



Farmer field schools in Madagascar: best practices for gender-sensitivity

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STUDY BACKGROUND

- Southeastern region of Madagascar provides favorable conditions for diversified agriculture
- Farmer Field School (FFS) is a common approach to promote agricultural techniques in rural areas
- Agriculture is dominated by men, along with patriarchal land tenure in many regions of Madagascar
- Lack of understanding of gender-transformative FFS implementation in rural areas of Madagascar
- We studied the different FFS approaches implemented by 3 NGOs in 3 districts of Atsimo Atsinanana region (fig. 1) to promote nutrition-sensitive agriculture

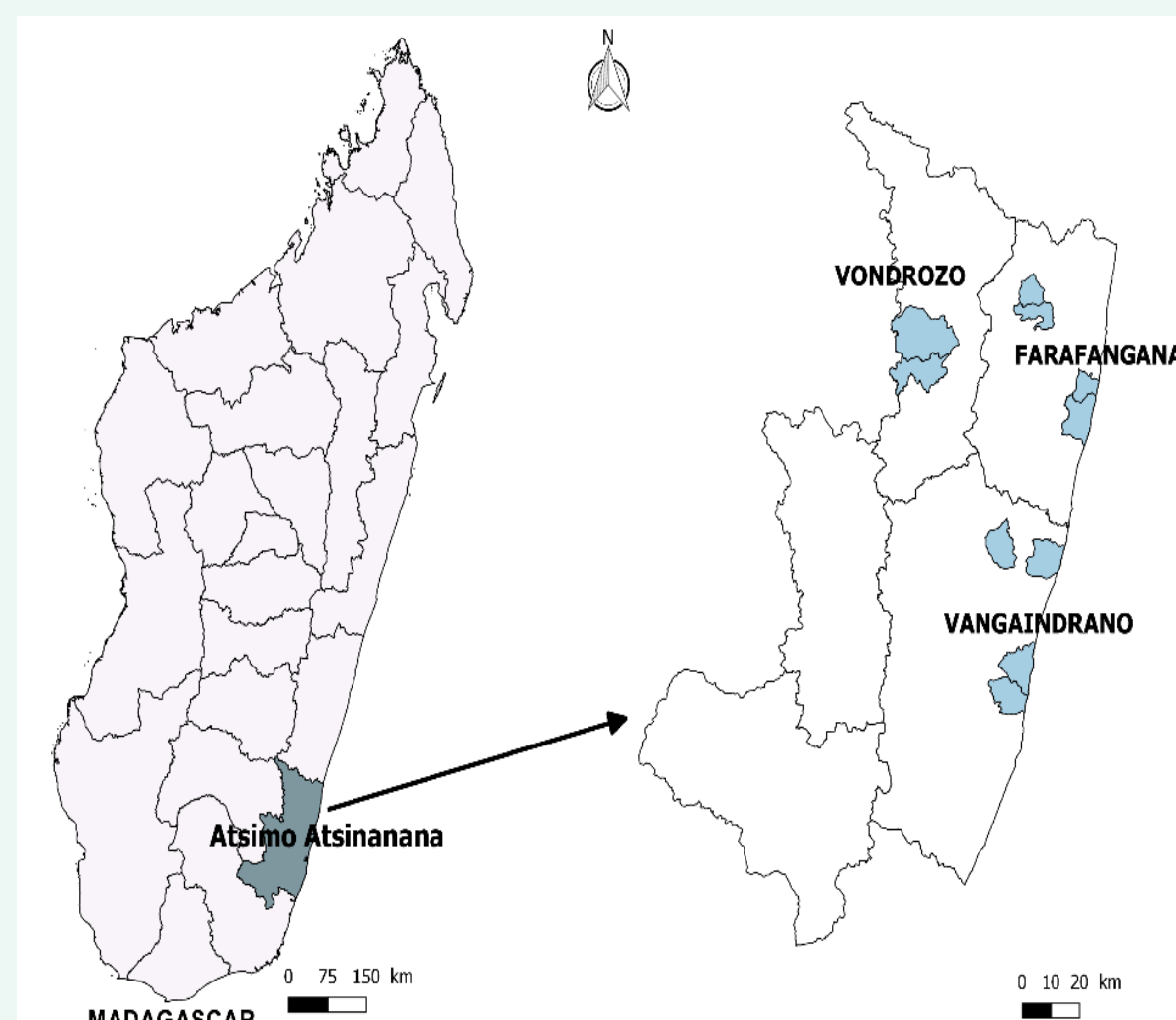


Fig 1: Targeted villages across 3 districts in Southeast region of Madagascar

OBJECTIVE

3 Districts of interventions; 3 different NGOs; 3 different approaches



Identify gender sensitive best practices for farmer field school?

METHODS

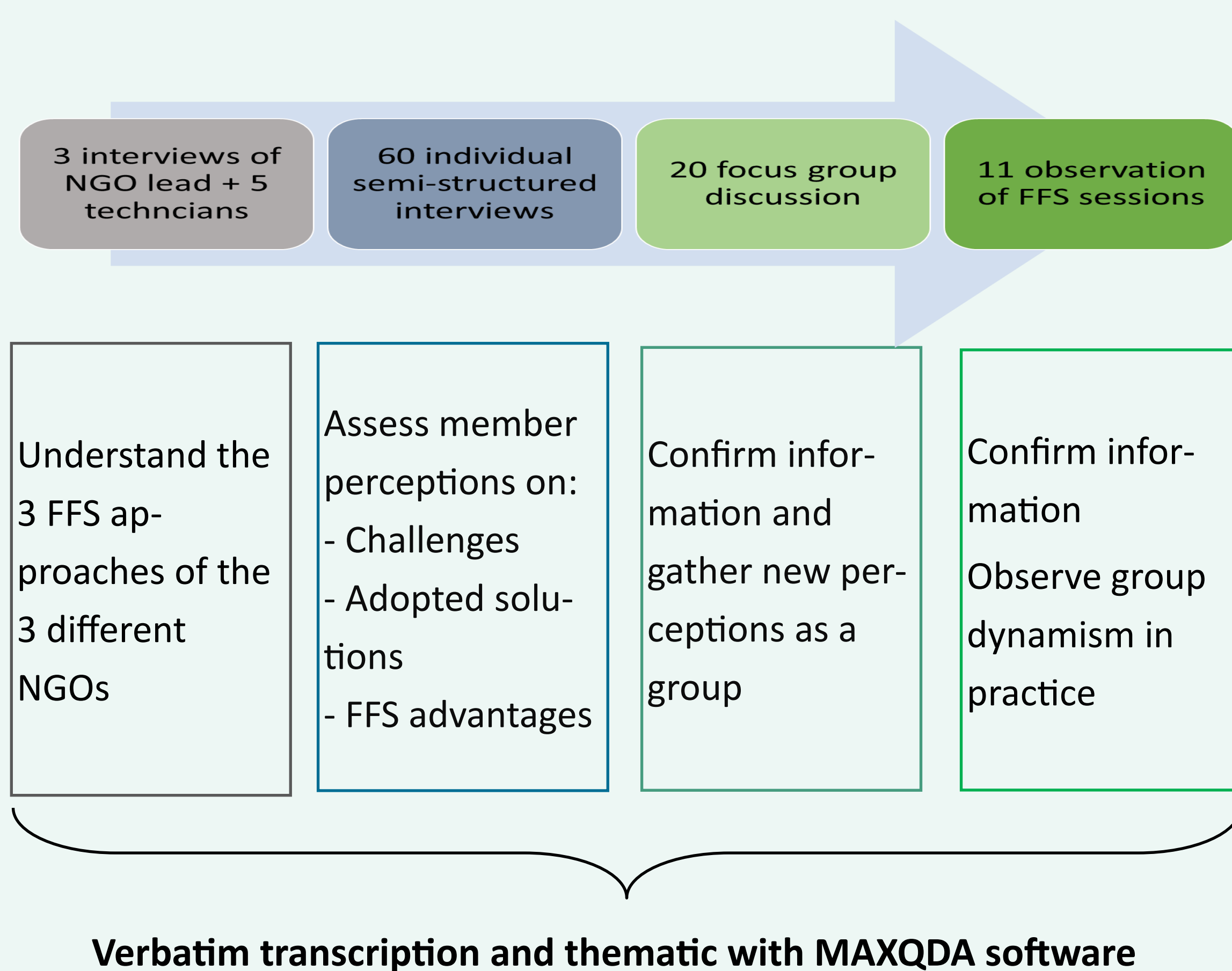
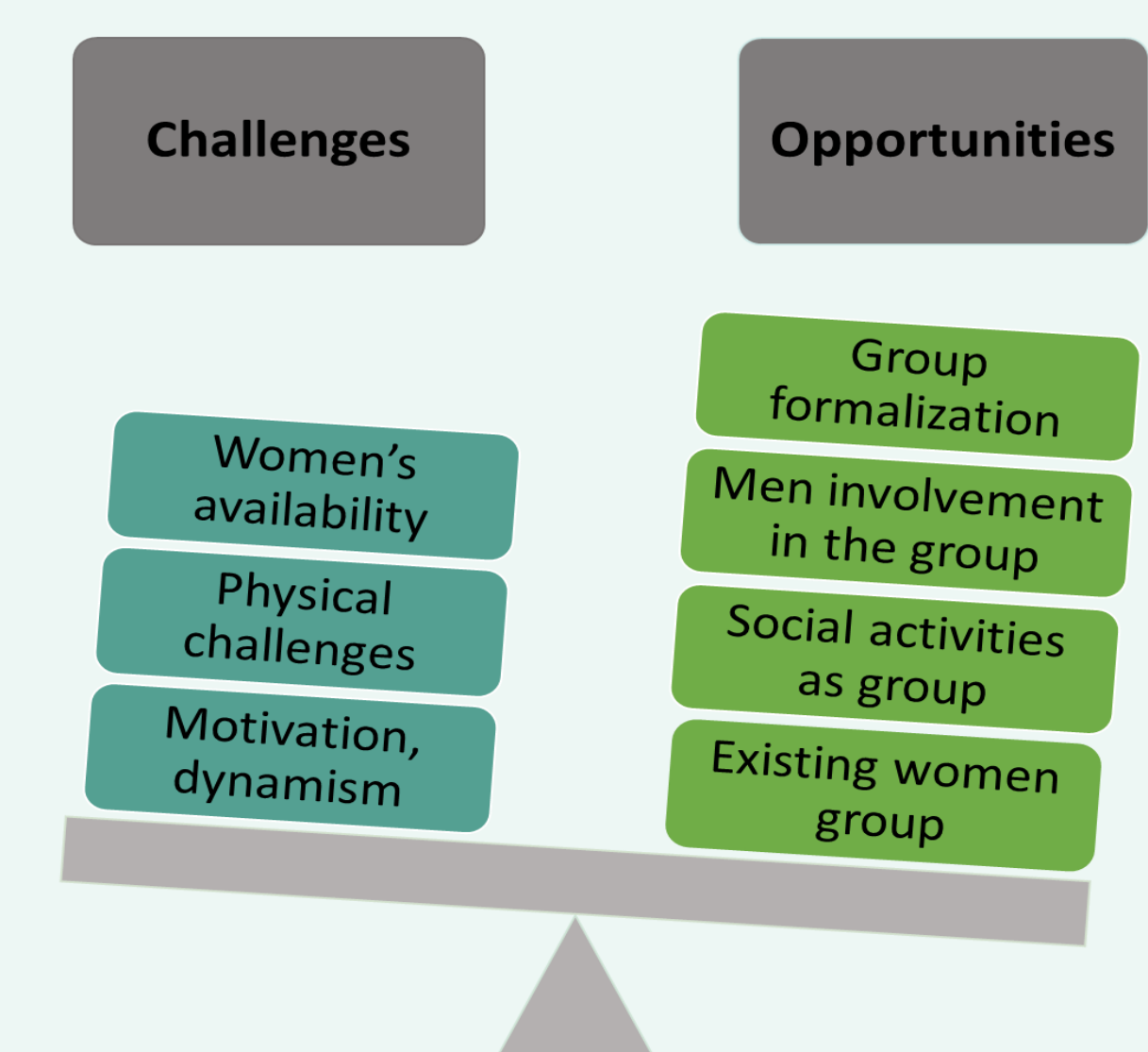


Fig 2: Women working on one plot and helping each other in the common FFS plot in Farafangana district

RESULTS

1. FFS implementation: challenges and opportunities

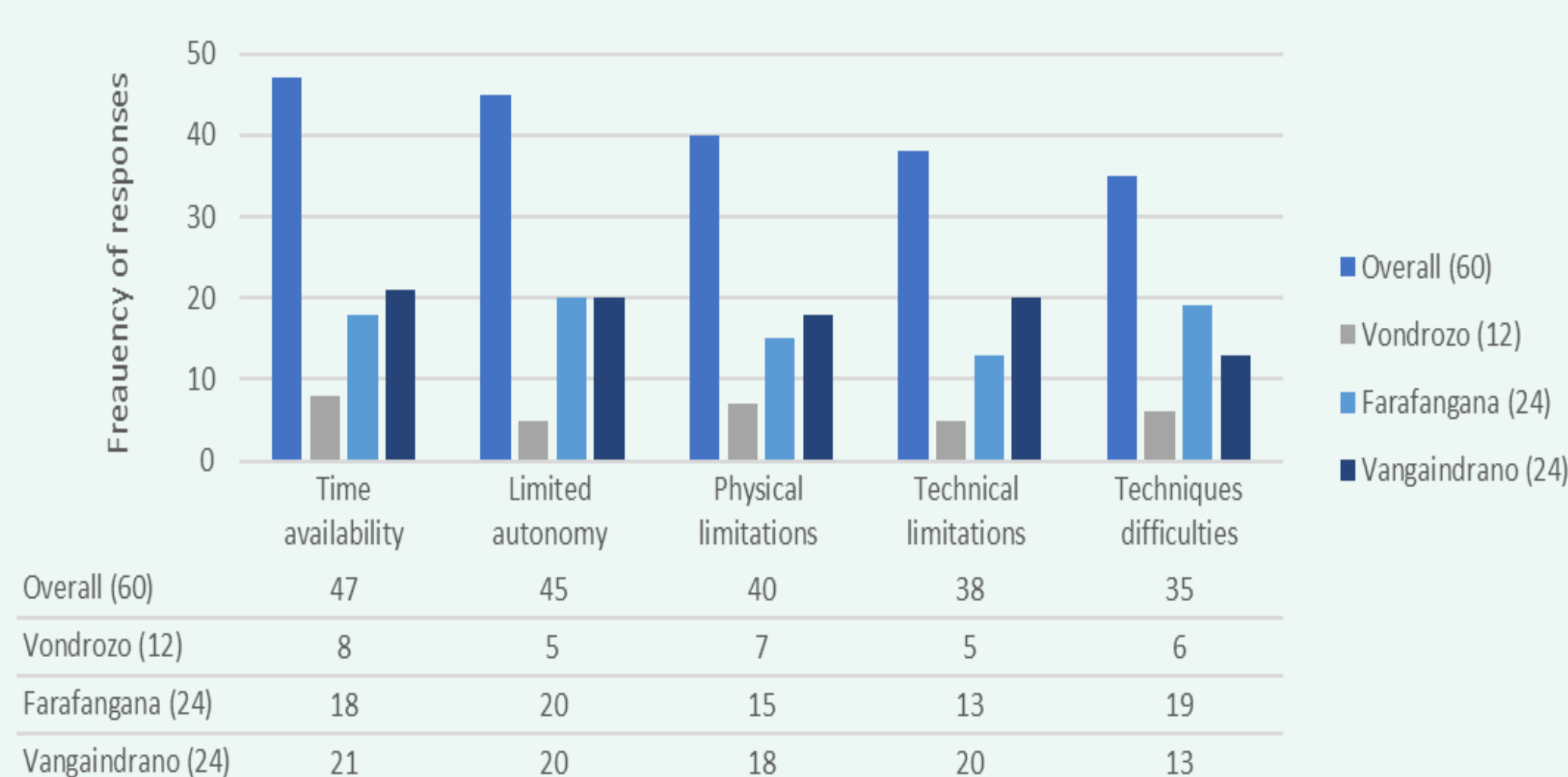


- Social influence : low decision power of women on farming activities, especially on staple food production
- More challenging for single women (fig.2): land access, child care, organic manure availability as they don't have cattle .

RESULTS

2. Adoption of agricultural techniques: challenges

- Women are more interested in crop diversification than new agricultural techniques
- Compared to married women, single women are more dependent on project support (materials, organic manure, etc)



Adoption challenges perceived by FFS members



Fig 3: Mixed group harvesting common FFS plot in one village of Vangaindrano district

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ Schedule FFS session regarding women's availability: early morning, after market day
- ✓ Simplify promoted techniques (less power intensive and alternative to livestock manure)
- ✓ Working on common land especially for women headed household and set individual valuable plot
- ✓ Promote vegetable gardening near the home
- ✓ Associate FFS group with social and non-farming activities such as cooking demonstration, village loan association

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