



## Gender and Youth Empowerment in horticulture Markets (GYEM)

Have more happy families on board in horticulture value chain

### At a Glance

The overall objective of the Gender and Youth Empowerment in horticulture Markets (GYEM) project is to enhance women’s and youth’s social and economic empowerment through improved access to and control over assets and benefits in the horticulture value chain. GYEM: Supports farmers in attaining higher income and control over income from their horticulture activities with a focus on women; Supports cooperatives in output marketing; Helps cooperatives improving their services in a gender balanced way; Enhances youth participation and income and; Promotes women participation and decision-making power in horticulture value chains.

<b>Coverage:</b>	Oromia and Southern Nations, Nationalities and People’s Region (eight woredas)
<b>Duration:</b>	2016-2018
<b>Donor:</b>	Comic Relief
<b>Beneficiaries:</b>	2 Horticulture Unions 15,000 households
<b>Implementing Partners:</b>	Oromia: <i>Meki Batu Fruits and Vegetables Products Cooperatives Union</i>  SNNPR: <i>Timret Irrigation Development and Marketing Cooperatives Union</i>
<b>Clients/ Partners:</b>	Regional and Woreda Women and Youth Affairs Offices, Regional and Woreda Cooperative Promotion Offices, Woreda Bureaus of Agriculture

### The Development Challenge

Ethiopia is one of the countries with significant differences in status, income and educational attainment based on gender. According to the UNDP, women had a 16% lower Human Development Index (HDI) than men in 2016. Men are twice as literate as women and earn on average USD 726 more than their female counterparts. The World Economic Forum’s Gender Inequality Index (GII) also shows women fare poorly in half of the measured dimensions including income and education.

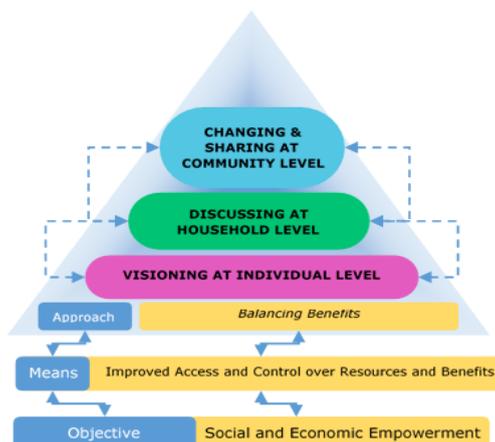
### SNV Solutions

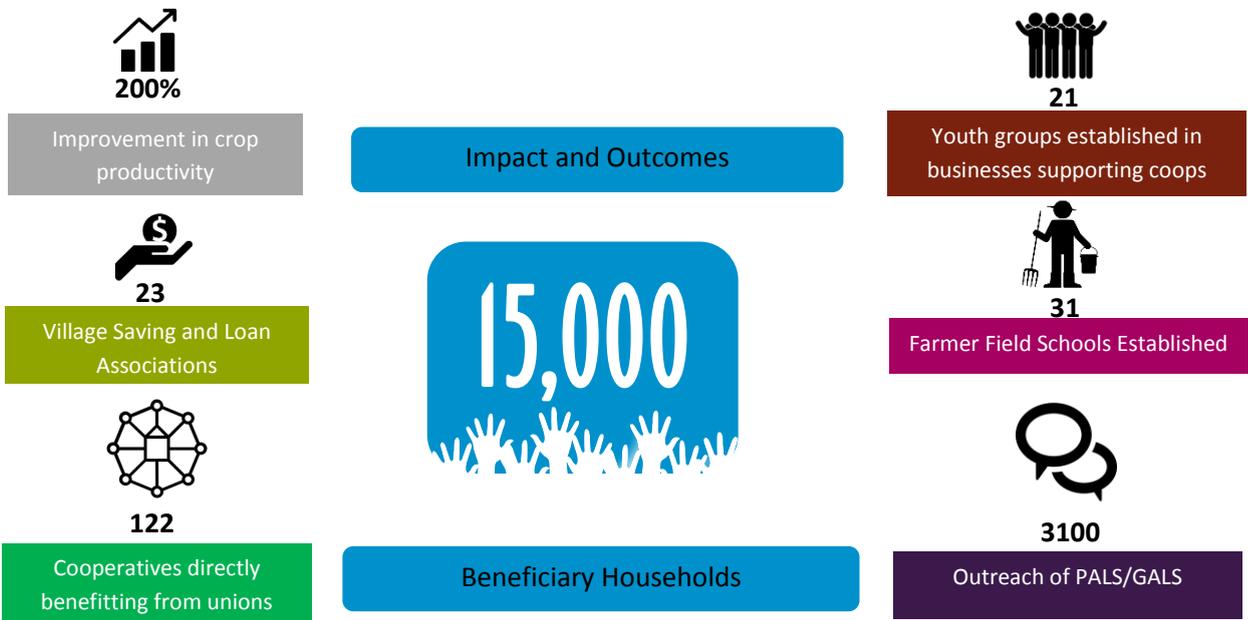
**Gender Empowerment:** This is key in GYEM. There are significant gaps between men and women in terms of horticulture production, productivity and labor force participation rates. The project’s approach regarding the empowerment of women, is *Balancing Benefits* with specific activities geared towards promoting household dialogues, helping women businesses to grow, encouraging women leadership and striving for gender-responsive markets and governance.

**Youth Employment:** GYEM matches youth with profitable horticulture businesses and supports their business skills. Technical skills are important, as well as social and leadership skills. Together with the concerned government offices, GYEM coaches the youth groups in their learning process towards sustainable business and the delivery of high-quality services to cooperatives.

**Value Chains:** GYEM is working with cooperative unions involved in horticulture value chains. The project’s intervention spans from seedling to crop. It is jointly working with another SNV project, Horti-LIFE, in establishing Farmer Field Schools. Next to that, GYEM is setting up Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) to enable access to savings and credits for women.

**Sustainable Markets:** GYEM collaborates with two cooperative unions in Oromia and South region to increase their output marketing of horticulture products. In this regard the project aims to link cooperative members, cooperatives and unions to B2C, B2B and processing markets. Developing a marketing and business plan at union level and facilitate participation of unions and cooperatives in business cluster meetings, is indispensable.





## How is GYEM making change?

**Behavioural Change:** Behavioural change is at the heart of the project's gender transformative interventions. The household methodology called Participatory Action Learning for Sustainability (PALS) uses visioning and planning tools<sup>1</sup> which depart from conventional methods and use drawing as a primary mode of learning and expression. The tools help farmers to reflect on their current status, habits and relationships in the household. Personal reflections, pair-wise and group discussions help farmers envision an ideal situation, recognize their current situation and develop a plan to reach their vision. These visions often cannot be accomplished without their spouses which makes PALS a convincing approach for men and women to live and work happily together. The positive impacts are not only being scaled-up via peer-sharing between farmers but also with cooperative leaders and government stakeholders.

**Capacity Development:** Access to resources is a big challenge for women. Even if they get access to resources, they do not know if they will be allowed to keep the benefit. GYEM is working on access to resources (assets, services, inputs, markets ...) through Farmer Field Schools and control over benefits through Village Savings and Loan Associations to grow women's businesses.

**Business Development:** Strengthening cooperatives and unions is indispensable to upgrade the horticulture value chains in which the union serves as an effective platform where farmers get improved services on input and output side. GYEM is working to create sustainable business linkages between unions and cooperatives with buyers in order to derive better profits from horticulture. On input side, affordable and qualitative input supply systems are being set up like agro dealership. Youth groups are integrated in these business linkages by providing them the required training and start-up capital to serve the horticulture farmers.



Gemedo is one of the men farmers from Meki Batu Union and Bochesa Cooperative (Oromia) who got the opportunity to participate in a workshop organized by GYEM. Equipped with the right tools from the workshop, he was able to identify some of his major challenges like his excessive drinking habit. After the PALS training, he managed to significantly reduce the use of beer and started spending most of his time on the farm. His relationship with his wife Tsehay and their kids has improved as well. The changes he exhibited were noticed by the cooperative members who later on elected him to become the chairperson. He is now a dedicated leader and under his leadership, things have started to change for the better for all the cooperative members.

More specifically, he was able to mobilize money for the maintenance of two broken water pumps and put them back to work. The program of using pumps was causing disputes between members. Gemedo worked out a schedule for an equitable use of the pumps among the members.

