

# IMPACTS OF THE VISION 2020 UMURENGE PROGRAMME (VUP) ON RURAL WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT



*Qualitative Research  
in a Mixed-Method  
Approach:  
FAO/Laterite*

*The Transfer Project  
Meeting  
Addis Ababa, 7 April 2016*



Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations



# PRESENTATION



- **Background**
- **Qualitative research approach**
  - Hypotheses
  - Sampling
  - Roadmap
- **VUP highlights**
- **Findings**
- **Recommendations**

# BACKGROUND



- **FAO Protection to Production (PtoP) & Transfer Project**
- **FAO – SCT linkages to agriculture; rural investments; improve resilience & livelihoods**
- **FAO RWE agenda:**
  - strengthen access of SP benefits for women & HHs
  - identify good practice in gender-equality in SP design/implementation to strengthen access & impacts
- **Bringing useful evidence, messages, recommendations to policymakers**

# QUALITATIVE STUDY HYPOTHESES...

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- 1. Economic advancement:** *SP programmes that promote economic advancement of women increase their productive resources (e.g. incomes, access to credit) & also can improve their skills & employment opportunities.*
- 2. Power and agency:** *SP strengthens women's power & agency by increasing their bargaining power within the household & wider community. This increases self-confidence, ability to engage in social networks & participation in public decision-making.*
- 3. Operations:** *When SP design & operational features ensure women's equal access to benefits & build linkages with community-based services & livelihood interventions they promote gender equality & women's economic empowerment.*

# WHAT DOES THAT MEAN FOR VUP? THEORY OF CHANGE.....

## **VUP can advance women's economic advancement through:**

- Promoting access to cash
- Increasing participation in (decent) wage employment
- Enabling savings and investment
- Skills development
- Minimising detrimental coping strategies

## **VUP can advance women's power & agency through:**

- Individual ownership of cash/assets & own decision-making on how they are used
- Increasing bargaining power, voice at HH & community-level

## **Program Operations can support these outcomes through:**

- Good performance in implementation - this supports empowerment outcomes
- Gender-sensitive design (e.g. female quotas, address gender-related constraints to participate)

# VUP – A FEW HIGHLIGHTS

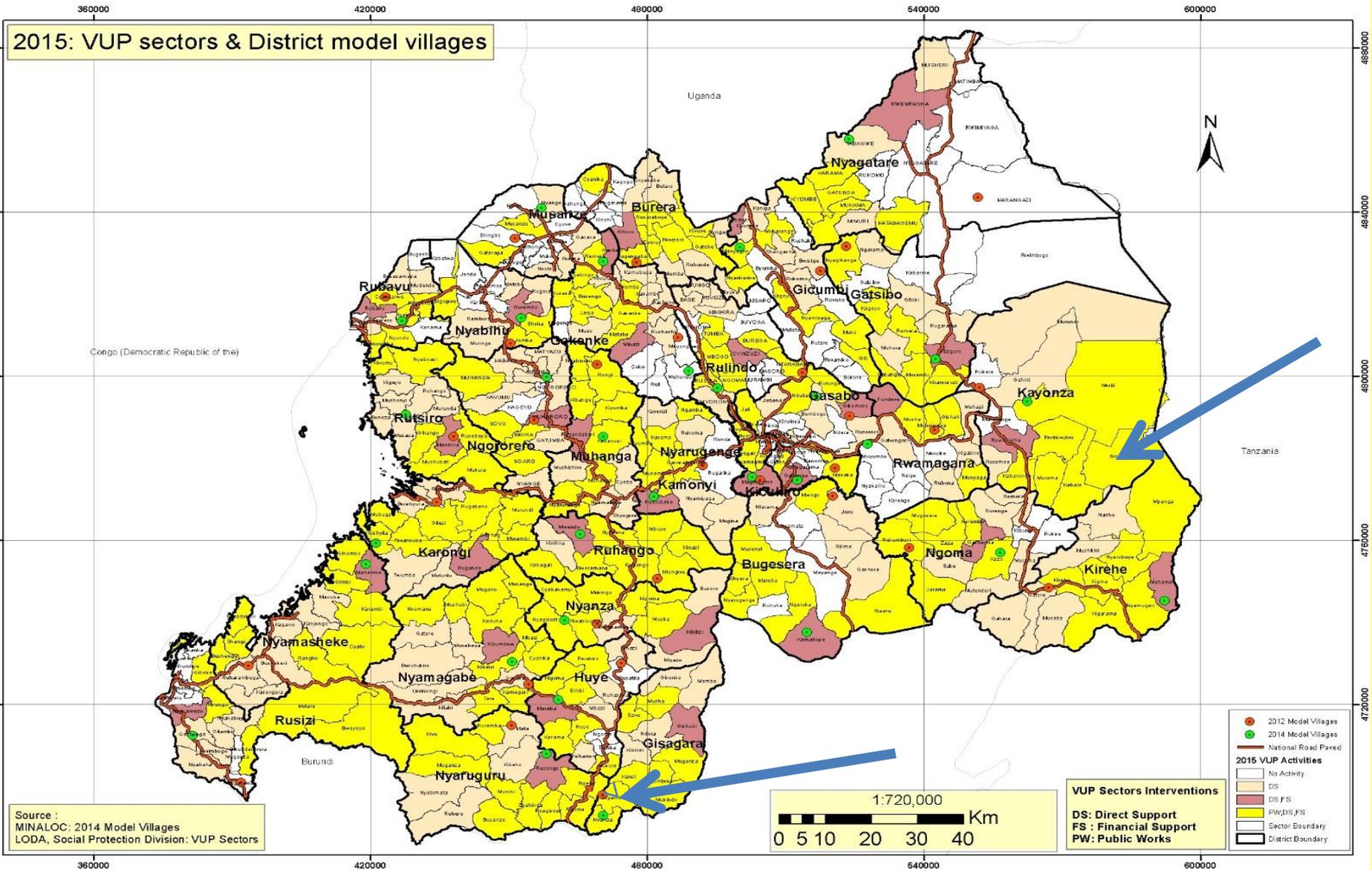
- Launched 2008 - managed by LODA (MINALOC) - implemented with decentralised gvt. & other ministries
- 3 prongs:
  - DS: up to US\$21 /5pHH/monthly for labour-constrained HHs (20% of VUP resources)
  - PW: wage US\$1.42/d) (set at local market wage rate) – paid every 15days in bank account (SACCO); cosignatories encrgd; can rotate work; works selected from sector plans...actual delays in payment up to year– coverage March 2015:130,000HH in 172 of 416 sectors(50% of VUP resources)
  - FS: low-interest loans to anyone (for NONBENs, must be in groups including BEN members) (30% of VUP resources) + sensitization and training in all above
- Targeting community-based – following ubudehe – 1+2 levels eligible – target HH (head of HH registered as BEN) - rescreen annually
- PW gender parity goal - 50% BENs should be women (unclear if ‘as registered BENs’ or ‘as workers’ ...actual, much higher (majority) no. workers are women & @30% FHH BENs
- PW target – min. 71 days/yr. (@4 phases/15d each over 3 mo.) – actual @50d/yr. - *our data Ndego: 15d/yr. only*
- VUP in revision – piloting new ‘graduation package’ & strengthening for timely payments, days worked, sensitization, linkages

# METHODOLOGY: SAMPLING, APPROACH, ROADMAP

- systematic sampling protocol – in each province: 1 district, 1 sector, 2 cells (near/far), 1 village in each cell
- training of local research team (4 days + 1 pilot day)
- 2 weeks fieldwork: 1 week each province
- 4 days village + 1 day comparison community
- nightly **debriefings and end-of-week syntheses**
- village/district/national feedback: validation and ownership
- “Roadmap” – systematic FGDs with BENs and NONBENs using participatory tools; KIIs; in-depth HH case studies; snowballing interviews
  - 34 FGDs; 19 KIIs; 2 case studies; other resource persons

Research guide on PtoP website: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4420e.pdf>

# RESEARCH LOCATIONS: KAYONZA & GISAGARA





# HYP 1 – ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT & TIME USE

- Women 'earning' cash thru PW, but seldom able to retain full or even partial control
- VUP payments thru SACCOs allowing some women to own a financial account for the first time - & providing possibility (for a minority) to access loans
- Women's own SACCO accounts (when existing) facilitates decision-making & control over credit & their income– but earnings are small
- Women's lower literacy skills and unequal bargaining power within the household are key constraints to accessing loans
- VSLs & other informal lending (e.g. tontines) are main credit sources for women – VUP has enabled some women to join these for the first time & access loans
- A requisite for married individuals applying for a loan from SACCO is spouse consent; some women expressed fear on misuse of loans by husbands
- For a minority of female BENS, wages from PW serve as a catalyst for small investments (petty trade, brewing beer, renting land) – but most wages used for consumption smoothing

# HYPOTHESIS 1 – CONT.

- Despite women being the majority of workers, no changes found in time allocation for domestic activities (e.g. care) - men report 50 -75% more leisure time than women
- VUP participation increases workload of women & children (women offloading some domestic burden)
- Inability to hire in labor (agriculture or care activities) to make up for less time available
- BENs do learn new skills (e.g. levelling roads, digging ditches, constructing terraces) – but this is mostly ‘on the job’ - women not able to find similar jobs elsewhere due to domestic obligations & few viable opportunities
- Migration (for men & women) continues as a common coping strategy during drought/difficulties - low number of work days and unreliable payments limit improving coping
- But, some indication that VUP helps improve resilience through investments (e.g. livestock as precautionary savings)

## HYPOTHESIS 2: WOMEN'S POWER & AGENCY



## HYP 2: POWER & AGENCY

- VUP is contributing to ongoing positive enabling environment for women's empowerment - positive perception & views on women's economic role & capacity to engage in income-generating activities
- But, momentum concerns activities of small amounts of cash (e.g. day-to-day household expenses), issues of less priority
- Relatively small cash wage amounts & implementation challenges key reasons for VUP shortcomings in promoting more change in women's power & agency at household level
- Men have greater asset ownership than women, yet women & men bear similar responsibilities, particularly in agriculture
- Women reported as continuing to have limited ability to negotiate, voice their opinions & assert their rights in household

# HYPOTHESIS 2: CONT

- The use of VUP cash for personal and children's items and economic investments resulting in heightened feelings of self-esteem, dignity, increased ability to make independent choices

Busasamana: ***“Now that I have a SACCO account I have some small money that my husband is not aware of so if I want to buy something for the children I can do it without having to ask him.”***

- For some, VUP is catalysing social capital - inclusion in social networks for economic collaboration & mutual support (e.g. mothers' evenings, VSL) with positive spill-over feelings of self-confidence
- Women are forming new friendships, exchanging information, fostering a sense of unity & support – often at worksite
- But this does not result in increased leadership or decision-making in the public arena: mixed findings about speaking up in public, some feel enhanced confidence & self-worth, most feel shy & embarrassed

A woman from Taba: ***“before I was afraid to go to community meetings including “mothers' evenings” because I had dirty clothes, but now I am clean, I feel better to attend and sometimes I speak up.”***

# HYPOTHESIS 3: OPERATIONAL ISSUES/RWEE



# HYP 3: OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- Targeting may be risking exclusion of the poorest:
  - In practice - not fully aligned with targeting criteria - inclusion errors from *ubudehe* category 3
  - obstacles for some households to attend targeting meetings (e.g. households with high dependency ratios/FHHs)
  - VUP not attractive for the poorest : short-term status, few days, delays in payments, low pay
- VUP workers tend to be females - males find work unattractive and migrate elsewhere
- Limited number of work days available compromise the potential for improving women's and men's economic empowerment

Kigembe: ***“VUP is for people who can afford to wait for payment.”***

- Average work sites far from beneficiaries' dwellings: between 2.5-3 hours
- Distance & work tasks problematic for female-only households with low labor capacity
- Delays in payment continuous (quant. survey data from Southern show 32 percent of total payment not been paid at time of data collection)
- Absence of multi-year monitoring system to track BENs :
  - Cumulative number of days worked in different projects
  - Phases in which individuals have worked and years
  - Identification of household members that worked

## HYPOTHESIS 3: CONT.

- A majority of BENS had not been reached with sensitization messages – inconsistent delivery
- Little training and skills development (e.g. financial literacy)
- General lack of awareness among beneficiaries of how VUP projects are selected & lack of understanding of the linkage with local development (*imihingo*) process
- Limited gender sensitivity for addressing specific challenges, needs & priorities of female BENs (e.g. water wells, child care services, labor constraints)
- About 50% of “double households” and 61% of “female-only” households did not know where to file complaints about VUP
- Mixed feelings about the effectiveness of the complaint mechanism (e.g. finding solutions to payment delays)

# SO WHERE DO WE STAND ON THE HYPOTHESES?

Hypotheses VUP.....	Results	
1. promotes <u>economic empowerment</u> , increasing women's resources, skills & employment opportunities	<b>partially confirmed</b>	supporting financial inclusion – some save & invest; domestic obligations maintained; new employment absent; implementation challenges weaken economic advancement
2. increases <u>women's bargaining power, self-confidence</u> , engagement in <u>social networks</u> & public arenas	<b>partially confirmed</b>	marginal increase in inter-HH bargaining power (small amounts of cash); catalysed joining social & economic networks; enhanced self-confidence; no change in public arena comportment
3. <u>design &amp; implementation</u> facilitates equal benefits & opportunities for women – promoting <u>gender equality</u> and <u>economic empowerment</u>	<b>not confirmed</b>	low no. working days; delayed payments; weak communication; dysfunctional MIS; design could better address women's constraints to participate, provide training, skills development (financial literacy), & linkages

# RECOMMENDATIONS



# PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS.....

## **Economic**

- 1.Ensure wage payments are delivered on time & that VUP PW beneficiaries work a minimum number of days in each financial year (71d)
- 2.Sensitize females for opening individual accounts with a financial institution to increase their decision-making capacity & control over their own incomes
- 3.Explore how to best develop synergies between VUP & other programs: rural development promoted with other ministries (e.g. extension services, health/nutrition) & NGOs (e.g. financial literacy)
- 4.Build capacity in household financial decision-making for men & women to capitalise on opportunity to promote economic empowerment

## **Power & agency**

- 1.Strengthen implementation of sensitization activities concerning intra-household gender relations – systematic use of Sensitization Manual
- 2.Establish/extend support to local community spaces to enhance participation in social networks & public life by female BENs; promote formation of women's groups, particularly around economic empowerment

# CONT.

## Operational

1. Strengthen VUP monitoring & information system (MIS) to better track beneficiary households & understand & direct pathways to more productive livelihoods and economic empowerment
2. Include specific indicators that measure progress in women & men's economic empowerment, particularly in intra-household decision-making
3. Strengthen VUP targeting to ensure compliance and consistency in implementation – redirecting households with high dependency ratio/low labor capacity to DS component
4. Expand VUP project portfolio to include projects which can be performed closer to the household & address priorities & interests of both women & men (e.g. child care services, health & educational services, water wells, nutrition clubs, providing labor on fields from labor-constrained households)

**THANK YOU. MURAKOZI - ANY QUESTIONS?**

