas Breeding: a consolidated investment	IITA	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF)	45747	\$9,749,441	
6	Small-Scale Aquaculture Investments for Livelihood	WorldFish	USAID	9/14/2027	\$9,000,000	
7	ISARC Phase III	IRRI	India-Department of Agriculture and Cooperation and Farmers Welfare	3/31/2027	\$6,260,764	
8	Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation Phase II	IITA	The African Development Bank (AfDB)	3/31/2025	\$5,672,202	
9	Cassava Value Chain Development to Support Food Security and the Bread Industry in DRC	IITA	USAID	9/30/2027	\$5,590,844	
10	TAAT Clearinghouse: Re-invest to Accelerate Innovation Adoption	IITA	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF)	10/31/2025	\$5,176,061	
11	An innovative approach to agribusiness training and start-up for Nigeria's young people within the Young Africa Works Program	IITA	Mastercard Foundation (Mastercard)	5/31/2025	\$4,826,833	
12	Science ProgramIR II Ethiopia	IFPRI	World Vision International	7/7/2028	\$4,715,194	
13	Dev. & Scaling of Sus. Feeds for RAqFS in Sub-Saharan Africa	WorldFish	Norway-NORAD-Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation	6/30/2027	\$3,564,738	
14	Potential climate change effects on food security, nutrition, and health of the Mexican population. Codesigning integrated policy measures	CIMMYT	Wellcome Trust	10/31/2027	\$3,000,500	
15	Youth In Agribusiness: enabling scaling of innovation	IITA	Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Nigeria (EKN, Nigeria)	11/30/2025	\$2,921,160	
16	DFAT-Generating Revenues and Opportunities for Women	CIP	Canada-DFATD-Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development	9/30/2026	\$2,566,646	

No.	Project/program title	Lead CGIAR Center	Funder	Duration (end date)	Expected 2025–30 funding (USD)	Relevant Program/ Accelerator AoWs if known
17	World Bank-Food Systems Resilience	AfricaRice	World Bank	06/31/2026	\$2,215,879	
18	IKAN ADAPT	WorldFish	FAO-Food and Agriculture Organization	10/31/2026	\$2,190,967	
19	On farm Selection	CIMMYT	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	10/31/2026	\$2,000,500	
20	Additive intercropping in wide row crops for resilient crop production in Bangladesh, Bhutan and eastern India	CIMMYT	Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR)	5/31/2028	\$2,000,000	
21	Climate-Adaptive, Inclusive, Nature-base Aquaculture	WorldFish	IDRC-International Development Research Centre	5/31/2027	\$1,628,467	
22	IPV RESEARCH COLLAB PH 2	IFPRI	Anon	4/2/2027	\$1,457,136	
23	CANADA -GAC - Beans For Women For Empowerment In Eastern DRC (BEANS4WOMEN)	Alliance	Global Affairs Canada (GAC)	3/31/2028	\$1,352,072	
24	Secure Timor-Leste Fisheries for Sustainability	WorldFish	Minderoo Foundation	6/30/2028	\$1,305,531	
25	Technologies for African Agri Transformation Phase	WorldFish	AfDB-African Development Bank	3/31/2025	\$1,282,333	
26	USAI-Emergency and livelihood recovery support	CIP	USAID	6/31/2026	\$1,279,418	
27	DEFIS	AfricaRice	IFAD-International Fund for Agricultural Development	12/31/2026	\$1,027,454	
28	Center for renewable energy in Aquaculture (CeREA)	WorldFish	Norway-Ministry of Foreign Affairs	5/31/2027	\$950,177	
29	SGP-AGGRI2 AGGRI Project	IRRI	BMGF-Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	2/28/2025	\$894,409	
30	Biodiversity for Resilient Ecosystems in Agricultural Landscapes (B-REAL)	Alliance	Global Affairs Canada (GAC)	3/31/2026	\$800,000	
31	Technical Assistance for Sweet potato processing	CIP	Unité Nationale de Gestion de Projets – Banque Mondiale	5/31/2025	\$757,897	
32	ICAR 2023 – 2027	IRRI	India-ICAR-Indian Council of Agricultural Research	12/31/2027	\$753,212	
33	Scaling Commercialization of Drought Tolerant Crops (DTC) Technologies to Secure Dignified and Fulfilling Work for 120,000 Youth in Rural Kenya	ICRISAT	Mastercard Foundation	7/31/2027	\$716,300	
34	IITA Accelerated Innovation Delivery Initiative (AID-I) Mozambique	CIP	USAID	6/30/2025	\$693,000	

No.	Project/program title	Lead CGIAR Center	Funder	Duration (end date)	Expected 2025–30 funding (USD)	Relevant Program/ Accelerator AoWs if known
35	Transforming Agri-Marketing through effectively operationalizing RMCs (including PHM & Primary Processing centers), Develop Market Linkages, and Empower Women SHGs through Supply Chain Management in Odisha	ICRISAT	Odisha State Agriculture Marketing (OSAM), Government of Odisha	5/1/2026	\$688,190	
36	Cap. Build. of Mission Shakti in Gram Panchayat ta	WorldFish	India-Department of Mission Shakti, Government of Odisha	3/31/2028	\$666,561	
37	A-2019-180	IRRI	India-Department of Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment, Government of Odisha	12/31/2025	\$657,330	
38	Creating Employment Opportunities for Rural Youth in Africa: Support to Integrated Agribusiness Hubs in Nigeria	IITA	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)	6/30/2025	\$652,936	
39	Youth, Citizen Science and E-commerce: scaling integrated conservation solutions and farmers' rights by connecting key diversity hotspots: Bolivia, Chile, and Peru	CIP	FAO-Food and Agriculture Organization	2/20/2027	\$550,000	
40	Build resilient seed systems & fish value chains	WorldFish	EC-European Commission	12/31/2026	\$439,218	
41	Women in Agricultural Technical Education and Apprenticeship in Nigeria (Femmes dans l'Enseignement Technique et l'Apprentissage en Agriculture et Agribusiness au Nigeria)) (FET3A-Nigeria)	IITA	Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEAE)	4/14/2025	\$414,254	
42	RiceEco	IRRI		11/30/2025	\$413,321	
43	Achieving Genetic Gains	CIMMYT	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	3/15/2025	\$398,529	
44	Climate Change and Child Malnutrition in Zimbabwe: Evidence to Action	CIMMYT	Welcome Trust	12/31/2026	\$369,503	
45	Establishment and Operation of Aeroponics Facility	CIP	India-State Government of Odisha-Directorate of Agriculture and Food Production	9/30/2026	\$350,000	
46	GAC-SCALING UP CLIMATE INFORMATION SERVICES AND CLIMATE- SMART AGRICULTURE FOR WOMEN FARMERS IN NICARAGUA'S DRY CORRIDOR	Alliance	Global Affairs Canada (GAC)	12/31/2026	\$337,512	
47	IMPACT EVALUATION ETHIOPIA (IMPEL)	IFPRI	Save the children	7/12/2027	\$331,655	

No.	Project/program title	Lead CGIAR Center	Funder	Duration (end date)	Expected 2025–30 funding (USD)	Relevant Program/ Accelerator AoWs if known
48	Sustainable valorization of water hyacinth biomass through aerobic composting as rural enterprise – A waste to wealth initiative	ICRISAT	India-Government of Odisha	3/31/2026	\$313,380	
49	WOMENS EMPOWERMENT- PHND	IFPRI	USAID	7/12/2026	\$282,806	
50	ACIAR in Timor-Leste and Indonesia	WorldFish	Australia-ACIAR-Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research	7/31/2025	\$267,806	
52	Seed Production Technology for Africa (Science ProgramTA)	CIMMYT	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	4/30/2025	\$262,897	
52	GLOBAL DATA HUB ENBLE GEN	IFPRI	USAID	7/12/2026	\$222,928	
53	EDUTAINMENT PHASE 2	IFPRI	Anonymous	6/6/2026	\$213,139	

Note: The table above is not intended to be exhaustive

The high-level indicative budget is presented below (note caveat above). Scenario 1 does not include the expansion youth but is based on the present allocation between the GENDER Impact Platform and HER+. Savings will be made as there will only be one 'work package' 0 and that will need to be accounted for and shared across the two AoWs. The ambition budget would allow for clearer collaboration with the Science Programs. A detailed budget will be prepared during the Inception Phase of the Accelerator. This budget will be impact oriented, guided by several factors including identification of opportunities, costing, impact estimation and prioritization. The selection of use-cases will take place during the Inception Phase based on a set of criteria described in section 3, until the exercise es completed, we rely on past experience to indicate potential budget allocations that will be adjusted as plans evolve.

In the final version, a table will be inserted here, showing the breakdown of pooled funding by Area of Work for different budget scenarios.

Annex - Pooled funding

The pooled and designated funding to the Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator will support its core mission to lead strategic and innovative research that advances gender equality, opportunities for youth, and social inclusion across the CGIAR Portfolio. This includes collaborating with GESI research programs across CGIAR, which themselves are funded by both pooled and bilateral funds, to further shared ambitions and enhance overall impact.

An estimated 80% of the Accelerator's pooled funding is specifically designated by donors — including Gates, FCDO, Australia, USAID, EC/EU, Germany and Switzerland — who wish to support the development of impactful solutions and to drive systemic change towards impact on gender equality, youth engagement and social inclusion.

The current estimated base scenario for funding available to the Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator is USD x, which is x% of funding from 2024, but will permit the Accelerator to build on the research and engagement portfolio of the HER+ Initiative and the GENDER Impact Platforms. Should the higher surge funding scenario materialize, the increased allocation of USD x would allow the Accelerator to fund and solidify emerging work on youth. Further budget ambitions to USD x would allow for the Accelerator to become equal partners and work closely with the Science Programs to co-develop research projects and finally leapfrog what CGIAR is doing in the gender equality, youth opportunities and socially excluded groups.

Key elements to be supported by pooled funding

The Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator builds on the Gender Equality Initiative (HER+) and the GENDER Impact Platform, as well as gender and inclusion research in CGIAR Centers and Initiatives. The Platform and Initiatives have gathered evidence, learned lessons and formed strong partnerships, all of which has created significant momentum and demand for the Accelerator to continue and grow in this field, achieving new outcomes.

The Accelerator's two-pronged approach described in Section 5 and 6 is reflected in its two AoWs. *Accelerating Solutions for Impact* and *Accelerating change through Evidence*.

AoW1: Accelerating Solutions for Impact

In AoW1, the Accelerator tests Solutions for Impact that take a socioecological systems approach by bundling innovations to respond to the differentiated needs and challenges faced by women, youth, IP&LC and otherwise socially excluded groups. It comprises five sub-AoWs:

- 1.1 Fostering equitable and inclusive norms.
- 1.2 Supporting pathways to empowerment and resilience.
- 1.3 Promoting equitable resource access and resilient livelihoods.
- 1.4 Amplifying voice and influence within FLWS institutions.
- 1.5 Youth thrive.

In addition to HER+ and the GENDER Impact Platform, these sub-AoWs also build on the body of gender research in CGIAR — including from SAPLING, Market Intelligence, SI MFS, Livestock, Climate and Systems Resilience, SeedEqual, and From Fragility to Resilience.

AoW2: Accelerating Change through Evidence

In AoW2, the Accelerator fosters structural **Change through Evidence** across the FLWS ecosystem. This is achieved by engaging with actors to use evidence from research to set policies, priorities and define solutions for delivery and scaling; and by sharing capacities to conduct quality GESI and youth research while tracking impacts. It focuses on creating conducive conditions for rigorous, solution-oriented GESI research by CGIAR and its partners, and amplifying the influence and use of this research among relevant end users to contribute

to wide-scale impact on gender equality, social inclusion and meaningful opportunities for youth in FLWS. The AoW has three interlinked sub-AoWs:

1. Methods and metrics.
2. Leveraging evidence, strategic communications and engagement.
3. Capacity strengthening and institutional change.

This AoW builds particularly on the work of the GENDER Impact Platform, and the principle that to catalyze change requires the right evidence, tools and methods to optimize programs for increased access to, and adoption of, resilient and equitable innovations, policies and capacity sharing. Specifically, this AoW will use pooled funding to:

- Elevate CGIAR's gender-in-FLWS research agenda and its transformative potential.
- Facilitate synergies among gender researchers and other scientists, in CGIAR and beyond.
- Develop methods, metrics and analytics for gender and inclusion in FLWS.
- Strengthen capacities for equitable and inclusive research.
- Improve conditions for such research and its uptake in an evolving global food system.
- Engage in strategic multi-level policy discussion within FLWS.

Beyond the AoWs, the Accelerator takes responsibility for supporting CGIAR in accelerating progress towards the Impact Area on GESI. This provides continuity to the role of the GENDER Impact Platform in: (1) fostering global critical thinking; (2) building internal capacity; (3) advising management on the prioritization, design and implementation of Science Programs and Accelerators, and bilaterally funded projects; and (4) amplifying CGIAR's external profile and voice.

New and emerging areas of work supported by pooled funding

The Accelerator expands the scope, approach, and ambition of CGIAR's GESI work, based on evolving trends and the implications flagged in the ISDC megatrends report, the need for research that examines the drivers of deep-rooted inequalities in FLWS and their feedback loops with other negative FLWS outcomes, to enhance adoption of CGIAR innovations by women, particularly from IP&LC. This is the focus of the Accelerator's AoW1, *Accelerating Solutions for Impact*, which identifies scalable solutions to lift systemic barriers of gender equality specific to FLWS under a changing climate. In AoW2, *Accelerating Change*, examines the systemic conditions, unique to FLWS, that can hinder implementation of these solutions and seeks to create enabling conditions for sustainable change and impact.

The same ISDC report highlights the need for a stronger focus on opportunities for youth to create profitable career paths in FLWS. The Accelerator therefore includes a sub-area of work on 'Opportunities for youth' under AoW1, which explores opportunities with digital technologies and adoption and scaling of technologies and is conducted *with* youth, from co-design through to implementation and scaling. Similarly, and as recommended by the ISDC, the Accelerator embraces an approach that centers on women, IP&LC, youth, and other socially excluded FLWS actors as central actors across the entire research process, starting with priority setting and co-design.

Partnerships to be supported by pooled funding

Partnerships are an essential element for the Accelerator to achieve its planned outcomes. First, within CGIAR itself, the Science Programs, the Scaling Program and the Accelerators contribute to the thematic AoWs of the Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator while the Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator contributes methodologies, evidence, tools,

approaches, best practices, and more to raise the ambition of the Science Programs on GESI and drive a coherent CGIAR-wide GESI research agenda.

Beyond CGIAR, the Accelerator harnesses high-level support, fosters strategic partnerships, and influences global discourse to build an enabling external environment for GESI in FLWS research through effective communication and engagement. It builds and sustains global coalitions and networks to accelerate the impact of GESI initiatives on a broader scale.

Strong engagement with research networks like FARA and its sub-regional organizations, APAARI, SEARCA and NARS like ICAR, Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, Uganda National Agricultural Research Organization, KALRO, Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research drives relevant research and outcomes. The Accelerator engages with national governments and multilateral organizations to understand their information needs in support of evidence-based policy making and program design, and their preferences for accessing this evidence. The Accelerator's work with global partners such as World Bank, FAO, IFAD, ADB, AfDB, and AGRA builds on previous successful engagement, such as collaborations on the Status of Women in Agrifood Systems and the Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition. With its presence across multiple centers and connections to a broad spectrum of actors, the Accelerator is poised to continue to influence agricultural innovation to become more inclusive.

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- lxxxiii <https://gender.cgiar.org/news/new-hotspot-mapping-reveals-where-climate-change-hits-women-hardest>
- lxxxiv Definition: The “post-human” or “more-than-human” turn in social sciences is a shift away from solely anthropocentric perspectives toward acknowledging the agency, importance, and interconnectedness of non-human entities such as animals, plants, ecosystems, and even technology. This theoretical approach challenges traditional human-centered views by considering how non-human elements actively shape social, cultural, and environmental dynamics. It is now considered key to understand climate change impacts with all its nuances.
- lxxxv https://www.who.int/health-topics/one-health#tab=tab_1
- lxxxvi <https://www.cgiar.org/research/publication/capacities-needs-assessment-gender-research-cgiar/>
- lxxxvii FAO, 2023
- lxxxviii Cabot Venton et al., 2021; Barrett et al., 2021; Nellemann et al., 2011; Babugura et al., 2010; Huyer & Gumucio, 2020
- lxxxix Morgan et al., 2024
- xc Page 23:
https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGII_SummaryForPolicymakers.pdf