

Positioning vegetables as a good business opportunity in lower-income communities needs to go beyond technical know-how. Cultural and social contexts have a direct impact on the way communities participate in the planning, production, and marketing of vegetables. Women and youth bring dynamics that are indispensable to accelerate and drive the development of successful and vibrant vegetable markets. Although cultural and social barriers may hinder their full participation, the ease with which they organize into groups, their fast learning capability and their ability to share knowledge widely within their networks make women and youth an attractive and needed target group.



Although youth have often perceived agriculture as being a “backward” sector, increasing unemployment and the impact of COVID-19 drying up opportunities in urban areas has compelled many to now look for alternative careers and sources of income. By showcasing the quick wins and business viability of modern farm practices alongside an increased use of digital technology, we will attract more youth involvement in our activities. Their lower aversion to risk and greater appetite to try new technologies will accelerate the pace of change and pave the way to greater sustainability of vegetable markets. We recognize the cultural difficulties of giving a voice to youth and the challenges they have in securing resources, including access to land. Nevertheless, we are confident in reaching our goal of increasing their participation in

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training events from the current level of 30% to 40% by ensuring at least 40% of the key farmers we support are also below the age of 35. These figures will vary according to different countries' cultural and social norms in terms of the youths' access to land and decision-making roles.

As well as accelerating change through youth, we also recognise the critical impact the gender dynamic has on value chain efficiency. To encourage balanced and actively engaged training events, and to ensure that the knowledge we support is most effectively spread within the community, we will work toward increasing the participation of women in training events from the current level of 40% to 50% over the coming years. This will be influenced by ensuring that 50% of the key farmers we support are women.

As well as leveraging influencers in the farming community, we will also strive to maximise the dynamics of our country teams, our management and our governing board by cultivating a gender-inclusive workplace.