

# Grameen Foundation's Gender First Approach To Cultivating Male Champions to support Women Enterprises



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# WHO WE ARE

Grameen is a global non-profit that uses technology and innovation to transform ecosystems so that women and girls can claim their full power, thereby breaking the cycle of poverty and hunger.

## Our Vision

A world free from poverty.

## Our Mission

Enable the poor, especially women, to create a world without poverty and hunger.



*“The poor themselves can create a poverty-free world.”*

*—Muhammad Yunus*

# Grameen's focus on Systems Change

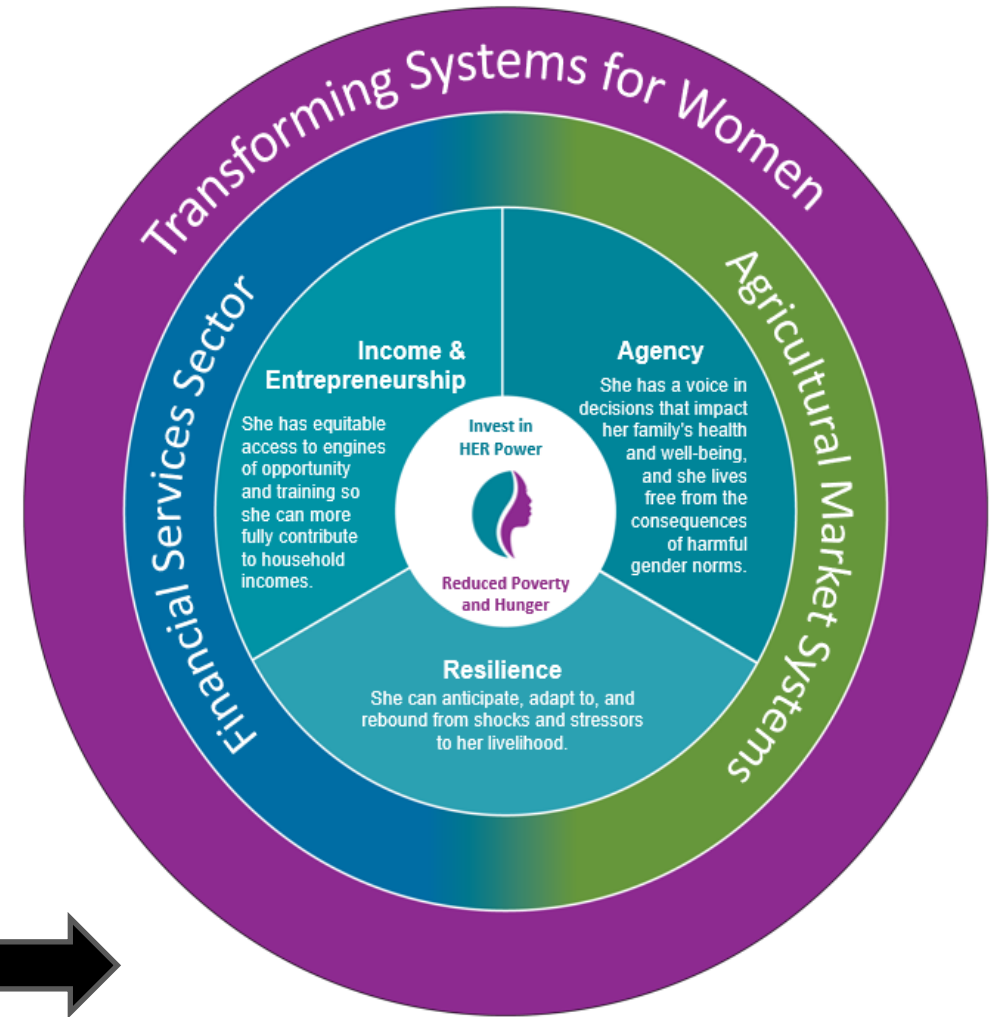
**Three (3) areas of work globally and in Ghana:** Digital innovations in Agriculture, Digital Financial Services and our Female Community Agent Networks. Cross-cutting in all of these 3 is gender mainstreaming.

Gender first approach to Women Economic Empowerment and Strengthening (VEES)- calls for new behaviors, mindsets and ways of working and a new interaction with communities that are power neutral. Women are at the center of all we do. Gender equity is not just a lens through which we view our work. It is foundational to our purpose

Work with communities to dismantle gender biases that touches every aspect of a woman's life by using a locally-led/bottom-up approach so that women and girls can access formal financial services and rural market systems



**Our 3 broad Areas of work embedded with Gender First contribute broadly to 3 general outcomes**



# Grameen's Gender First Approach to WEES to mitigate unintended consequences of WEES in Ghana

## (I) Inquiry Phase

Gender and Inclusion Analysis	Rapid Needs Assessment
Analyzing legal framework, socio-cultural norms, gender roles and power dynamics within households, community and political lives of women	Understanding multifaceted barriers and opportunities to address barriers to women's economic empowerment (Structural, Material, Cognitive, Relational, Personal and Perceptual Barriers and Opportunities)

# Grameen's Gender First Approach to WEES to mitigate unintended consequences of WEES in Ghana

## (I) Inquiry Phase: What we found

- Female entrepreneurs have heavy labor burdens, limited mobility and decision-making power.
- Customary law places women in positions subordinate to men, affecting their land ownership, ability to generate income, and limiting their access to financial services.
- Laws, institutions, and policies designed to support women's empowerment and provide legal protections for women, particularly with regards to GBV, have very little effect due to limited availability of legal support and women's low legal literacy.
- Women face limited access to finance, particularly business credit due to long distances to reach financial institutions, collateral and formal identification requirements, small loan sizes, and terms.

# Grameen's Gender First Approach to WEES to mitigate unintended consequences of WEES in Ghana

## (2) Planning Phase:

Program/Project Level SAP	Activity Level SAP
Identifying and analyzing risk aligned to the project and mapping strategies to address identified risks	Identifying risk per planned activity, mapping it to level of impact and formulating activities to address risks

**Outcome:** Analyzing the risks allowed us to identify specific male engagement strategies that could be employed to mitigate the risk of GBV and male backlash and open up opportunities for collective support for women economic empowerment. This included gaining buy-in of spouses/ male relatives and involving them in the process of supporting the full potential and power of women and girls from the start in the area of income generation, entrepreneurship and agency.

# Grameen's Gender First Approach to WEES to mitigate unintended consequences of WEES in Ghana

## **(3) Implementation Phase:** Male Engagement Activities deployed to Create Male Champions and mitigate unintended consequence of WEES

### Family/Spouse Engagement

- Getting consent from families or spouse of female agents or female beneficiaries during stage of recruitment into program

### Community Dialogues

- Interface with community leaders to reframe some social norms to open up opportunities for women to effectively participate in all aspect of life

### Intra-household Dialogues

- Interface between couples to provide safe space for discussions on family issues and explore ways for mutual understanding and commitment to support women

### Engaging Men Groups

- Interface with men to create awareness about the positive outcomes in supporting women and rethinking about existing social norms that limit women- through this male champions are created to spearhead advocacy on WEE

### Complaints and Feedback Mechanism

- Ensured that each local partner established a Complaints and Feedback Mechanism (CFM) desk to receive and address complaints from females, couples

# What Worked/Working for Ghana

- **Had support from men and community leaders to set up 90 female mobile money agents to deliver digital financial services and create awareness on GBV and VEES within patriarchal societies.**

“I am proud of the work my wife does to raise awareness about GBV. I support her in this regard to refer people to the right institutions for support. Our culture has made the woman timid and afraid of their husbands, so I am happy about the GBV component of the project.”

-Roger, spouse of a female agent

- **Men are now ready to sit down with their spouses to talk about family issues and plan together as a result of intra-household dialogues.**

Women were happy to be sited with their spouses to engage in household planning for the first time; some indicated that this was rare. Due to cultural practice, Men find it difficult to show affection in public or in the open hence the reason for them not being comfortable with the exercise.

- According to Alido Osman, “it takes a collective effort to improve the welfare of a family hence the men cannot do it all without the support of our wives. Therefore, we need to discuss with them what we want for the family.”



GBV Info

DFS

Health Products

Tips on business



Alido Osman sited with 3 wives (Gurunpaga (L), Mariam (SL) and Fatima (R)) discussing household goals



# What Worked/Working for Ghana

- **Men now serve as Male Champions and leading the transformation by** creating awareness on gender equity and inclusion and WEES through community dialogues to cause a change;
- Recruited 107 Community Based Facilitators (79% males/21% females) leading 1050 intra-household dialogues with 1050 Men Groups (25 men per Group)
- Engaging 13,125 individual men belong to the men groups
- Creating 10,500 MALE CHAMPIONS leading the change by;

- Men engaging women/spouses in household decision making
- Men supporting women/spouses to create a bank account or mobile money account
- Men making cash contribution into bank account or mobile money account as business support capital, family income or savings.
- Men supporting in household chores and parenting



Ayisha, a member of VSLA, is now happy with the enormous support and cooperation from the husband as she established that *“from the day my husband and the four wives participated in the dialogue, he has opened up and now plans the family together with all the four wives which was not the case before. My husband has even joined a savings group in the community”*.



# Thank You



When one woman can show up with her full power, breaking the cycle of poverty for her household, **It's a success.** When millions of women can do the same, **it's a movement.**

**Together, lets invest in her power.**

Francis Arthur, Program Lead,  
[farthur@grameenfoundation.org](mailto:farthur@grameenfoundation.org)