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Promoting Women and Youth in Agriculture for Sustainable Livelihoods

GIFT CHITAMBALA¹, RASHID MPINGAGJIRA², JOSHUA APOCHI APOCHI³, RAMLA BAABA KEELSON⁴, SALEM HADHAMI⁵

¹ *Westwood Agri Limited, Zambia*

² *Women Economic Empowerment Project, Malawi*

³ *Financial Cycle GIZ-AFC-AGFIN, Nigeria*

⁴ *JKBA Farms, Ghana*

⁵ *Plantix (Cooperation with GIZ and start-up PEAT), Tunisia*

Abstract

Young people and women are increasingly linked to targeted agriculture and food security interventions. In Africa, the argument is that the combination of agricultural value chains, technology and entrepreneurship will unlock a sweet spot for youth and women employment.

Therefore, the main question which begs answers is as follows: which sector provides the most potential to reduce poverty among the youth and women? The agricultural sector seems to provide the answer to this question, despite the increasing evidence suggesting that the sector is not attractive to young people and women.

With the looming employment challenge in Africa, exciting agribusiness ideas as well as policy directions on how the sector can be made attractive to the youth and women remain crucial. Although there is overwhelming empirical evidence on youth employment in agriculture across the globe in general, evidence in Africa seems to be sparse especially with youth and women engaged in agricultural related livelihoods. Generally, while there is an increasing number of studies and interest on youth and employment studies in Africa, very little is known about sustainable livelihoods of youth and women employment in agriculture. Further, sustainable project ideas coming from the youth themselves as well as aspirations existing in agriculture are not well established.

It is against this background that, Salem, Ramla, Josh, Rashid and Gift from Tunisia, Ghana, Nigeria, Malawi and Zambia respectively wish to present their project ideas around their common title which focuses on promoting the youth and women involvement in the agricultural sector for sustainable livelihoods. The following are the project ideas;

- AMAL women cooperative for goat farming (Salem - Tunisia)
- Changing the perception of youth about agriculture through educational strategies and vegetable production (Ramla - Ghana)
- Improving agricultural extension by formation of private extension service of sustainability of agricultural innovations (Josh -Nigeria)
- Improving the role of women in groundnuts value chain (Rashid - Malawi)
- Potential of Agricultural Smart Hub value chains to improve youth unemployment (Gift - Zambia)

These project ideas will therefore centre on promoting women and youth in Agricultural activities for sustainable livelihoods.

Keywords: Agriculture, education, women, youth