



INITIATIVE ON
Gender Equality

How gender norms constrain women's economic resilience to climate change challenges in Nigeria

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Outline

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Introduction

Climate change and gender norms are interwoven, with women frequently being more vulnerable due to pre-existing social and economic inequalities (Awiti, 2022)

In Nigeria, gender norms and the tradition of giving more privileges to men are prevalent (Makama, 2013; Olonade et al., 2021)

These norms shape women's access and control to issues pertinent to successful participation in agrifood systems (AFS)

The norms are slow to change, restrictive, and limit the capacities of women's AFS actors to build economic resilience to climate change

Nigeria, as a climate change hotspot, presents a compelling situation for understanding how gender norms influence women's economic resilience (Akinsemolu and Obafemi, 2019)



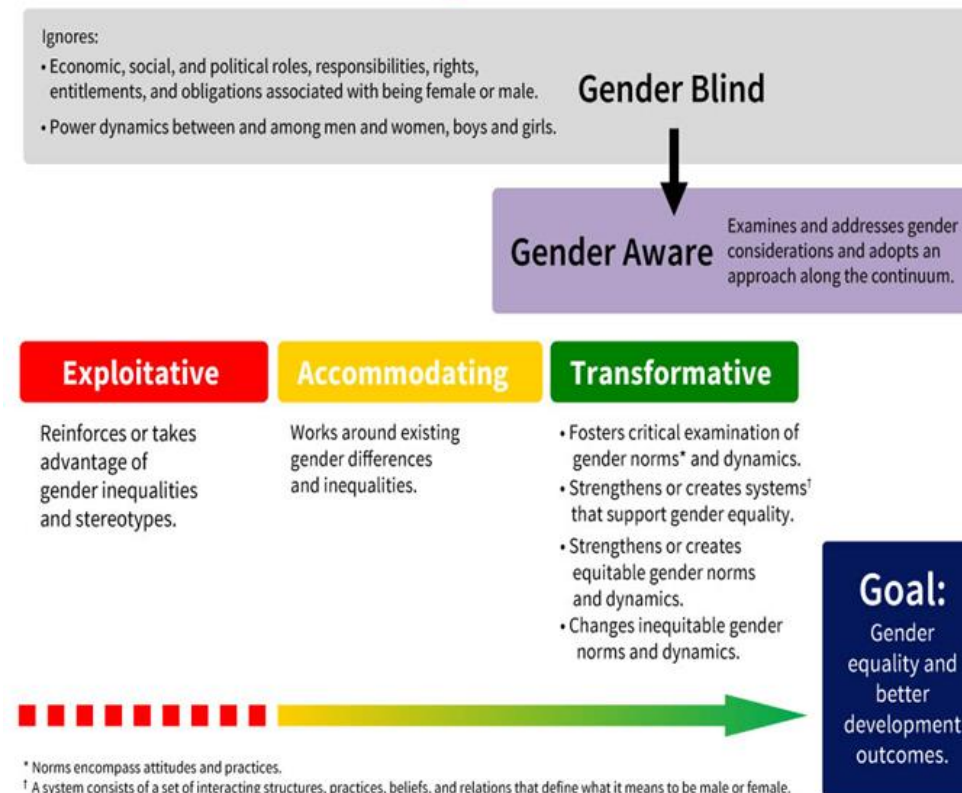
Source: [CGIAR System Organization's albums | Flickr](#)

Motivation

Most efforts at addressing gender inequality have been limited to the use of gender accommodative approaches, which most times concentrate efforts on increasing awareness of women's needs and treating the symptoms of inequality, such as individual access to land, credits, technology, and other resources

Critiques have discouraged using such approaches because they address the visible gender gaps, not the underlying structural barriers that create gaps, such as unequal attitudes, norms, and power relations (Cole et al., 2015).

Gender Integration Continuum



Source: Interagency Gender Working Group, 2009; updated 2019.

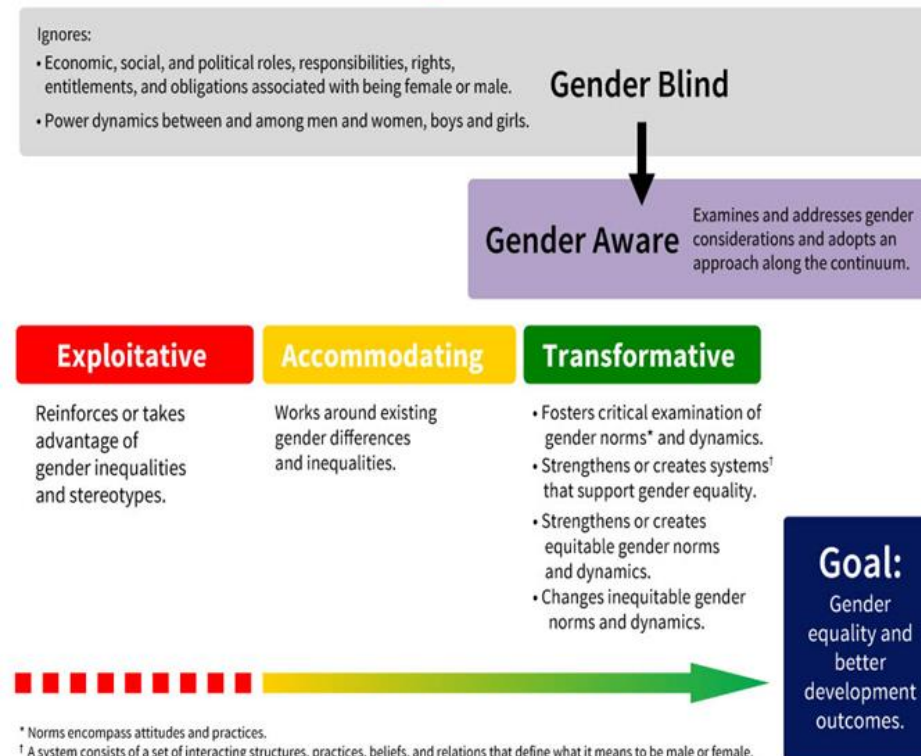
Motivation

Recently, Gender Transformative Approaches (GTAs) have been forwarded to address the root causes of gender-based inequalities by tackling unequal norms, attitudes, and power relations.

Evidence Gap: there are critical evidence gaps in the design, use, and application of GTAs that can address normative constraints

Effective design and application of GTAs: Designing effective GTAs in addressing normative constraints requires a better understanding of the existing norms at different institutional levels and the associated constraints

Gender Integration Continuum

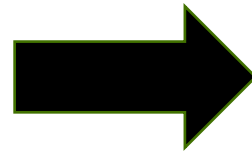


Source: Interagency Gender Working Group, 2009; updated 2019.

Objectives

Main Objective

Provide insights into the normative constraints that limit women's capacities to build economic resilience to climate change (CC) challenges – learning from Cassava, Catfish and Chicken value chains in Nigeria.



The study addresses four main objectives which are:

Objective 1: To identify the major climate-related events affecting AFS actors in the cassava, catfish, and chicken value chains

Objective 2: To understand how climate-related events have affected the performance and livelihoods of the AFS actors;

Objective 3: To understand the gender norms that shape the activities of women value chain actors across the three value chains and

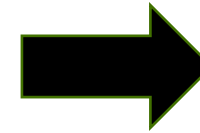
Objective 4: To understand how gender norms affect women's economic resilience to climate change challenges across the three value chains

Methodology

As part of its Work Package 1 (**TRANSFORM: Reducing normative constraints that limit women's economic resilience to climate change (CC) challenges**),

The Harnessing Gender and Social Equality for Resilience in Agrifood Systems (HER+) Initiative:

- Implemented comprehensive qualitative assessments of gender norms with women and men operating at different nodes of the cassava, catfish/fish, and chicken value chains in Nigeria and Tanzania.
- The assessment complements other diagnostic work implemented in the One CGIAR Harnessing Gender and Social Equality for Resilience in Agrifood Systems (HER+) Initiative to inform the design and piloting of gender-transformative interventions.



HER+ initiative

A CGIAR research initiative working to achieve climate resilience by strengthening gender equality and social inclusion across agrifood systems in the Global South

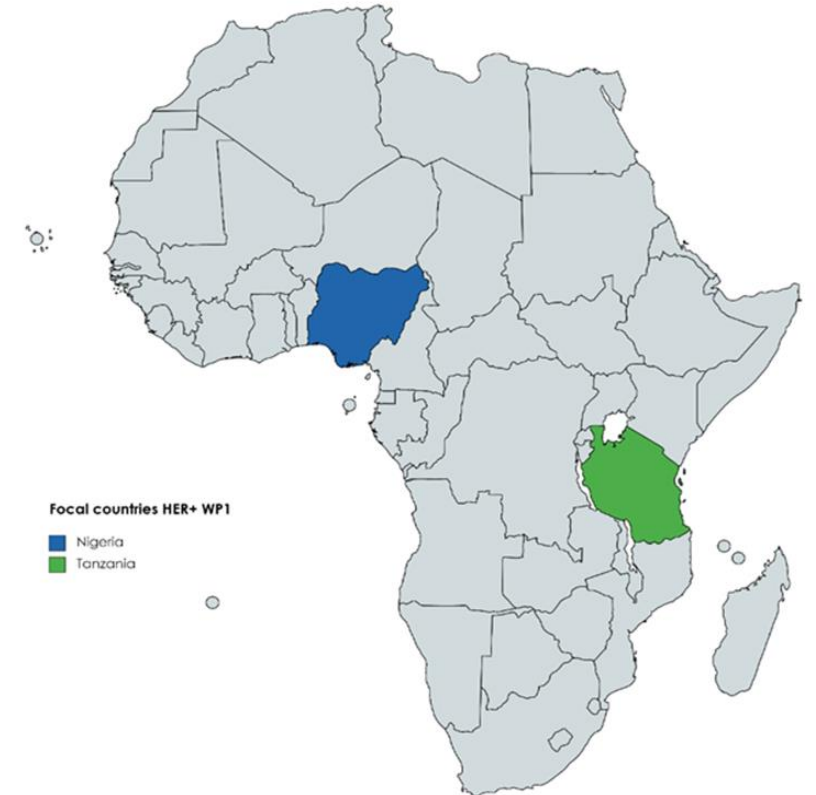
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<https://www.iita.org/news-item/her-initiative-builds-womens-agricultural-resilience-for-climate-change>

Methodology

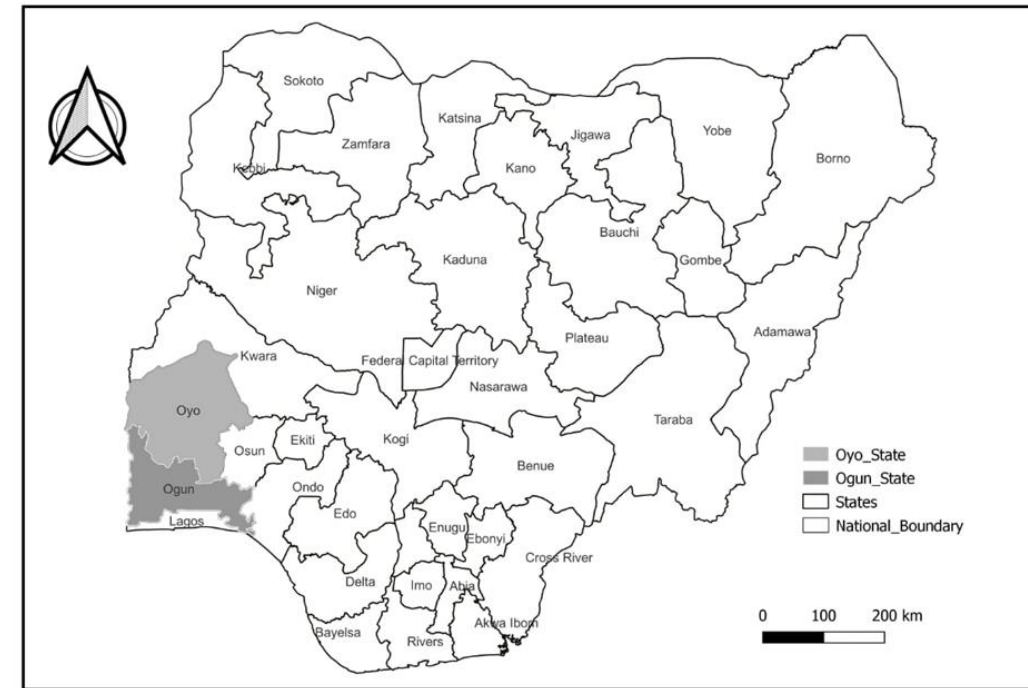
The study was implemented in Nigeria and Tanzania. The study used a combination of tools – Individual Interviews, Key Informants Interviews (KIIs), and Community-Level Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) to collect data from:

- Value Chain actors at different value chain nodes (input suppliers, finance providers, aggregators/traders).
- Community members involved in the value chain (processing, marketing, transportation etc).
- Value chain service providers (input suppliers, finance providers, aggregators/traders)
- Community leaders; and
- Government representatives, regulatory bodies, and NGOs.



Methodology

This study presents the methodology and preliminary findings of the qualitative assessment that was carried out with women and men operating at the different nodes of the cassava, catfish, and chicken value chains in Nigeria.



Methodology

Breakdown of Tools and Respondents in Nigeria

Tool	Respondents	Catfish		Cassava		Chicken	
		F	M	F	M	F	M
Individual Interviews	– Community members involved in the value chain (including producers, processors, traders etc but operating at the community level (both in rural areas and peri-urban areas)	3	3	3	3	3	3
	– Value Chain actors at different nodes of the value chain (processing, marketing, transportation etc.	2	2	2	2	2	2
Key Informant Interviews	– Value chain service providers (input suppliers, finance providers, aggregators/traders/middle persons, supermarkets etc.)	2	2	2	2	2	2
	– Community leaders	1	1	1	1	1	1
	– Government representatives, regulatory bodies, NGOs		2		2		2
Community-level Focus Group discussion	– Producers (fish, livestock and cassava), community-level processors and traders (6 participants per FGD)	3	3	3	3	3	3



For each of the three value chains, we conducted 10 Individual Interviews, 8 KIIs and 6 Community-level FGDs. This results in a total of 30 Individual Interviews, 24 KIIs and 18 Community-level FGDs (totaling 72) across the three value chains.

Preliminary Findings

Objective 1 - Main climate-related events affecting AFS actors across the three value chains



Cassava Value Chain

- Inadequate/infrequent rainfall
- Early/delayed onset of rainfall
- Weather extremes e.g. extreme heat



Catfish Value Chain

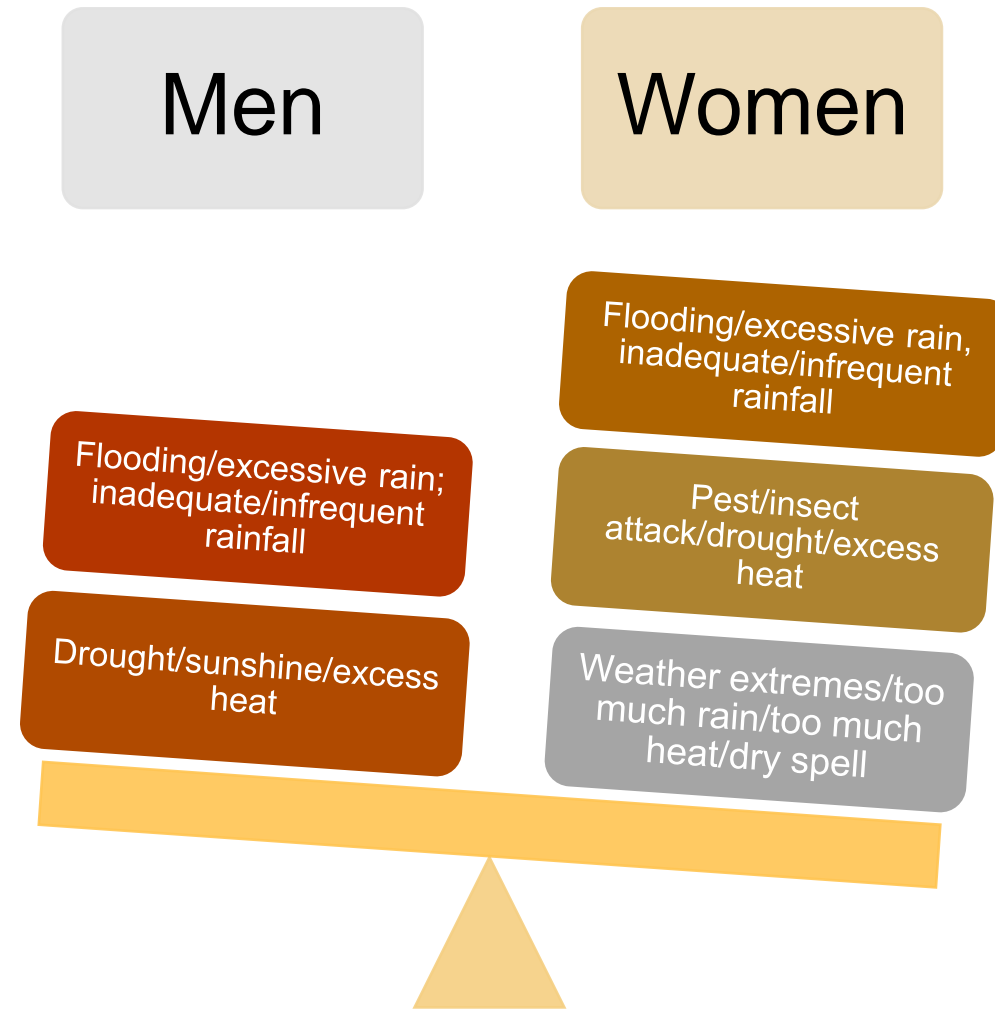
- Flooding/excessive rain
- Inadequate/infrequent rainfall
- Early/delayed onset
- Weather extremes e.g. too much rain, too much sun, long dry spell



Chicken Value Chain

- Flooding/excessive rain
- Drought/excess heat

Objective 1 - Main climate-related events affecting AFS actors by gender



Objective 1 - Main climate-related events affecting AFS actors by gender

Although men and women reported being affected by similar climate events, our study observed gender differences. **Women's activities were affected by all the climate-related events reported. However, men's activities were affected by three main climate events - flooding/excessive rain, inadequate/infrequent rain, and drought/excess heat.**

In some ways, **this finding confirms men's concentration in the production nodes of the value chains, while for women, there is a high possibility of participation in post-harvest handling, processing, and distribution; thus, they are affected by more climate events transcending those experienced by men.** This finding is supported by Akinsemolu and Obafemi (2019). Their study observed that women and girls' involvement in more domestic activities exposes them to more extreme weather events.

Objective 2 - Impact of CC challenges on the performance and livelihoods of AFS actors across the value chains

- Although men and women reported that they have similar impacts of CC challenges, our study revealed that there are gender differences in the experiences of CC challenges, and this is determined by the nodes/activities in which the men or women AFS actors are involved.

Objective 2 - Impact of CC challenges on the performance and livelihoods of AFS actors across the value chains

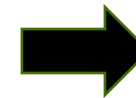
Cassava Value Chain

Women

- **1:** Excessive rain destroys roads, and women as buyers are not able to travel to the affected villages to acquire the products
- **2:** When the rain comes with heavy wind, it affects women who process gaari

Men

- **1:** Early onset of rains affects the planting of cassava
- **2:** Weather affects farming activities negatively, destroying the produce; the cassava roots get rotten.
- **3:** Excessive rains destroy cassava roots leading to poor or low harvests



Impacts on women and men in cassava value chain

- Reduced productivity and profitability
- Reduced income with attending impact on livelihoods and climate resilience

Objective 2 - Impact of CC challenges on the performance and livelihoods of AFS actors across the value chains

Catfish Value Chain

Women

- **1:** When there is flooding, processors (fish), who are mostly women, do not have access to fish to process
- **2:** During excessive heat and a long dry spell, the cost of fish goes up, which also affects business for fish processors
- **3:** During the rainy season, when there is excessive rain, it takes longer to smoke fish using charcoal

Men

- **1:** Men are more into fish production than women. As a result, climate events such as flooding, excessive heat and dry spell will affect the pond condition and the production capacity of the male catfish producers



Impacts on women and men in catfish value chain

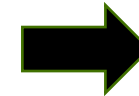
- Reduced productivity and profitability
- Reduced income with attending impact on household food security, livelihoods and climate resilience

Objective 2 - Impact of CC challenges on the performance and livelihoods of AFS actors across the value chains

Chicken Value Chain

Women and Men

- **1:** When there is a flood, it is difficult for some chicken farmers to access their farms leading to the loss of birds and equipment.
- **2:** However, when there is too much heat, chicken farmers need to find a way to cool down their chickens; otherwise, they experience poor egg production, reduced meat production, and high mortality and morbidity of chickens
- **3:** When it is too hot, vaccines fail, and the quality of vaccines received cannot be assured, which increases death and disease for chickens



Impacts on women and men in chickenvalue chain

- Reduced productivity and profitability
- Reduced income with attending impact on household food security, livelihoods and climate resilience

Objective 2 - Impact of CC challenges on the performance and livelihoods of AFS actors across the value chains



Key Learning

Although men and women AFS actors reported they experience the same impacts of CC challenges. However, our studies found gender differences in the impacts especially in line with the nodes/activities actors are engaged in.

Also, for men and women, CC challenges are compounded by poor infrastructure such as poor roads and lack of drainage.

“When it is the rainy season, the river is full, then it affects our pond, and our fish are washed away”

Many of the women and men AFS actors presented an attitude of fatalism and helplessness in their responses to CC challenges

‘Exactly, we know that it is from God, and we can do nothing about it’ (Male Producer, Cassava Value Chain, FGD)

Objective 2 - Impact of CC challenges on the performance and livelihoods of AFS actors across the value chains

Key learning

Slow onset climate events (SOEs), especially changes in climate variability and increased extreme weather, have disproportionately greater negative impacts on the well-being of smallholder farmers

- *‘There is always flood. The rivers are full, and there is no repair, in my own opinion, that’s it.... when it’s rainy season the river is always full so it affects our ponds to the extent that it carries away our fish. So, the carrying away of the fish brings loss for most of the farmers. The extent that from there some farmers do collapse due to losses’ - (Male catfish producer - FDG).*
- *‘What I can see in those events is excess heat. That is why we plant banana trees to protect the water flowing in and out of the fishpond. The excess heat is the major challenge, as we have taken care of the flow of excess water and dirt, making the fish safe because nets are over the fishpond. It is the excess heat that poses a big challenge to the fish’ (KII Female community Fish Value Chain)*

Objective 3: Gender norms that shape the activities of women value chain actors across the three value chains

Participants confirmed the prevalence of discriminatory gender norms that serve as barriers to women's in:

- **Access and control of financial resources**
- **Mobility**
- **Participation in leadership**
- **Adoption and use of technologies/equipment**
- **Participation in value chain nodes/activities that have high returns**

Objective 3: Gender norms that shape the activities of women value chain actors across the three value chains



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Norms restricting women's access to and decision-making around financial resources in the chicken value chain

- A woman cannot get credit/loan for chicken farming without the approval of her husband
- It is not appropriate for a woman to decide over the use of money obtained from chicken sales



Objective 3: Gender norms that shape the activities of women value chain actors across the three value chains

Participation in leadership

- A woman should not lead the cassava or chicken association/cooperative society



Objective 3: Gender norms that shape the activities of women value chain actors across the three value chains

Mobility

- It is an abomination for a woman to travel or move far away from their home or community for chicken related matters without the approval of the husband
- A woman should not travel to attend chicken related training or workshop outside her community especially when it involves a sleepover



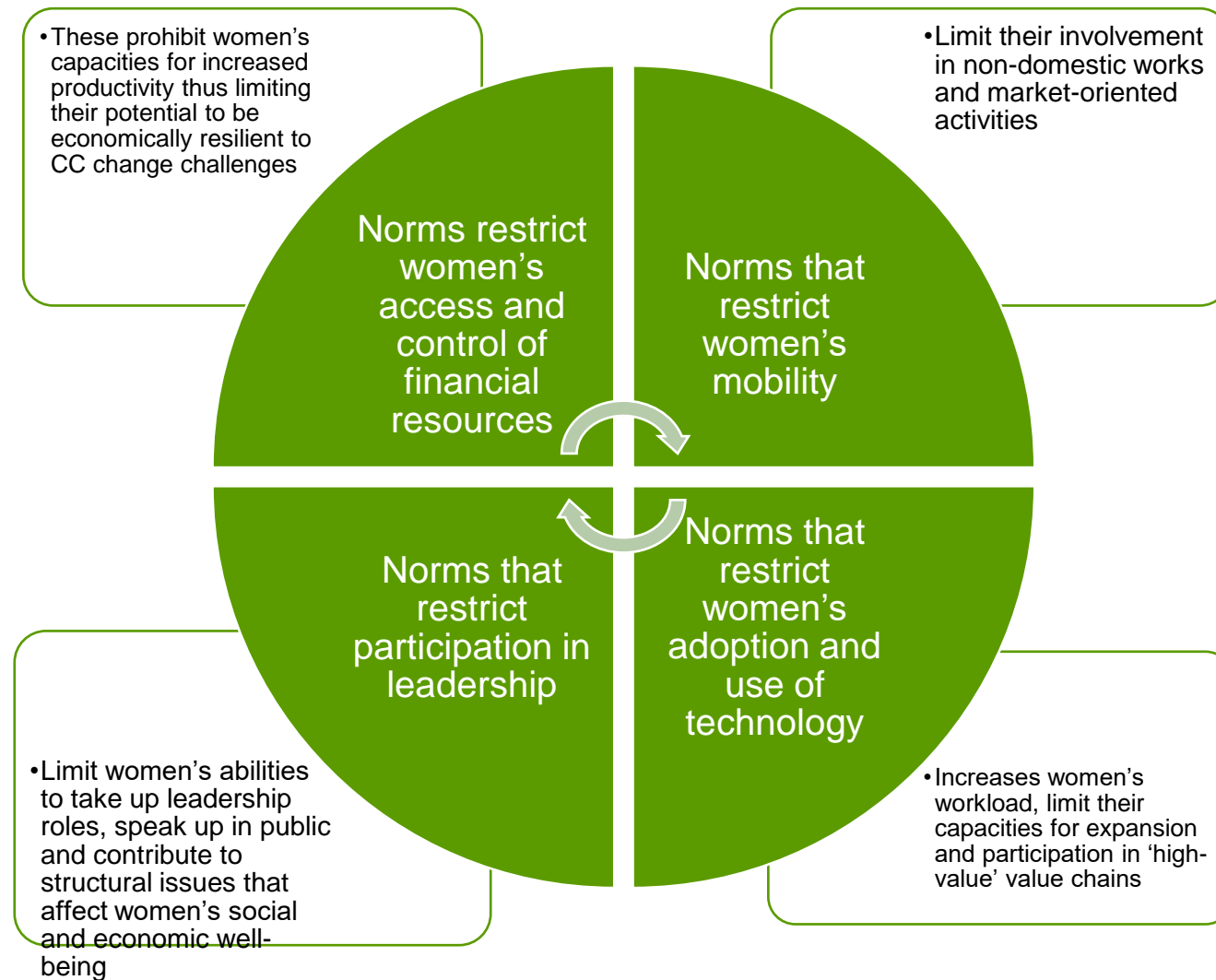
Objective 3: Gender norms that shape the activities of women value chain actors across the three value chains

Adoption and use of technologies in the catfish/fish value chain

- Women should not operate catfish hatcheries
- Women should not use fishing equipment
- It is not appropriate for a woman to own fishing vessels such as boats



Objective 4: How gender norms constrain women's economic resilience to CC challenges



Source: elaboration by authors

Objective 4: How gender norms constrain women's economic resilience to CC challenges

- **Norms that prevent women from owning major assets such as land** - limit women's ability to expand their businesses and, finally, their ability to be resilient to climate change impacts
- **Norms that restrict women's mobility and demand that women are responsible for caring for the children** - prohibit women from engaging in other non-domestic and productive activities
- **Norms that restrict women from speaking in public** - affect their ability to voice out issues of concern to them and their livelihoods

Objective 4: How gender norms constrain women's economic resilience to CC challenges

- **Norms about technology adoption and use** - prohibit women's free access and use of some technology/equipment. It limits their participation in some activities of the value chain
- **Norms about access to credits and loans** - prohibit women from getting loans without their husbands' approval. This increases the bureaucratic process of women's accessing loans and restrictions on their financial capacities
- **Norms relating to the gender division of labour** – assign domestic roles to women, thereby increasing their workload; such norms also restrict women from taking up some activities in the value chain which are presumed to align with women's domestic role e.g., washing, peeling, processing

Conclusion

- Restrictive gender norms widen structural gender inequality in AFS.
- These norms further limit the capacity of women in AFS to build economic resilience to CC challenges.
- Actors in AFS should focus on designing and implementing gender-transformative interventions that tackle structural norms that limit women's economic resilience to CC challenges.
- These and evidence from other diagnostic work under the One CGIAR HER+ initiative will inform the design of interventions to overcome the normative constraints towards women's economic resilience to climate change impacts.

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