



EMPOWER@SCALE

SCALING UP EMPOWERMENT THROUGH HOUSEHOLD METHODOLOGIES: FROM THOUSANDS TO MILLIONS

Consortium Oxfam Novib and Hivos, supported by the International Fund For Agricultural Development (IFAD)

EVERYONE CAN BE A CHANGE MAKER

Like trees, households need to be properly balanced if they are to bear rich fruits. If the roots are not equally strong on both sides or if fruits are heavier on one side, the tree will easily fall over and there will be no harvest next year. Intra-household gender relations matter in rural development. Oxfam Novib and Hivos join hands with support from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) to increase **gender equality, empowerment** and **participation** in rural transformation programs.

Gender equality typically means more productive, faster-growing local economies and improved livelihoods. By breaking through gender constraints at individual, household and community levels, women and men achieve their livelihood visions. Unhealthy relationships can change into win-win situations that increase the effectiveness of programs.

Empowerment happens when individuals and groups imagine the world differently, stand on their own feet and take their destiny in their own hands. With a vision for the future, they challenge and change the power relations that keep them in poverty. Women’s empowerment cannot be achieved without changes at the household level involving all members, young and old, women and men.

Participation means that everyone takes responsibility for their personal and collective development. Women’s contribution often stays hidden, informal and undervalued, and men are trapped in traditional roles as “household heads”. An equal voice in decision making – whatever your gender identity is – mobilises people to collectively improve their situation and get out of poverty.

IFAD is an international financial institution that provides low-interest loans and grants to developing Member States. These are used for programs to enable rural women and men to overcome poverty. IFAD is the leading UN agency innovating with “Household Methodologies” (HHM) to effectively reach poor households and improve intra-household gender relations. IFAD recognises the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) as the most comprehensive approach to empower households and communities, and addresses power imbalances that hinder development. IFAD therefore supports a Consortium of Oxfam Novib and Hivos to scale up empowerment through HHM¹.

¹ IFAD grant Scaling up empowerment through HHM: from thousands to millions. CfP 2017. Implementation 2018-2022

MEMBER STATES WANT “HOUSEHOLD METHODOLOGIES” IN THEIR AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS

By integrating GALS in projects, Oxfam and Hivos already contributed to the empowerment of over 200 thousand of people. Income and assets are shared more equally between women and men. Women and youth have a bigger say in group decisions. Domestic violence reduced. Households and groups pursue shared goals, make informed decisions and thus participate much more actively in programs. To make significant global impact on gender equality, millions of people need to be reached. Over 40 IFAD-supported programs in 23 countries (mostly in Africa) committed to using HHM in their work. The Consortium works together with dedicated and knowledgeable IFAD counterparts to respond to the demand for capacity development and information on HHM.

SCALING UP REQUIRES BOTTOM UP

The consortium aims to contribute to more gender equitable and inclusive programs for rural transformation in at least 15 countries in Africa, by facilitating the scaling up of HHM. According to the consortium this requires:

- 1) Clarifying what is universal about Household **Methodologies** so that these can be localised and mainstreamed into different themes and interventions;
- 2) **Strengthening capacities**. Professional training routines need to change. The predominant step-down teaching style needs to change into process facilitation, to enable very poor people to become change-makers in their communities for gender equality.
- 3) **Monitoring and impact assessment** need to go beyond project teams: if all organisations that apply HHM share and consolidate evidence of pro-poor outreach and effectiveness for empowerment, it can convince many others in the public and private sector.
- 4) Tacit **knowledge** needs to be disclosed and disseminated through **networks**, so that it can be used more widely.
- 5) By forming **partnerships** across countries, regions and organisations, more resources can be leveraged and more poor people can be reached.

ACTION AT MULTIPLE LEVELS

Voluntary **peer replication in communities** is the basis of scaling-up, through “champions” who have undergone major changes themselves. Replication by **CSOs, government agencies and companies** is needed. The Consortium applies four key strategies to make this happen:

- 1) Facilitate the **professionalisation of 6 Empowerment Learning Centres (ELC)** in Kenya, Uganda and Nigeria where clients from at least 15 countries can come to learn and gain hands-on experience on HHM;
- 2) Engage with at least **20 IFAD-supported projects** and others for HHM capacity development ;
- 3) **Link isolated HHM initiatives** into Regional Hubs and a global network with universal principles to secure the quality, and to strengthen the knowledge and evidence base;
- 4) Develop **tailor made HHM approaches** for easier integration in programs (such as rural finance, youth, private sector engagement etc).

GROWTH MODEL

As part of the project the Empowerment Learning Centres, the regional hubs and the new approaches will be evaluated on their effectiveness to facilitate scaling up. Once tested, these mechanisms will be made available and replicated so that more communities and organisations can apply HHM worldwide.