



Gender-responsive approach to harnessing ICTs to scale-up agricultural innovations

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Farm Radio International



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Increased interest in the issue of scaling-up

Impact at scale

Achieved when large or significant proportions of potential beneficiaries or users are reached and have, in some way or another, benefited from the innovations resulting from research.

Scaling-up

Scaling up means expanding, replicating, adapting and sustaining successful policies, programs or projects in geographic space and over time to reach a greater number of smallholder farmers



How can ICTs enhance the scaling-up process?

1. **REACH:** Make info available, accessible and affordable to a large number of farmers
2. **PARTICIPATION:** Facilitate the participation of beneficiaries in the design and implementation of scaling-up initiatives
3. **COLLABORATIVE PLATFORMS:** Strengthen interactions, linkages and networking among key stakeholders



Women, Agriculture and ICTs in Africa

- Women living in rural areas have the least access to ICTs.
 - *Lack of financial resources*
 - *Higher levels of illiteracy*
 - *Norms that discourage women and girls from using technology*
 - *Lack of control over and ownership of technology*
- Women are at a disadvantage in making informed choices about production, increasing their productivity and participating in decision making in their households and communities.
- ICT-enhanced scaling-up could potentially exacerbate that gender divide



Her Voice on Air approach

- Farm Radio International has developed the **Her Voice on Air** approach which involves:
 - **Training of radio broadcasters** to incorporate a gender-sensitive approach in their programming to address information needs of women
 - Assisting women farmers in forming **community listening groups (CLGs)** and **using mobile phones** to call into the radio programs and to record and contribute content for the programs.
 - Presenting **practical information** on farming practices tailored for the crops grown in each area using **interactive radio**



The Her Farm Radio Project

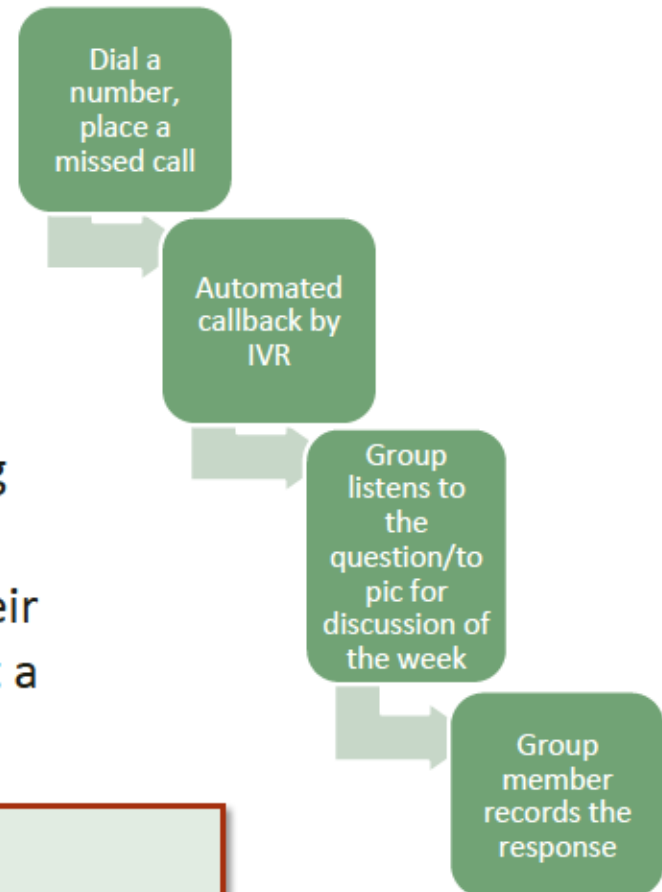
- The Her Voice on Air approach was developed and piloted during the **Her Farm Radio Project** funded by IFAD (2016-17).
- In partnership with 13 radio stations in Ethiopia, Malawi, Tanzania and Uganda, the project included and engaged women in rural radio programs about agriculture
 - 134 community listening groups (CLGs) were formed:
 - 2300 members, 80 percent of them women.



Interactivity System: Uliza

- Purpose-built dashboard for radio stations
 - for managing on-air listener interactions, including incoming and outgoing calls, conference calls, and SMS.
- Each radio station set up dedicated segment in each week's program for the messages and discussion that came from the women's listening groups to the Uliza dashboard.
- Each week two groups were selected to have their messages played, to ensure that every group got a turn.

Content is gathered from remote, hard-to-reach communities with **no travel, no cost to the caller**, and **high quality audio** for inclusion in radio programs.



Evaluation – Focus Group Discussions

- Focus Group Discussions were performed with a number of community listening groups

Some statements by participating women

- *“I used to fear speaking on phone because I thought I would press a wrong button and spoil everything. But now I even pick up my husband’s phone when it is ringing.”*
- *“I was so happy when I heard myself educating others on air. This made me realize everyone has something to contribute in this world even if you are just a farmer with no education.”*
- *“I thought no one could believe in me because am uneducated and a woman. But my group members chose me as their chairperson. This gave me confidence to even contest for the Local Council 1 position which I got.”*



Evaluation in Western Uganda (n =378)

Farmers asked about their level of agreement with following statements

1. Men and women should share productive and domestic tasks more equally

2. Both man and woman should agree on when to sell bananas

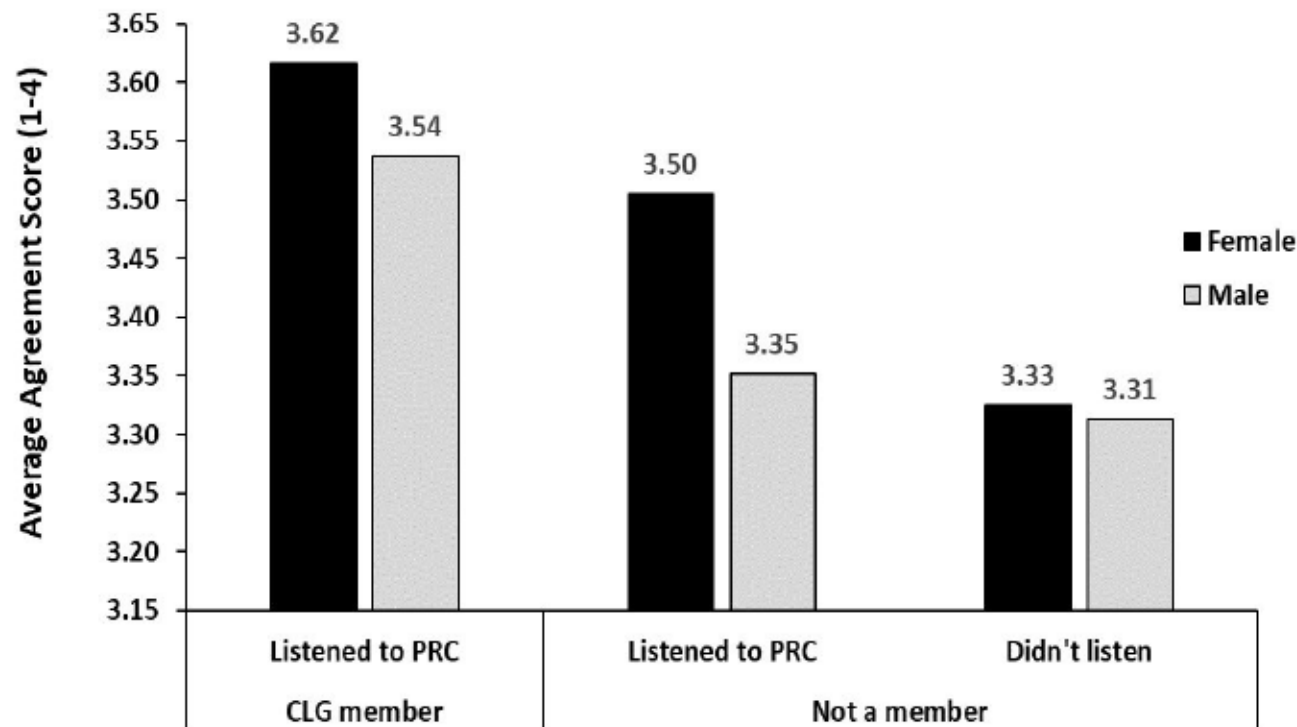
3. Women who have access and control over land are better banana farmers

4. Women should contribute more to decisions about farming and use of income

5. There should be more women's voices on the radio and other media



Evaluation – Western Uganda



Agreement score

Strongly Agree = 4

Agree = 3

Disagree = 2

Strongly Disagree = 1

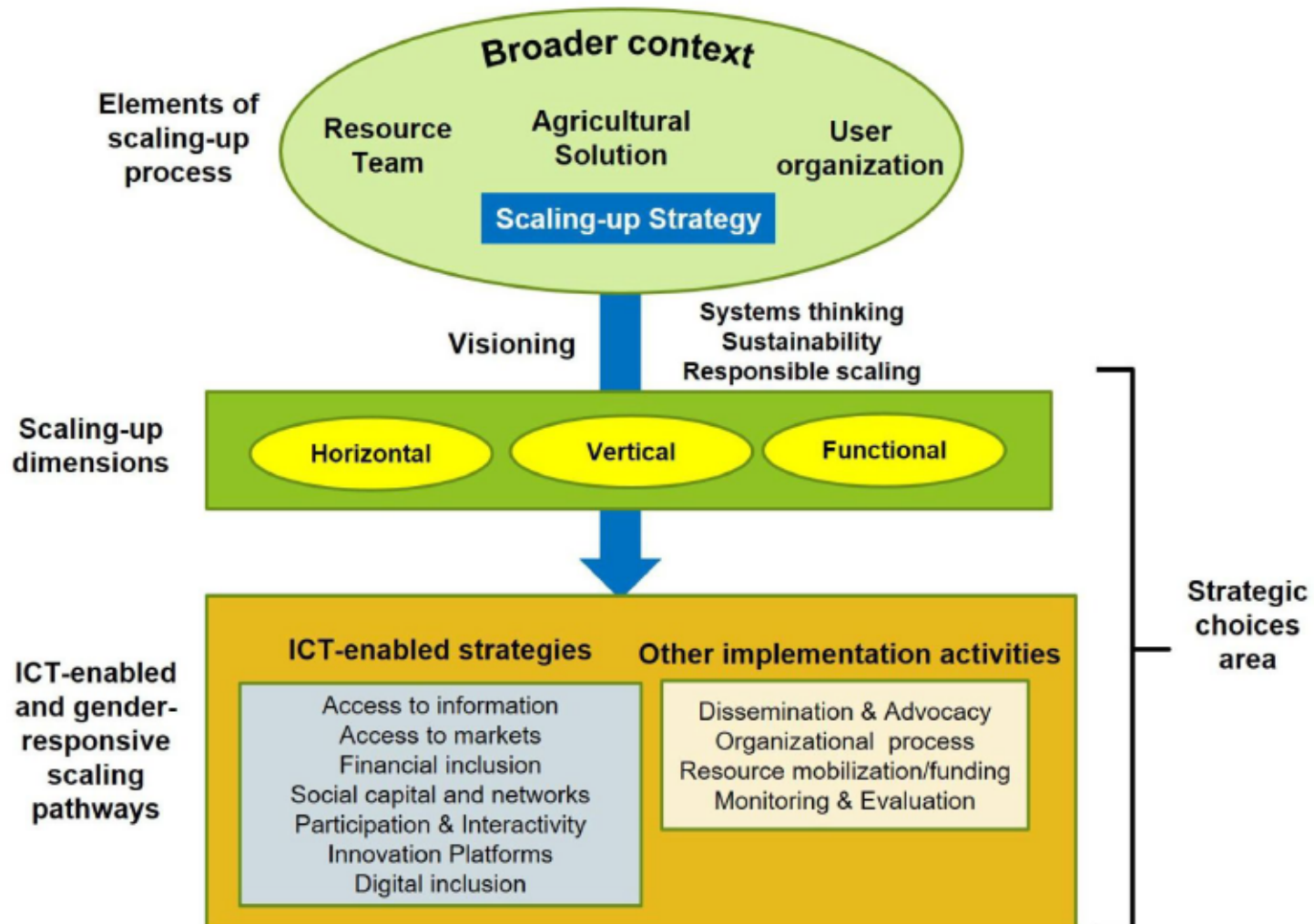
Listening and participating in community listening groups resulted in significantly more positive responses to five (5) statements on gender equality

Lessons Learned

- **Women have a voice; they also really need a platform**
 - If women are given a chance to voice out their issues concerning any development challenge, they are willing and able to articulate their issues in their own ways.
- **Capacity development in ICT skills-** Critical for women's use of ICTs
 - To make a positive link between rural women's livelihoods and ICTs, capacity development must be rooted in project design and linked to outcomes for all project stakeholders especially women who most of the times are disadvantaged.
- **'Women's issues' cannot be dealt with by women only**
 - For change in the plight of women to occur, there is need for open discussion of women's issues and concerted efforts by various stakeholders.



Integrating Her Voice on Air in ICT4Scale conceptual framework



Next steps

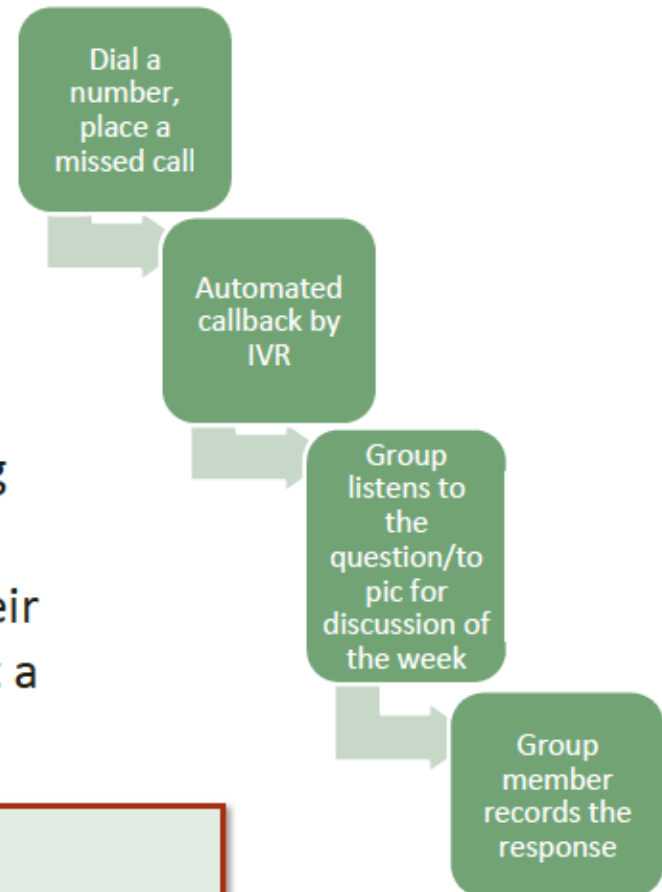
- **Integrate gender-responsive ICT approaches in scaling-up initiatives**
 - Elements of the Her Voice on Air approach will be adapted for a research initiative implemented by FRI and Farm Radio Trust, Malawi to develop a gender-sensitive framework for using ICTs in initiatives aiming at achieving sustainable impact at scale.
- **Increased use of Her Voice on Air approach in future projects by FRI and FRT**
 - The Her Voice on Air approach will be integrated/adapted in an increasing number of projects by FRI and FRT.
- **Further development of Monitoring and Evaluation strategy**
 - Additional work is required to develop M&E tools that can provide solid evidence of the impact of the Her Voice on Air approach on gender-sensitive and gender-transformative developmental outcomes



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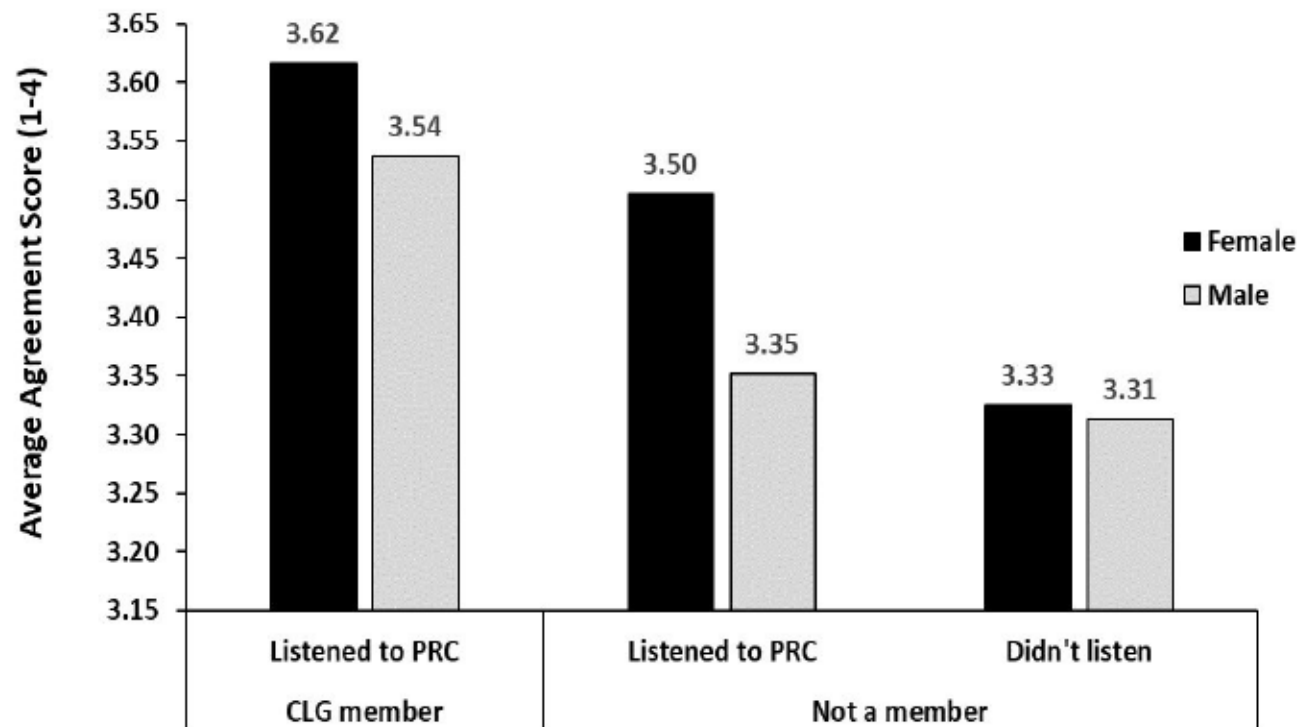
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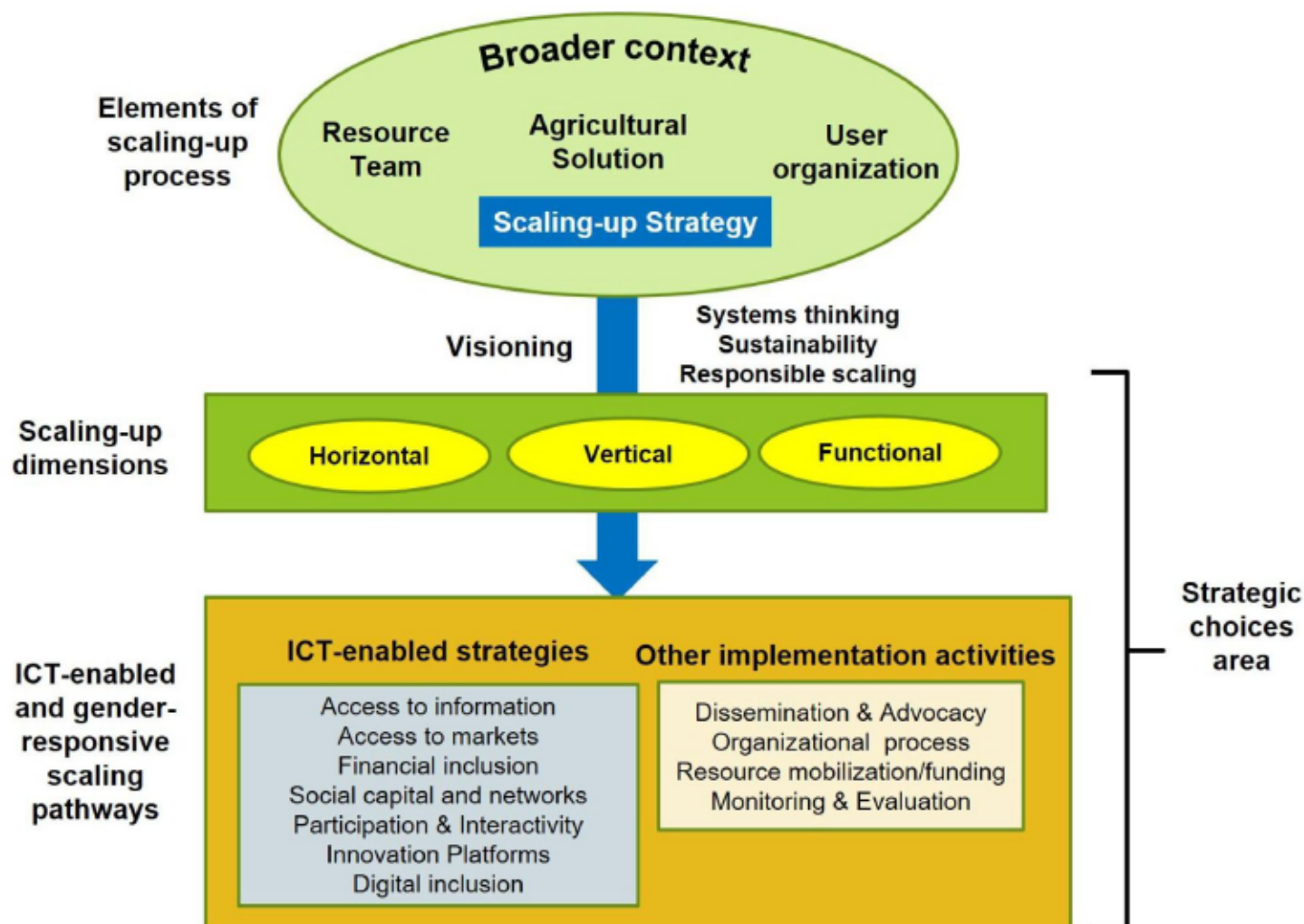
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