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Going Beyond Research:
Theory and practice for taking action on gender and nutrition research

A Case Study by IGNITE

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The Impacting Gender and Nutrition through Innovative Technical Exchange in Agriculture (IGNITE) project was a technical assistance programme, implemented by Tanager and its learning partners, in four African countries from 2018–2024. The project supported 35 African agricultural institutions across 18 countries to integrate gender and nutrition into their business operations and agricultural interventions.

Going Beyond Research

Theory and practice for taking action on gender and nutrition research

Introduction

Research cannot make an impact if it is not shared with others. The traditional research process involves researchers generating data, conducting analyses, and providing their interpretations to stakeholders in technical reports or published articles. While this approach is appropriate in some fields and disciplines, there is evidence that it does not facilitate rapid adoption and implementation of new ideas. In the context of IGNITE, it was important that our approach to sharing information led directly to the implementation of the identified improved practices. IGNITE's mission was to produce 'decision-focused' research to help agricultural institutions increase:

(1) access and consumption of safe, affordable, and nutritious diets year-round; and

(2) women's empowerment in agriculture.

'Going beyond research' recognises the importance of a participatory, two-way dialogue between research teams and stakeholders. The approach has five activities and is inspired by the fields of implementation science[1] — which focusses not only on the effectiveness of an intervention, but also on the contextual factors leading to its uptake — and participatory research[2] — which focusses on involving stakeholders, particularly the participants and direct implementers of a programme, in specific aspects of the evaluation process.

[1] Bauer & Kirchner. (2020). Implementation science: What is it and why should I care? Psychiatry Research, Volume 283, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2019.04.025

[2] Guijt, I. (2014). Participatory Approaches, Methodological Briefs: Impact Evaluation 5, UNICEF Office of Research, Florence. https://www.participatorymethods.org/sites/participatorymethods.org/files/Participatory_Approaches_ENG%20Irene%20Guijt.pdf

Representatives from IGNITE local service providers (LSPs) share their best practices on gender and nutrition integration during a training workshop held in Nairobi, Kenya.

Going beyond research and promoting interactions between researchers and stakeholders was at the heart of IGNITE activities. Researcher– stakeholder relationships are not always a focus of traditional implementation research,[3] including in gender[4] and nutrition.[5] [6] Even when these interactions are recognised,[7] it is not always accompanied by concrete examples of how to facilitate them.[8] The five activities in IGNITE's approach are distinct opportunities to bring multiple perspectives to the table and build stronger relationships between researchers and stakeholders. These individual activities are not novel and have been described previously in literature — for example, dissemination is a key component of implementation science,[9] co-creation of ideas and stakeholder validation is a common feature of participatory research,[2] and education is an entire field in its own right. However, these activities are usually housed in different disciplines and not always discussed as complementary, and rarely in the context of gender, nutrition, and agriculture. By combining all five activities into a single framework, this 'going beyond research' approach encourages both researchers and stakeholders to recognise the value of each activity, distinguish between activities, and develop a plan to combine them into a strategy to effect change.

This case study shares the theoretical framework that agricultural institutions can use to build these relationships and 'go beyond' with their research. It provides real-world examples of how agricultural institutions working with IGNITE implemented activities to improve the impact of their gender and nutrition research.

Theory: 5 Activities for Going Beyond Research

'Going beyond research' promotes interactions between researchers and stakeholders in all five activities in the approach. The five activities are summarised in the following table:

Generation

Identifying a context-specific knowledge gap that — if addressed — would lead to actionable gender and nutrition insights.

Validation

Sharing the interpretation of the data with diverse audiences and stakeholders, including participants, to ensure that this interpretation is complete and contextually appropriate. Feedback from validation sessions can be used to improve the interpretation of findings from the current study and improve the quality of future work.

Dissemination

Identifying the audience(s) who can use and act on the content and sharing it in an appropriate format. A single study may be relevant for a diverse set of audiences, including policymakers, programme implementers, and programme participants. It is necessary to consider the audience's level of literacy, numeracy, time availability, and geographic locations.

Education

Research often uncovers novel findings that have the potential to improve the way programmes are delivered. Sharing information and training key staff and stakeholders in a systematic way is important to close knowledge gaps or promote behaviour change.

Innovation

Coming up with specific, contextually relevant, and actionable next steps based on the research findings, along with a clear plan to deliver on these activities. This step can involve co-creation of recommendations from the study and can also feed back into idea generation by suggesting innovative ideas for new research.

[3] Damschroder et al., (2009). Fostering implementation of health services research findings into practice: a consolidated framework for advancing implementation science. Implementation Sci 4, 50. https://doi.org/10.1186/1748-5908-4-50

[4] Tannenbaum et al. (2016). Why sex and gender matter in implementation research. BMC Med Res Methodol 16, 145. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12874-016-0247-7

[5] Menon et al. (2014). Strengthening implementation and utilization of nutrition interventions through research: a framework and research agenda. Ann. N.Y. Acad. Sci., 1332: 39-59. https://doi.org/10.1111/nyas.12447

[6] Sarma et al.. (2021). Developing a conceptual framework for implementation science to evaluate a nutrition intervention scaled-up in a real-world setting. Public Health Nutrition, 24(S1), S7-S22. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1368980019004415

[7] Perry & Elwy. (2021). The Role of Implementation Science in Reducing Sexual and Gender Minority Mental Health Disparities. LGBT Health. Apr 2021.169-172. http://doi.org/10.1089/lgbt.2020.0379

[8] Tumilowicz et al. (2019). Implementation Science in Nutrition: Concepts and Frameworks for an Emerging Field of Science and Practice, Current Developments in Nutrition, Volume 3, Issue 3, https://doi.org/10.1093/cdn/nzy080.

[9] Baumann et al. (2022). A scoping review of frameworks in empirical studies and a review of dissemination frameworks. Implementation Sci 17, 53 (2022). https://doi.org/10.1186/s13012-022-01225-4

There is no single way to go beyond research, but a strong plan will incorporate aspects of each of these five activities in a context-specific way. Each organisation and study context will require a customised plan fit to its own needs and resources. A strong plan will ensure that there is a two-way dialogue between researchers and stakeholders. The following section offers examples of how agricultural institutions working with IGNITE took different approaches to implementing activities to suit their specific contexts.

Practice: How Agricultural Institutions Have Implemented the 5 Activities

IGNITE interviewed 14 representatives from its partner institutions, as well as four gender and nutrition experts from Tanager, to understand which of these activities had been undertaken. The objective of these interviews was to understand the scope of activities, rationale, challenges, and lessons learnt. Below are insights from agricultural institutions based in Ethiopia and Tanzania, who worked with IGNITE: Sasakawa Africa Association (SAA), Digital Green, Silverlands, Tanzania Agricultural Development Bank (TADB), Heifer International, and Land O'Lakes Venture37.

Generation

The first step to going beyond research is ensuring research activities are designed to produce actionable insights. Generation of useful research is an essential step towards mainstreaming gender and nutrition in institutions providing agricultural interventions. Research should fill a knowledge gap and provide insight on a previously unanswered question. While the remainder of this case study focusses on best practices and lessons learnt from disseminating and taking action on already completed research, the value of generating useful research in the first place must be emphasised, as well as of starting the cycle again once new ideas and knowledge gaps emerge.

The IGNITE team followed a two-way, collaborative process of generating ideas for gender and nutrition research with agricultural institutions. Other organisations embarking on research can replicate these steps:

- Use data collected through internal monitoring to identify key gender and nutrition knowledge gaps
- Generate ideas based on upcoming needs and key decision points for management pertaining to the mainstreaming of gender and nutrition
- Hold a brainstorming workshop with gender and nutrition focal experts, programme teams, management, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) teams
- Prioritise ideas in a collaborative workshop attended by all relevant stakeholders, including gender and nutrition focal experts
- Hire a credible research partner to design and implement the study if internal capacity is not available
- Draft a detailed proposal, together with research partners, gender and nutrition focal people, and other stakeholders, outlining the objectives, methods, literature, limitations, risks, and budget

For example, when offered the opportunity to conduct research with IGNITE's learning partners (Laterite and 60 Decibels), Digital Green requested a focus on two specific value chains — wheat and dairy — that they had identified in a previous gender analysis as priority areas for women's engagement. IGNITE and Digital Green then held brainstorming sessions with internal staff and donors to identify key decision points for management (e.g., how to modify video-mediated extension training programming to be more gender sensitive). Once a long list of ideas was generated, IGNITE held a prioritisation workshop to weigh the merits of each idea and to select the most important to pursue first. This ultimately led to a detailed proposal and a comprehensive review process for multiple studies to be conducted under IGNITE.

IGNITE Recommends:

1. Design your study with gender and nutrition in mind

Generating evidence on gender and nutrition requires intentional study design choices from the outset. From a gender perspective, IGNITE research on Capturing Women's Voices in Agricultural Research highlights the importance of designing research to include both women and men's voices — both adults and youth — as a vital first step to exploring gender in agriculture in any project. This includes forming a sampling strategy that is clear on how women will be involved, who within the household will be spoken with, how different household compositions (e.g., female-headed households) will be considered, and how the data is collected (e.g., limitations of phone surveys, gender of enumerator) so as to not exclude women. Similar considerations are needed from a nutrition perspective, including the choice of indicator, whether it is at the individual level (e.g., minimum dietary diversity for women or MDD-W, Global Diet Quality Score or GDQS) or at the household level (e.g., food consumption

score). Other important considerations include comparisons that are being made in the study (e.g., comparing men and women, comparing adults and youth, comparing diets in different seasons).

Having gender and nutrition experts or focal people involved from the start, with the research design process, is important to ensure these considerations are made. A credible research partner will be able to help the organisation understand the trade-offs involved in making these comparisons, and how the study should be designed (e.g., sampling strategy, methods) to generate the desired comparisons. Finally, it is important to consider from the outset how the envisioned study — once completed — might lead to changes in practice. Generate internal hypotheses early on and consider what concrete actions might be taken to improve gender and nutrition outcomes and close gaps.

Validation

For stakeholders to act on research, they need to accept the research as credible and contextually relevant. Research teams can bring powerful expertise to study design and data analysis. However, the distillation of data into findings and recommendations always includes some interpretation, and external research teams do not always have the full context to properly interpret the data. They can also be disconnected from the realities of programme implementation and therefore may not be best placed to suggest feasible recommendations.

Validation activities ensure that local knowledge and perspectives are reflected in the study findings. Researchers share the data, preliminary findings, and preliminary recommendations with those who have direct knowledge of what is being studied, to elicit feedback from stakeholders and ensure that the data is being interpreted in a way that reflects the reality on the ground. In some cases, this may involve eliciting feedback directly from the participants themselves.

As one interviewee highlighted, there may be differences in buy-in from management when research is produced internally within the organisation, e.g., by in-house M&E teams, as opposed to when research is commissioned externally from learning partners. Internally conducted assessments are seen as more likely to secure commitment from management so that recommendations are taken into consideration, since these studies involve not only the technical team, but also country management teams. A validation exercise alleviates some of this worry, giving an opportunity for internal staff to provide feedback, so that findings are put into appropriate context and viewed as credible. Agricultural institutions working with IGNITE conducted validation in a variety of ways, producing some key lessons.

2. Hold in-person validation workshops

Validation workshops should occur before dissemination activities, to ensure the final disseminated materials are relevant to the target audience who may include stakeholders from both internal and external audiences. From a gender and nutrition perspective, ensure that there is representation of both women and men in the workshop, and that gender and nutrition focal people or experts are present to validate any technical elements of the findings. Consider the audience before the workshop and assess whether any participants may require additional training or sensitisation to gender or nutrition concepts ahead of the workshop. If so, consider an additional training or sensitisation exercise prior to the workshop to ensure that key concepts are understood.

For example, the Tanzania Inclusive Producer–Processor Partnership in dairy project (TI3P), implemented by Tanzania Agricultural Development Bank (TADB), Heifer International, and Land O'Lakes Venture37, held a workshop to validate the findings of a gender and nutrition formative assessment. One month prior to disseminating the results, TI3P and IGNITE held a one-day, in-person validation workshop, which brought together government officials, implementers, gender and nutrition experts from Tanager, and members of the research team. The workshop featured brief presentations of findings, guided small-group activities, and full-team discussions. The participatory format allowed participants to ask questions, challenge the findings, and make suggestions for revisions. Collectively, these interactions created a higher level of engagement than simply circulating a preliminary report. Participants interviewed for this case study reported that this step was crucial in getting buy-in from government and other stakeholders before finalising the report. Digital Green also held a validation workshop for studies focussed on the Ethiopian government extension system. It invited field coordinators and government representatives from partner organisations, such as the Ministry of Agriculture and the Institute for Agricultural Transformation, to a workshop where the findings of several studies on the dairy and wheat value chains were discussed. This workshop led to a lively discussion on the merits and feasibility of the recommendations, highlighted gaps where the research fell short, and identified areas where further research was required.

3. Validate directly with participants

Sometimes, the people who are best placed to validate and offer recommendations on a study

are the participants who took part in the study . For Silverlands, an impact study on the effectiveness of field staff training showed improvements in numerous outcomes. Sharing these study findings directly with the field staff who participated in trainings helped to validate the findings, but also had a direct impact on morale. Staff reported feeling recognised for their work and appreciated hearing about the work being done in other parts of the country. It is important to note, however, that this activity may be logistically difficult if participants are in remote areas, are geographically dispersed, or lack access to the Internet.

Dissemination

Research is only useful when shared. All institutions covered in this case study did some form of dissemination of their research, but the audiences and methods of dissemination varied, with some opting for internal audiences only with programme teams and management, and others sharing widely with external stakeholders such as partner organisations, donors, government, field staff, or extension agents. Various approaches were used, including simply sharing the report over email, sharing on social media, making virtual presentations, or in-person workshops and presentations. The IGNITE Research Summit[10] also provided a convenient platform to share their findings with a wider audience, including like-minded organisations.

IGNITE Recommends:

4. Disseminate widely, and in different formats

Share research widely and with as many relevant groups as needed. For any audience, the dissemination format should be tailored to the audience's preferred language, gender, level of literacy, numeracy, time availability, and geographic locations. Materials should also be tailored in terms of content, considering cultural norms related to gender and nutrition that may influence how results are perceived. Sharing more is generally preferable to sharing less, but sharing is only impactful when the content is relevant and accessible to the audience and when the audience is empowered to act on the findings. Agricultural institutions that worked with IGNITE reported sharing findings in a variety of different formats, including the full technical report, short technical bulletins, blog posts, executive summaries, or PowerPoint presentations. Some also opted for more novel formats of dissemination such as videos, message cards, posters, or cartoons.

5. Hold an in-person dissemination workshop

One dissemination approach that stood out as being particularly effective for agricultural institutions working with IGNITE in-person workshops. Unlike validation workshops, which are intended to elicit feedback on preliminary findings and recommendations, dissemination workshops raise awareness of the validated information and

IGNITE's practical tips for a successful dissemination workshop

- Limit the focus of the workshop to one study at a time.
- Limit attendance to 20–30 people. If the audience is larger, it may be helpful to host multiple events rather than combining large groups of stakeholders.
- Ensure that gender and nutrition experts with knowledge of the local context are present at the workshop to handle any technical questions or aid in the interpretation of results.
- Combine dissemination and innovation activities using a two-day agenda that ensures enough time for discussion and reflection.
- Focus on internal stakeholders for the first dissemination workshop, to give staff freedom to explore ideas without concern for the perception of outside actors.
- Invite those who will find the research relevant to their work, including management.
- By the end of the workshop, participants should:
    1. Understand the gender/nutrition research findings and recommendations
    2. Reflect on how gender/nutrition findings relate to the implementation and outcomes of interventions
    3. Identify and prioritise key steps to increase gender and nutrition integration in their interventions and way of doing business

[10] In January 2023, IGNITE organized a research summit in Nairobi to share findings and evidence from 16 studies conducted jointly with six partner agricultural institutions. The motivation for the summit was "moving research to action."

facilitate the future development of a plan to use the findings and recommendations in practice. Several agricultural institutions hosted in-person workshops with IGNITE's support, to disseminate the findings of their research to both internal and external audiences. For instance, IGNITE and TADB hosted a two-day in-person workshop in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, to disseminate the findings from the TI3P study. The workshop was attended by IGNITE partner organisations on TI3P, including officials from the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries and the Tanzania Dairy Board, gender and nutrition experts from Tanager, an IGNITE local service provider, and the consultant who led the study. On the first day, the participants discussed the findings and recommendations of the formative assessment as a group and reflected on the implications for TI3P. The second day focused on action planning. Participants interviewed for this case study appreciated this event, which they considered as effective and crucial in the formulation of the next steps.

6. Ensure workshop participants have basic knowledge of gender and nutrition concepts

Consider the audience before the workshop and assess whether any participants may require additional training or sensitisation on gender or nutrition concepts ahead of the dissemination workshop. If so, consider holding a training or sensitisation exercise prior to the workshop to ensure that the participants understand key concepts. Including both women and men in the workshop, as well as technical gender and nutrition experts, ensures that the findings are appropriately interpreted and contextualised.

7. Allocate dedicated time and budget for dissemination activities in advance

Generating a range of dissemination materials for diverse sets of audiences takes time and resources. Building dissemination activities into the work plan and budget of study from the start helps ensure that research partners and key stakeholders are well-resourced and on-board for these activities. Setting these expectations in advance leads to a smoother process and holds stakeholders accountable, ensuring these activities are not overlooked. Preparation for an in-person workshop is extensive, both in time and finances required. It includes scheduling for the participants, cost of travel, and hiring of a venue, among other factors. Starting to plan for dissemination activities as soon as possible helps ensure a smooth transition from the end of the research phase into the dissemination and action planning phase.

Education

Behaviour change starts with creating awareness. Research does not just uncover gaps in the literature — it can also uncover gaps in the knowledge or abilities of key programme participants. In these cases, it is often not enough to simply share the findings; it may be important to also educate staff or the community to incite change. This is particularly true when dealing with gender and nutrition, which are embedded in cultural norms and longstanding traditions.

IGNITE Recommends:

8. Train the trainers

Agricultural programmes often reach households through field staff (e.g., government extension officers, village-based advisors, marketing staff) who share knowledge with farmers or train them on specific practices. Because these individuals play a critical role in programme delivery, it is imperative to continuously train them to ensure that they are sensitive to key concepts in gender and nutrition and can pass on their knowledge to farmers.

Silverlands supplies day-old Sasso[11] chicks to farmers in Tanzania's poultry value chain Tanager trained Silverlands field marketers on how Sasso chickens can improve gender and nutrition outcomes as well as increase household income. A subsequent impact survey conducted by Tanager observed increases in the number of households who raised chickens, joint decision-making within households, consumption of chicken and eggs, and allocation of poultry income to buy other nutritious foods. Silverlands credits the training by Tanager for the increased sales of Sasso chicks and more qualitative benefits, like improved public speaking skills for field staff. SAA, another IGNITE client, delivers its programmes through the Ethiopian extension system's development agents (DAs). SAA used information from a nutrition assessment conducted in Nigeria and Ethiopia to shape its nutrition messaging. The institution collaborated with IGNITE to develop a nutrition training manual for extension agents, who could then go on to train farmers directly on nutrition. Other IGNITE studies with SAA highlighted the gaps in the development agents' knowledge on gender, and SAA is now working to make trainings more gender-responsive.

Training field staff can come with challenges. Digital

[11] Learn more about Sasso chicks here: https://www.silverlandstanzania.net/sasso

Green, which works with approximately 7,000 DAs across Ethiopia, highlighted the logistical difficulty and expense of disseminating additional information to DAs and frontline workers. Furthermore, since DAs are responsible for implementing any changes to the extension training curriculum, some of them see this layer of additional planning and adaptation as a burden on their already heavy workload, and at times hesitate to follow through with the proposed changes. Mitigating this challenge requires close collaboration and follow up from the institution and subject matter specialists at the regional level, as well as allocating adequate resources for training the extension agents.

9. Consider societal norms related to gender and nutrition

Households and individuals are part of a broader community. For programmes that impact gender and nutrition outcomes, the community must understand and accept the recommendations being implemented. Having community buy-in is imperative, especially when dealing with sensitive themes — like gender or nutrition — that challenge societal norms. Silverlands, together with IGNITE, initiated numerous community sensitisation campaigns where it works to educate communities on the financial and nutritional benefits of raising or consuming Sasso chicken, and to challenge misconceptions around the consumption of eggs by women. This campaign involved several modalities of content targeting the community, including large message cards, posters, and cartoon videos that were shown on a big screen at a public mobile video centre. Through these channels, Silverlands created community awareness and buy-in for its product.

Changing behaviours in a community is extremely difficult, especially when those behaviours are embedded in cultural norms. Having a coherent strategy for how this change will happen can be a great first step to inform education activities. Have a structured process and build an actionable strategy that is: (1) rooted in the findings of research; (2) guided by gender and nutrition experts; and (3) guided by people who are embedded in the local context and norms. Several agricultural institutions working with IGNITE developed their own social behaviour change (SBC) strategies, informed by the findings of their gender and nutrition research.

10. Deliver education materials in a gender-sensitive manner

In some communities, men and women have different levels of education and access to information, and different roles and responsibilities, which can influence if and how an educational message is received. These factors need to be considered when developing a campaign, in consultation with gender experts with knowledge of the local context. Digital Green piloted a novel approach to educate dairy farmers on best practices in Ethiopia using interactive voice response (IVR) messages on mobile phone. The recipient of the message, usually the owner of the phone and more often a man, was asked to play the message on the speakerphone for others in their household (mostly women) to also hear. This approach was intended to increase access to information for women in the household, as it was noted that messages were not commonly shared. This gender-sensitive approach became the topic of two IGNITE studies meant to evaluate its effectiveness.

Innovation

Research is only useful when real change happens in its wake. Take action and innovate in response to the research findings. Innovation can take many forms, including programmatic changes, shifts in gender or nutrition strategies or policies, changes in personnel or resource allocation, or the conducting of further research. Several agricultural institutions that worked with IGNITE took steps in this process.

For example, Digital Green used the findings from the gender analysis to design a systemic gender action plan to reach women. This plan included creating women-only extension groups and recruiting extension group members from existing women development groups and self-help groups. Ultimately, this innovative idea led to the successful registration of more than 100,000 women farmers. The findings from another of IGNITE's studies helped shed light on intra-household decision-making dynamics; consequently, Digital Green tailored its video content to explicitly demonstrate the importance of joint decision-making in wheat farming. The research also led to operational innovations. After research highlighted that farmers struggled with being able to see and hear videos properly, Digital Green facilitated access to portable whiteboard screens and external speakers for Pico projectors. For SAA, IGNITE research helped further mainstream gender and nutrition into its strategic plan, beyond just collecting sex-disaggregated data. Research highlighted the importance of calendar planning and food diversity to accommodate the production calendars of different crops farmers grow in the study areas. Correspondingly, corrective actions were taken to improve SAA's training curriculum. For TADB, taking action involved hiring new personnel. A gender and nutrition focal person was recently hired in response to findings from the gender formative assessment to help implement recommendations and to be a champion for gender and nutrition across the organisation.

IGNITE Recommends:

11. Co-create gender and nutrition recommendations

Research should culminate in recommendations that can be utilised to achieve a desired result. Research teams or learning partners often lack crucial context that determines what recommendations are feasible or not. For this reason, co-creating recommendations between research teams, gender and nutrition experts, programme teams, management, donors, and other stakeholders is a great way to ensure that action can be taken. It also promotes ownership of the recommendations as stakeholders have been involved in their creation. This activity can happen as part of a validation or dissemination workshop, or separately. It is helpful to start with a first draft of recommendations from a research partner, and validated by gender and/or nutrition experts, so that the group has something to react to. For TI3P partners, having an opportunity to adapt, modify, and prioritise recommendations based on what was feasible was a crucial aspect of their research process.

12. Create an action plan

Once the key recommendations are identified, the best way to promote innovation is to create a structured action plan. This involves designing specific tasks, assigning responsibility to specific people, creating timelines, and monitoring progress regularly. For agricultural institutions working with IGNITE, action planning often took place during the second day of a dissemination workshop. For TI3P partners, this action plan had distinct activities based on recommendations (e.g., 'Identify champions for gender and nutrition'), with timelines and a staff member delegated to lead. In interviews for this case study, TI3P partners noted that action planning was the most important part of the research process.

13. Identify champions for gender and nutrition innovation

A final crucial element of the innovation activity is to identify innovation champions. For organisations seeking to mainstream gender and nutrition, a champion may come in the form of an internal focal person for gender or nutrition. At TADB, hiring a gender and nutrition focal person was an institutional innovation to promote gender and nutrition integration in the TI3P project. It also ensured that there would be a dedicated champion who could guarantee accountability and progress as future innovations were implemented. In other cases, high-level stakeholders, such as managers, donors, or government officials, can become champions. For example, Silverlands undertook advocacy training on how to better engage and get buy-in for its work from the government. In this way, Silverlands created external champions for its work at the highest levels.

Conclusion

Research is an ongoing process of learning, sharing, and innovating. However, impact is only achieved when concrete action is taken based on the findings of the study. Organisations studying the effectiveness of gender and nutrition programmes in agriculture should consider the five activities to 'go beyond' with their research:

1. **Generation:**—Identify and fill a knowledge gap with actionable insights
2. **Validation:** Confirm your data and findings with those who know the context best
3. **Dissemination:** Share your findings with the right audience and in the right format
4. **Education:** Sensitise those closest to the community to cascade findings and prevent obstacles
5. **Innovation:** Change the way things are done based on the findings

This case study was written by **John DiGiacomo, Senior Research Associate, Laterite; Ioana Lungu, Research Associate, Laterite; Dale Barnhart, Research Director, Laterite; and Tanager Technical Experts**

IGNITE Partners

Tanager, an ACDI/VOCA affiliate, is a global development organization that empowers people to realize life-changing economic and social opportunities. We have 30 years of experience implementing gender-transformative and nutrition-sensitive agriculture approaches, connecting actors across the production supply chain, fostering knowledge and access for women and other marginalized groups, and unlocking sustainable, climate-smart economic opportunities for all.

Laterite is a data, research, and advisory firm dedicated to providing high-quality research services for social impact in East Africa. We provide technical advice on the design and implementation of research projects, development interventions, and socio-economic policies. We strive to deliver impactful research that helps decision-makers find solutions to complex development problems.

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Morningside Office Park, Ngong Road
2nd Floor, Wing A suite C
P.O. BOx 1308-006060 Nairobi: Kenya

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