



# Why Gender Matters for Marketing

## Joint/collaborative decision making pre and post-harvest processes increases the possibility that women will benefit crop marketing

**In Rakai and Isingiro districts of Western Uganda** women have little say when it comes to selling cooking bananas 'matooke'.

*"You cannot sell even one bunch – unless you steal it. If you are lucky and steal a bunch, the buyer will offer a very low price because he knows it is a 'deal'... buyers also like to buy from us our 'stolen' bunches on credit, and they know you will not ask for your money because if you do, then they report you to your husband."* (Women FGD Participant, Dwaniro).

The gendered nature of markets put women at risk of exploitation. Women lack access to information due to low mobility levels given their household responsibilities, which, in turn, limits their access to market prices and abilities to fully participate in marketing.

Annet a woman who managed to break into the banana export business mentioned that she was able to become a successful banana exporter not only because of the technical, marketing skills training she received from the project but also because of the support she received from her husband. Annet says, "I am now a professional business manager as a result of the training I received. I even have a business plan. The support from my family has been enormous. When my children are around, I work with them and when I take the bananas to Kampala, they take charge of the home. My husband does not complain even when the children cook bad food. This gives me peace of mind. He calls me when I travel, to find out how things are, I share with him all my challenges and he advises me." Other women who mentioned that they benefited from banana sales also mentioned that their husbands consulted them on sales as well as on how to use and invest income from banana sales. Women's experiences shows that marketing interventions should not only consider the technical aspect but also promote and encouraged meaningful cooperation and collaboration between men and women in the household.



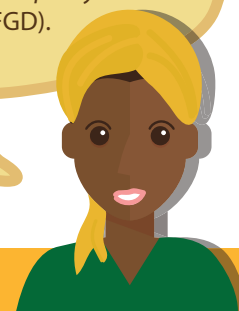
## Guidelines for Gender Mainstreaming in Marketing

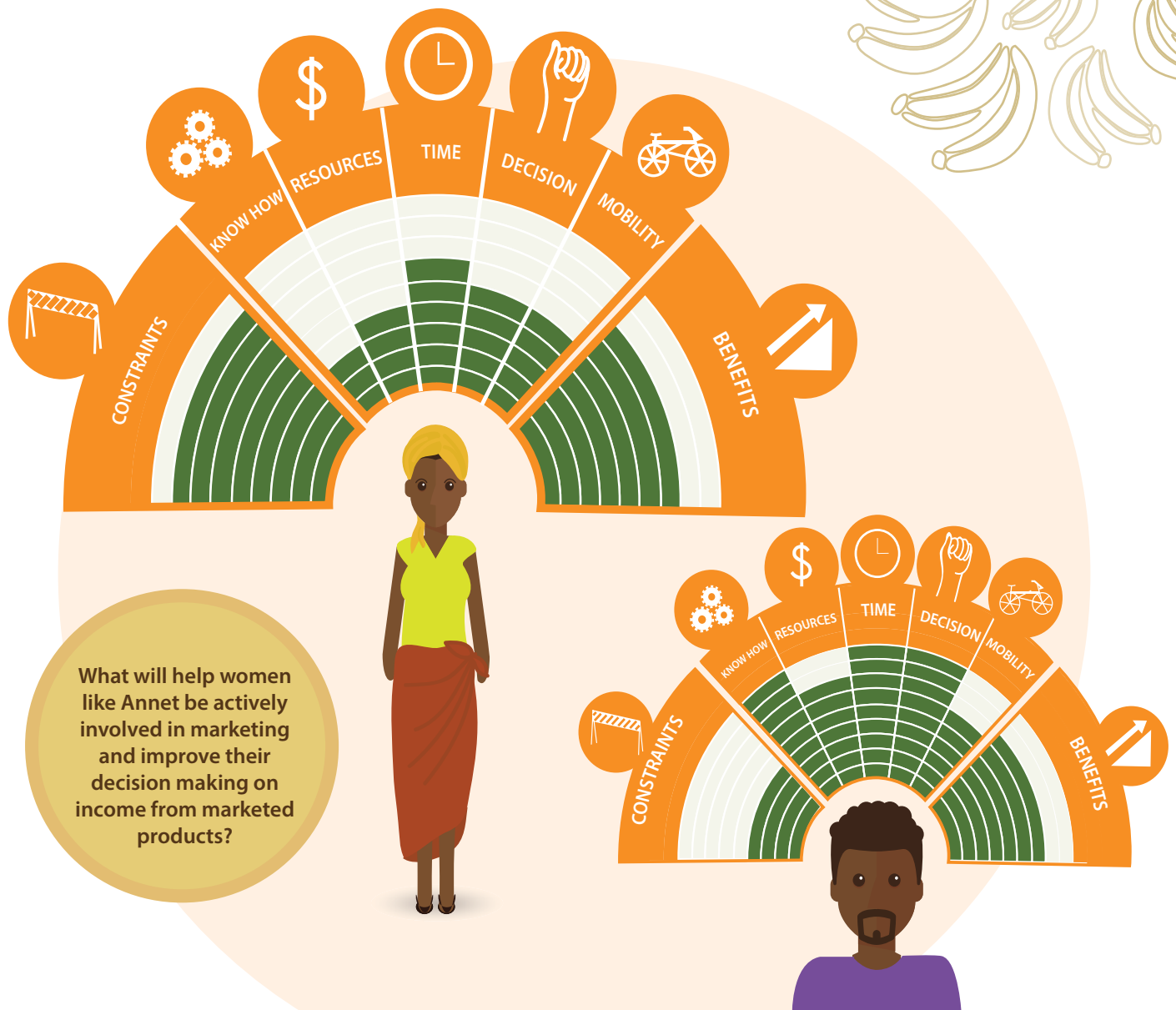
- Involve both male and female farmers and entrepreneurs in business training courses.
- Develop a gender module on household cooperation and decision-making and incorporate it into farmer marketing training events.
- Engage both men and women in training beyond their gender based roles and interests to ensure effective adoption and as a gender transformative action. Train both men and women on nutrition and food processing and commercialization.
- Adopt household approaches to farming as a family business and train on household planning and budgeting with husbands and wives.
- Consider the use of mobile phones and other ICT technologies, and mass media channels for disseminating market and technical information to men and women farmers.

## Awareness Raising: Making People Reflect on their lives is Powerful

- Reflect on the benefits men and women receive from their work. "What activities do men and women engage in to produce the RTB crop? Do men and women benefit from their work"?
- Reflect on level of empowerment men and women have in their lives.
- Focus on positive message of joint work, joint decision-making and joint benefits in household.
- Look for men and women in community with more equal gender roles and power relations. Promote them as change agents in community.

*“ I used to grow my crops but I could not even think that I could sell the crops. I would always wait for my husband to sell for me. After the discussion with other women [during FGDs when project was conducting a gender analysis of post-harvest processes including marketing, when I went home I asked myself why I was not selling my crops? I just thought that I have to wait for the man to do it. Now I am selling my own crops. There was no reason why I was not selling my crops myself. ”*  
(Woman farmer in an FGD).





What will help women like Annet be actively involved in marketing and improve their decision making on income from marketed products?

## Gender Responsive Market Innovations:

- 1 Understand social factors that may restrict men and women from participating in markets and address these.
- 2 Respond to gender related constraints women and men face in relation to marketing.
- 3 When designing market interventions, take into account the power relations between men and women within households, communities and within markets and address these.
- 4 Focus on improving benefits for women and men.



**For more information contact:**  
[n.mudege@cgiar.org](mailto:n.mudege@cgiar.org)  
 (CIP Gender Research Coordinator);  
[s.mayanja@cgiar.org](mailto:s.mayanja@cgiar.org)  
 (CIP, Uganda)