

Terms of Reference

Gender Transformative Business Models; definition and key metrics

March, 2022

1. Background

Introduction CGAP's work on Women in Rural and Agricultural Livelihoods

The Livelihoods and Financial Inclusion Project (LiFi) in CGAP focuses on areas where improved financial services could enhance livelihoods prevalent among people living in poverty: Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs), platform workers, and women working in rural and agricultural livelihoods (WIRAL). LiFi works to better understand how improved financial services, business models, and ecosystem conditions can help increase, stabilize, and support incomes and resilience. Aligned with CGAP's mandate and partners, LiFi seeks to enhance livelihoods by synthesizing evidence, framing discussions and insights, and testing solutions related to financial services and digital technologies.

The WIRAL program of LiFi focuses on rural women. Women are highly engaged in agriculture and rural economies, as laborers, consumers, and producers, for both markets and their households. In low-income countries, the face of agriculture is female: 79% of economically active women report that agriculture is their primary activity (IFPRI [2014](#)). Despite the central role of women in rural economies, few services and solutions respond specifically to their needs and ambitions. Only 7% of extension resources and 14% of donor resources target women in agriculture (MCA [2018](#)).

In addition, rural women are also frontline actors in the global response to climate change. Due to gendered social norms (CGAP [2021](#)), and compared to men, women have less mobility, rights, and access to resources, as well as lower access to social capital, productive resources, and technology, which affords women less capacity to adapt and diversify their livelihoods as climates change (MCA [2020](#)). Rural women have also been disproportionately impacted by Covid-19, which has strained their economic activities, endowments, and agency (FAO [2020](#); CGAP [2020](#)).

CGAP's work with WIRAL focuses on how financial services can play a role in increasing their access and returns to labor and markets to improve their livelihood opportunities and resilience. CGAP's strategy addresses the key challenges of climate change and gendered social norms facing WIRAL and leverages digital tools and bundled solutions (i.e., combinations of financial and non-financial services) in response (see CGAP [2021](#)). Improving rural women's access to labor – including the labor they provide outside their homes, their own labor saved through use of time-saving tools, and the outside labor they hire on their farms and businesses – can increase their productivity and income, and therefore contribute to building more resilient livelihoods. WIRAL's access to markets is also critical: Increased agricultural productivity only generates increased income when outputs reach markets.

But access alone is not enough; rural women must also get equitable returns to labor and markets. How female farmers benefit from productive resources, for example, often has a larger effect than simply their equal access to those resources (WBG [2014](#)). Tools and technology are worthless if WIRAL are not trained to use them; hired labor does not increase productivity when women are perceived as ineffective supervisors and wage labor is not dignified when women sacrifice safety in the workplace.

An important part of CGAP's work is building the business case for serving rural women and raising awareness of sustainable, scalable gender transformative business models (GTBM) and approaches with potential to drive impact for WIRAL and value for providers. GTBM foster change as they add value to women and men's lives and livelihoods. They are designed to address the varied needs and constraints of women and men and aim to foster change in individual capacities, gendered social norms, and institutional rules and practices. Successful GTBM create value for women and the firm.

Introduction to IDH's work on Gender Transformative Business Models

IDH is working together with the private sector and the public sector to create systems change to work on Better Income (more/living income, more stable and more equitable income), Better Jobs (living wage, safe and healthy working conditions and collective bargaining), Better Environment (sustainable land use with a focus on climate mitigation and climate adaptation for smallholder farmers) and Gender Equality as a cross-cutting theme.

To contribute to systems change, IDH is convening key private and public players in specific value chains and jurisdictions, co-funding and developing field level innovations and developing data-driven intelligence to make better informed decisions and accelerate change. We believe that changes at three levels need to happen to contribute to systems change; changing sector governance, changing business practices and changing field level practices. IDH is active in 20 different value chains and 20 different jurisdictions. IDH is considered by both the private and public sector as a neutral convener.

We started our gender journey a couple of years back. One of our first investments has been the development of a gender tool. The objective of our gender tool is to engage and assess whether our private sector partner's business model is gender unintentional, gender intentional or gender transformative. Besides the assessment of the "status" of the business model, the tool also provides concrete guidance to our program colleagues and their partners on what type of interventions can be introduced to move a business model from "unintentional", to "intentional" and "transformative".

Besides the gender tool, we also included a gender module in our "Service Delivery Model" Analysis. In this analysis we look into the Return on Investment for companies that are offering services to farmers (i.e. training, inputs, access to finance, access to markets) and the Return on Investment for farmers that make use of these services. By integrating the gender module, we have been able to collect key data points related to gender equality (at company and farm level) and we are also able to look into the (economic) effect of certain gender related interventions on the performance of the company and the performance of the farmer. We have published some of our first insights from applying the gender tool and gender module in our publication "Optimizing farm systems through gender inclusion" (Farmfit gender report).

We have used the outcomes of the Farmfit Gender Report to co-organize with CGAP a series of events where we focused on how Gender Transformative Business Models make business sense. We hosted a high-level meeting with key companies and H.M. Queen Maxima of The Netherlands, a public event where we focused on what companies can do to make their business models gender transformative and an expert event where we went in more depth into the challenges and opportunities to make a business model gender transformative.

CGAP and IDH joining hands in developing a Gender Roadmap

CGAP and IDH are keen to make Gender Transformative Business Models the new norm. There is sufficient data that shows that business can grow their business by including and centering women as leaders, employees, suppliers and clients and responding to their specific needs and ambitions. But currently many businesses leave value at the table, because they do still often approach the topic from a socio-economic perspective, rather than from a business case perspective. They lack data on where they are and where they have opportunities, there is no language that resonates with them and in case they are willing to work on gender transformative approaches, they often do not know how to do that. We see that three challenges are constraining the understanding, acceleration and scale of GTBM, particularly in rural areas:

1. There is not a widely understood definition of what precisely makes a business model gender transformative, making it difficult for companies and sector support organizations to push for concrete changes.
2. There are no standardized indicators for measuring how transformative a given company's business model is, preventing companies and other stakeholders from measuring progress towards becoming gender transformative; and,
3. There is no available data on company business models and practices that would allow for benchmarking performance against industry peers and competitors, leaving companies and other stakeholders unable to assess the success of efforts to promote GTBM.

In response to these challenges, CGAP and IDH are developing a gender roadmap. The overall objective of the gender roadmap would be to help companies active in agriculture and the food system take ambitious actions to make their business models more gender inclusive and gender transformative.

The gender roadmap will have four milestones: 1) Measure; 2) Standardize and Benchmark; 3) Experiment and Synthesize; and 4) Share and Learn.

Four specific topics and research questions guide the steps of the roadmap.

1. Value for rural women: How do climate responsive, GTBM translate into value for various profiles of rural women, supporting their economic opportunity and income generation? How can innovative financial and non-financial services that address constraints to rural women's access and returns to labor and markets play a role? And what specific approaches to centering women as leaders, employees, suppliers, and customers have the greatest positive impact on rural women's lives and livelihoods?

2. Value for the firm: How do adopting climate responsive, GTBM and approaches create value for businesses, in the short- and long-term? How might CGAP and partners leverage experimentation and learning to articulate the business case for seeing and serving rural women as drivers of rural economic growth? How might we shift the narrative and increase the diffusion and adoption of GTBM in the wider market not only for 'corporate social responsibility' or social impact, but also as crucial to business success?
3. Climate adaptation and resilience: How can innovative financial and non-financial services that address constraints to rural women's access and returns to labor and markets strengthen their adaptation to climate change and resilience to climate shocks? In what specific ways can rural women increase their agency and economic opportunity at the frontline of climate change?
4. Data: To inform provider decision making and market benchmarking, what are the fewest, easiest to collect, and most meaningful indicators to measure the extent to which firms are gender transformative and track changes over time? What data can be aggregated to illuminate the market, allow providers to track and benchmark their performance against peers, and inform interventions from funders, governments, and sector support organizations?

2. Objectives, key activities and deliverables

The overall objective of this assignment is to come up with a commonly accepted definition and key characteristics of what a Gender Transformative Business Model is (in the agricultural and rural sectors) and the key metrics to measure whether a business model is gender transformative (business models of agribusiness, digital platforms that are active in agriculture, and financial service providers active in agriculture). A common definition and key metrics are key elements of the roadmap and will enable future action of companies to make their business models gender transformative, benchmarking of companies and sharing of comparable insights and lessons learnt. With this assignment, the consultancy will contribute to the first two steps of the roadmap.

1. **Measure**. We propose to work with service providers, sector support organizations and experts in data collection/analysis to identify key indicators that can be used to track the progress of firms as they work to adopt and implement GTBM. Working with partners, CGAP and IDH will develop and pilot test a set of indicators that cover various aspects of GTBM, including inclusion of women as employees, leaders, suppliers, and customers. These indicators will also be used to illustrate the business case for GTBM by conducting an analysis of how each indicator affects key outcomes such as revenue growth, profitability, and the acquisition/retention of suppliers and customers. Additionally, the data will be used to better illuminate the impact of GTBM on rural women by analyzing the relationship of each indicator to impact metrics related to livelihoods and resilience.
2. **Standardize and Benchmark**. CGAP and IDH, partners, and key sector stakeholders will narrow to a lean, standard set of indicators to assess the state of GTBM among providers serving rural communities. CGAP and IDH and partners will socialize these indicators to drive their uptake and use and position investors and others to use them

for verification of firms' progress towards adopting GTBM. CGAP and IDH and partners will also collect data on a range of firms serving rural economies globally in order to develop benchmarks that illuminate the industry and allow individual organizations to compare progress against peers.

The **expected key activities** of this assignment are:

1. Conduct research to identify existing definitions of gender transformative business models, approaches to/tools for ascertaining whether a given business model is gender transformative, and any other resources that might inform the activities detailed below.
2. Define gender transformative business models (GTBM) using practical, concrete language free of specialist jargon and with supporting examples, identifying and prioritizing the key characteristics of GTBM through both qualitative and quantitative research methods and expert interviews.
3. Identify a long list of indicators that could help to identify GTBM, identify to what extent a company is gender transformative (i.e., their relative progress toward a gender transformative business model), and possibly correlate with positive outcomes among women and men as customers, suppliers, employees, and managers
4. Examine the long list of indicators to gauge what is important and reasonable for companies to track through an inclusive, collaborative process that engages key stakeholders in a variety of economic sectors, leverages aligned partners (e.g., AgriFin, FinEquity), and employs a range of participatory methods (e.g. expert interviews, virtual discussions, online surveys, social media campaigns)
5. Propose a short list of GTBM indicators, their definitions, and the data collection methodologies (maximum 10) based on what is reasonable for firms themselves to collect and well correlated with key outcomes for women and men as customers, suppliers, employees, and managers
6. Test and refine the short list of GTBM indicators with select companies keen to position themselves at the forefront of gender transformative approaches, learn from this body of work, and benchmark against peers and competitors
7. Build or fine-tune a data collection tool that allows companies to understand and self-report data for each indicator in the final list

CGAP and IDH will play an active role in this assignment by engaging in the following way:

- Sharing a list of key organizations and companies that need to be consulted during the process
- Co-organizing key meetings / sessions to validate the definition and metrics with those organizations that are key to create alignment
- Sharing and promoting the definition and key metrics via social media, events, etc.

The final deliverables of this assignment is:

- A written report that includes a description of the process how the consultancy has come up with the recommended definition, the key characteristics and the final list of recommended GTBM indicators and the final deliverables itself

(definition, key characteristics, indicators and data collection tool / guidance).

- A powerpoint deck that captures the definition and key characteristics of GTBM and the final list of recommended GTBM indicators.
- A data collection tool, in Microsoft Excel or another easy to use format, and concrete guidance on collection methods.

3. Profile of the consultant

The consultancy should have the following skills and expertise.

- Demonstrated experience in engaging with for-profit companies, inclusive finance, rural and agricultural economies, and gender transformative approaches and in effectively communicating with a private sector audience using business language.
- Networks and experience in the Global South, with an understanding of key research and implementation organizations, technical and infrastructure readiness, and the social and economic constraints facing customers and providers in food and financial systems.
- Demonstrated expertise in the collection and analysis of a range of different types of data, data aggregation and benchmarking, and the interpretation/presentation of results tailored to various audiences.
- Demonstrated experience developing metrics for tracking the performance of companies, constructing data collection tools, and collecting/analyzing/visualizing self-reported data.
- Creative, substantive approach to and demonstrated success in leveraging quantitative, qualitative, and blended research methodologies and applying a range of data in pursuing research questions.
- Demonstrated experience in distilling insights from the results of data analysis and creating a range of clear, engaging communications outputs that are understandable, relevant, and actionable to various audiences, particularly those with who are not data scientists.
- Excellent communication skills in both written and oral English, with demonstrated credibility at the senior level and the ability to adapt communication styles to various audiences and diverse stakeholders and the ability and creativity to explore a range of knowledge products and outputs.
- Proactive, positive approach to collaboration and communications with CGAP and partners in all phases of work.

4. Proposal

IDH is asking consultants to prepare a proposal (max. ten content pages) in which it is explained how the consultant will organize its engagement and team (when applicable) to contribute to the objectives as explained above.

The proposal should at least contain:

- Description of your organization;
- Approach to the assignment with concrete examples of similar types of assignments;
- Profile of the consultants (in line with Section 3), including CVs and at least three contactable references per consultant (as an Annex)
- Budget.

5. Selection criteria & procedure

The proposal will be assessed based on the following selection criteria:

- Quality of the proposal, based on the requirements in Sections 3:
 - o Quality of the proposed approach;
 - o Track record in working in gender equality, data and for-profit companies;
 - o Demonstrated experience in executive communication;
 - o Track record of the consultants.
- Budget

The following timelines apply to the procedure and assignment.

Activity	Timeline
Terms of Reference published	March 28, 2022
Deadline for submission of proposals	April 13, 2022 (23:59 hrs. CET)

Selection of consultancy	April 22, 2022
Inception meeting	April 25, 2022
Mid-term deliverables meeting	June 13, 2022
Final deliverables meeting	July 29, 2022

6. Contact information

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Kindly note that any question will be replied by email only. Thank you.