

Barriers and enablers to women smallholder farmers' adoption of agricultural innovations in Rwanda

Context and objectives

- 14 Mio people → 72% work in agriculture → 70% are women
- Ø farm size: 0.4 ha

- Innovation is promoted in policy but inconsistently reaches smallholders, especially women
- Limited gender responsiveness
- Lack of gender disaggregated data
- Women risk being left behind in Rwanda's innovation-driven agricultural transformation

→ **Objective: Examine how women engage with innovations and identify barriers and enablers for adoption**



Figure 1: Focus group discussion with women farmers in Nyagatare District

Study area

- 5 agroecological zones (figure 2)
→ selection criteria: majority of the surface suitable for irrigation (RAB 2020)
- Selection of districts → >20% poverty rate (NIRS 2025)

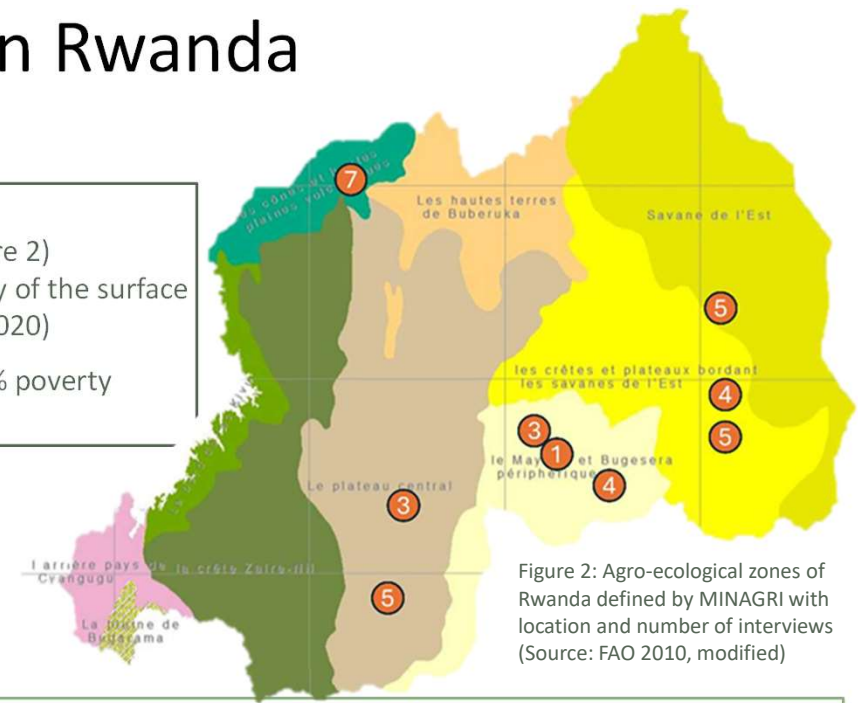


Figure 2: Agro-ecological zones of Rwanda defined by MINAGRI with location and number of interviews (Source: FAO 2010, modified)

Method

Selection of 3 innovations

- Method for selection: ROF (Relevance, Opportunity Feasibility) methodology
- Validation through experts (n=8) and women farmers (n=9)

→ **Innovation selected: small-scale irrigation, composting, Juncao technology for mushroom production**

Data collection

- Structured interviews (tot. 37 farmers: 28 women and 9 men)
- Focus group discussions (FGD) (tot. 6)
- Key informant interviews (KII) (tot. 11)

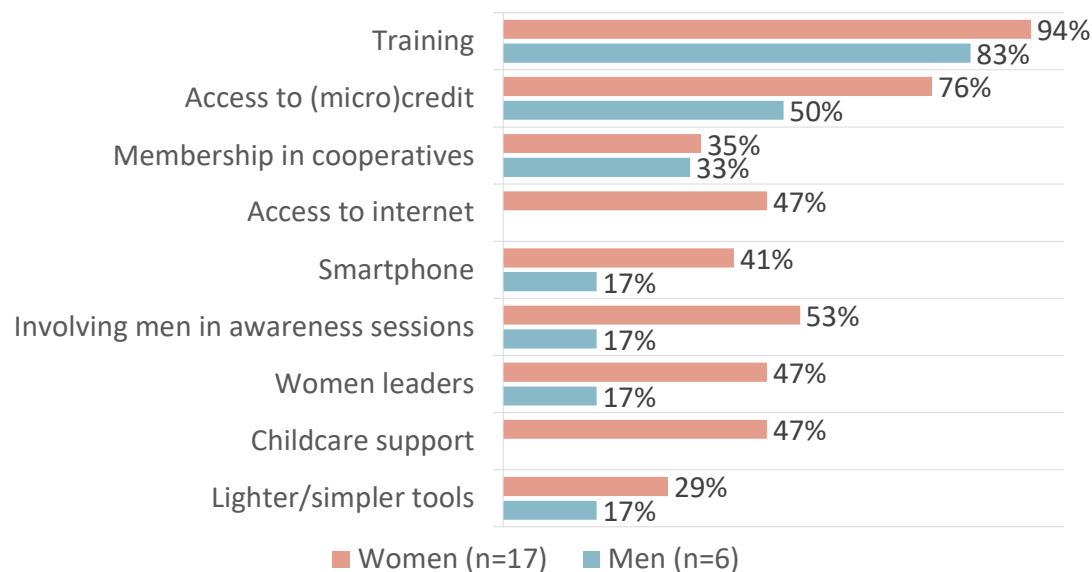
Data analysis

- Qualitative data: thematic analysis after Braun and Clarke (2006)
- Quantitative data: descriptive statistics

→ **Gender disaggregated**

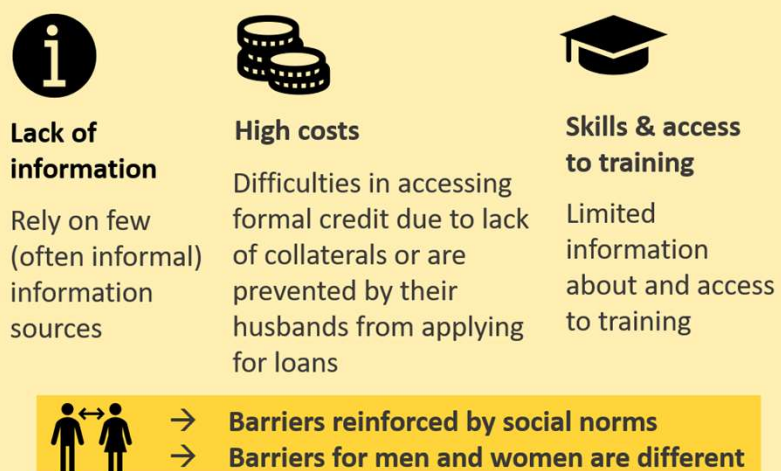
Selected results

Factors facilitating women's access to and use of ag. innovations

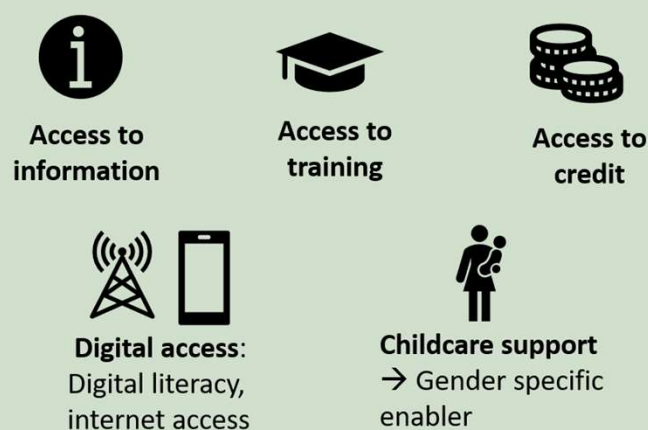


Conclusions

Main barriers for women



Main enablers for women:



To adopt innovations, women also need:

