



## **Gender, Agriculture and Assets Project: end of project evaluation**

**Report – final**

27 March 2014

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## 1 Executive summary

The Gender, Agriculture and Assets Project (GAAP) was run by the CGIAR centres IFPRI and ILRI and received \$2.9m of funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. It ran from 2010 to 2014. GAAP worked with 'member projects' that were already implementing agriculture programmes. It made grants of up to \$100k and provided capacity-building support to conduct gender-based research. GAAP was typically 1% of the member projects' total funding.

At the highest level, GAAP had two aims: adding to the body of knowledge on gender, assets and agriculture, and building the capacity of member projects to conduct gender-based research. This evaluation looks at success in terms of these aims, as well as the quality of programme management and support provided to member projects. It is based on 36 in-depth qualitative interviews with staff of member projects, the GAAP core team, funders and other stakeholders.

In terms of adding to the body of knowledge, stakeholders felt that GAAP was successful. GAAP used mixed-methods research and stakeholders felt that the quality of both quantitative and qualitative data varied across the portfolio, with some projects considered highly robust and others considered less robust. GAAP was felt to have produced three clear contributions:

- (i) Asset ownership is more complex and culturally specific than is sometimes thought; particularly regarding situations where men and women have joint ownership of assets. The contribution of joint ownership to women's empowerment is also complex and culturally contextual.
- (ii) Agricultural projects can produce unintended consequences that may be masked by non-gender sensitive outcome measures. An example is increasing workload for women who manage new agricultural assets.
- (iii) Demonstration that measurement of sex-disaggregated assets is important in agriculture projects, because it shows how men and women make decisions and can be engaged more effectively.

GAAP also demonstrated that the methods employed in the research are feasible in a wide variety of settings, despite perceptions that the data was labour-intensive to collect and the methodologies were complex.

In terms of capacity building, impacts were mixed due to different starting points and models of engagement with GAAP. Some member projects had extensive research and evaluation experience in this area and others had little. Some member projects ran GAAP as a separate research module, managed externally, and only engaged with the results.

The strongest impact for member projects was increased gender awareness. The small cross-section studied in this evaluation suggests that many agriculture projects are at an early stage of gender awareness, even where beneficiaries are specifically women or families. For many of the member projects, GAAP introduced gender research concepts for the first time.

GAAP also provided substantial methodological learning for some member projects. Half of the member projects identified specific programmes starting after GAAP where GAAP methods have been used in the research design.

GAAP does not appear to have built strong connections between member projects. While opportunities to meet and learn from other projects were provided, member projects do not appear

to have taken advantage of this, despite expressing an interest in more learning from projects that work with similar assets or value chains. This aspect of the project may have been more effective with a team member dedicated to building the network.

Several funders participated in this evaluation, including some that funded GAAP member projects and some that fund other gender-related work. In general, they had low awareness of GAAP. Those that were aware of GAAP felt that it had not yet produced clear, policy-relevant messages. This is a key part of the GAAP theory of change (see stages 7 – 8 in Figure 1), and will be a challenging area of work for any future round of GAAP. The complexity and limited generalisability of findings from each project make it difficult to produce simple recommendations. Funders feel there is little available advice on which agricultural models increase women's empowerment and would value more insight.

The process of synthesising findings across the projects was not complete at the time of this evaluation and further outputs will be released. The impact on funders and other wider stakeholders has therefore not been fully evaluated.

Based on the views of stakeholders, nine recommendations have been offered in section 8, which are relevant for any future round of GAAP or other research projects with similar objectives.

## 2 Introduction

### 2.1 Terms of reference

The evaluation focused on the two broad aims of GAAP: delivering benefits for member projects and delivering research that influences the agricultural development agenda.

The direct impact on gender equality has not been evaluated because (a) GAAP was designed to investigate the links between agricultural development projects and gender equality (using control and ownership of assets as a measure of empowerment), rather than directly increase gender equality, and (b) the projects are too diverse and the research findings at too early a stage to draw programme-level conclusions about the impact on target beneficiaries.

Specific objectives of the evaluation were to assess:

- How well GAAP was managed;
- The support provided by GAAP to the grantees;
- The extent to which GAAP has enhanced the member projects' work;
- Whether GAAP has produced findings that are useful for external actors;
- Recommendations for any further phases of GAAP.

### 2.2 Methodology

Due to the diversity of the GAAP portfolio and the subjective nature of many of the impacts that this evaluation is examining, the methodology is based on stakeholders' qualitative perceptions rather than quantitative measures.

The primary evidence is qualitative interviews with staff at the GAAP member projects, the GAAP core team, senior staff at IFPRI and ILRI, funders of gender and agricultural development projects and academics and consultants who were involved in GAAP.

36 in-depth interviews lasting between 20 and 60 minutes were conducted between January and March 2014. The evaluation objectives above were broken down into a series of research questions (shown in the appendix), which were used to design interview guides.

Anonymised quotes from these interviews are provided in the evaluation to illustrate general findings across the interviews.

*Table 1: Breakdown of interviewees*

<b>Interviewee group</b>	<b>Number of interviews</b>
GAAP member project officers	15
GAAP core team	4
GAAP hosts: IFPRI and ILRI	5
Funders	7
Academic institutions	3
Consultants	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>

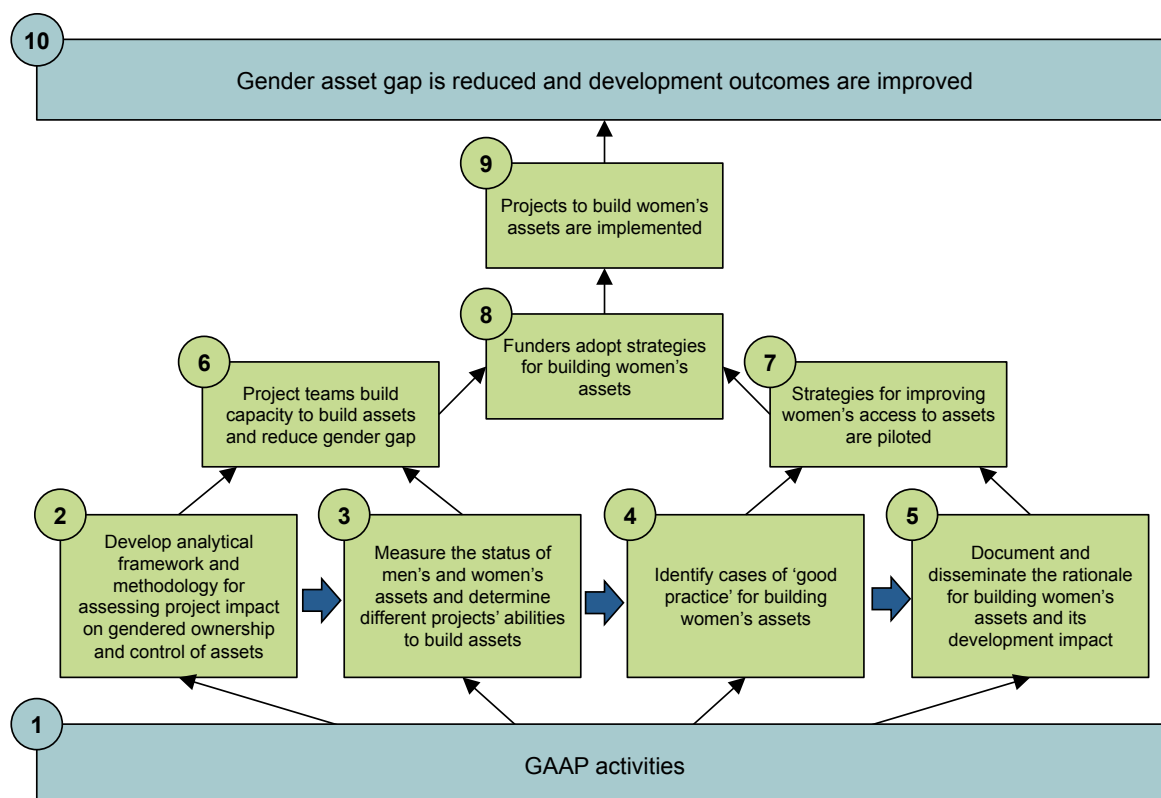
### 3 Background: about GAAP

GAAP was run by the CGIAR centres IFPRI and ILRI and received \$2.9m of funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. It ran from 2010 to 2014. GAAP provided grants of up to \$100k and capacity-building support to eight agriculture projects, which conducted gender-based research. It also provided capacity-building support but no financial support to the East African Dairy Development Project.

#### 3.1 Theory of change

GAAP was intended to investigate and demonstrate strategies that reduce the 'gender asset gap'. The theory of change from the original proposal to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in 2010 is shown in figure 1. GAAP aimed to build methodologies and capacities within the projects (stages 2, 3 and 6) and identify and document strategies for increasing women's access to assets (stages 4, 5, and 7), leading to changed behaviour among funders and improved development outcomes (stages 8, 9 and 10).

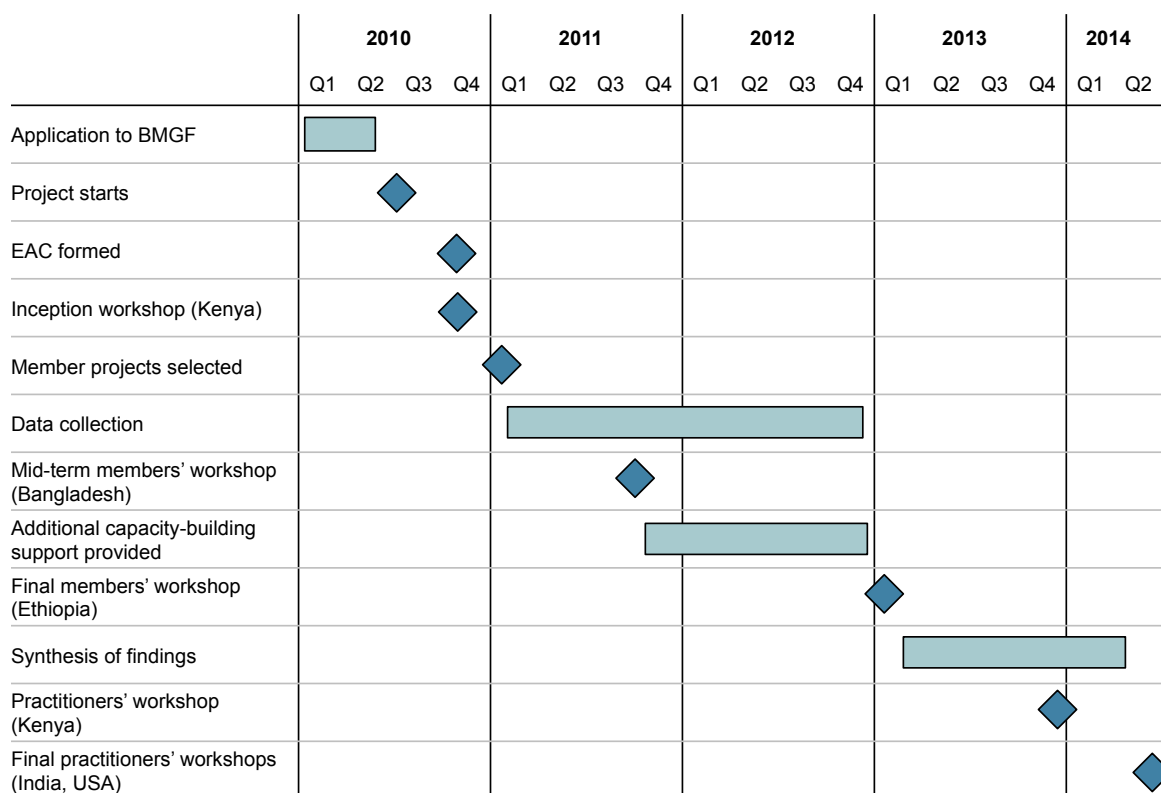
Figure 1: GAAP theory of change. Developed by the GAAP core team



#### 3.2 Timeline

A high-level timeline for is represented in figure 2, below.

Figure 2: Selected activities and milestones



### 3.3 Portfolio features

Member projects were selected through a competitive open process. Projects that participated in GAAP were diverse in a number of ways:

- **Assets and value chains**, including dairy cows, sweet potato vines, land rights and irrigation pumps;
- **Geographical location**, including 12 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia;
- **Project stage**, with some projects at the start of implementation and others in the final stages at inception of GAAP;
- **Contents of the baseline survey**, with some including detailed sex-disaggregated data and others including little;
- **Project size**, ranging from \$1.5m to \$195m;
- **Research intensity**, ranging from 2% to 29% of the project budget spent on research and evaluation;
- **Sophistication in terms of evaluation and gender expertise**, with some projects employing gender specialists and others having previously conducted little or no gender analysis.

Table 2: Indicative funding of GAAP member projects. While this data has been provided or estimated by member project officers and/or funders, it has not been verified with financial staff and is shown as indicative data only

Host	Programme	Period / phase	Total funding	M&E budget (ex. GAAP)	Additional GAAP funding
BRAC	Challenging the Frontiers of Poverty Reduction: Bangladesh	2007 – 2011	\$195m	\$3.9m (2.0%)	\$74k (0.04%)
IRRI / CIMMYT	CSISA: India	2009 – 2011	\$24m	\$750k (3.3%)	\$100k (0.4%)
HarvestPlus	Reaching end users (orange sweet potato): Uganda	2007 – 2009	\$7m	\$2m (29%)	\$100k (1.4%)
Landesa	Micro land-ownership: India	2010 – 2015	\$6.7m	\$500k (7.5%)	\$100k (1.5%)
Land O Lakes	Smallholder dairy development: Mozambique	2008 – 2012	\$1.5m	\$100k (6.7%)	\$100k (6.7%)
Kickstart*	Kenya and Tanzania	2010 – 2012	\$13m	\$960k (7.4%)	\$100k (0.8%)
HKI	Enhanced Homestead Food Production: Burkina Faso	2009 – 2012	\$1.7m	\$123k (7.1%)	\$100k (5.8%)
Care Bangladesh	Strengthening the dairy value chain: Bangladesh	2007 – 2012	\$5.8m	\$500k (8.6%)	\$100k (1.7%)
Heifer International	East African Dairy Development Project: Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda	2008 – 2013	<i>Capacity-building support only</i>		
TOTAL			\$231m	\$8.1m (3.5%)	\$774k (0.3%)
Total ex. BRAC			\$36m	\$4.2m (8.4%)	\$669k (1.2%)

\*Kickstart is a social enterprise that does not run in defined phases. \$13m is an indicative estimate by Firetail of the company's expenditure in Kenya and Tanzania in the three years 2010, 2011 and 2012.

## 4 Management of GAAP

GAAP was managed by a core team of four co-principal investigators based at IFPRI and ILRI. The member projects and other stakeholders felt that this team was responsive and provided high levels of expertise, and overall satisfaction with management of the project was high.

The most common area for improvement mentioned by interviewees was that the project would have benefited from a single co-ordinator who was not involved as a researcher.

### 4.1 Areas of satisfaction

#### *(a) Quality of the core team*

All member projects expressed high levels of satisfaction with their interactions with the GAAP core team. They considered the team to be responsive and expert. Many felt that the opportunity to interact with the core team was one of the main benefits of participating in GAAP. Other stakeholders that interacted with the GAAP core team also felt the GAAP core team was very high quality.

*It was a great experience working with the GAAP team and that greatly enhanced our knowledge. The GAAP team comprised a number of internationally renowned experts, especially on gender issues. It was a great learning opportunity – GAAP member project*

#### *(b) Administrative and reporting processes*

Member projects felt that the reporting and administrative elements of GAAP were well designed, compared to other agriculture projects. The reporting was felt to be appropriate and demanded minimal resources.

*The leads were very careful about requesting things in the easiest format available. It didn't feel onerous at all and they were asking for the relevant things. They asked for the minimum they needed to get. They were also very good in terms of the timings and the way they communicated – GAAP member project*

#### *(c) Flexibility of the GAAP model to accommodate projects*

Despite the diversity in the portfolio, GAAP member projects all felt that the core team provided valuable advice and support, and were able to show how GAAP methods (including research designs and survey modules) can be applied in different contexts.

### 4.2 Areas for improvement

#### *(a) Increased co-ordination capacity*

Several stakeholders, including funders and core team members, felt that the management of GAAP would have been improved by a single project co-ordinator. Project co-ordination was conducted by the team of principle investigators, which meant that (i) leadership of the project was sometimes unclear because there was no named individual co-ordinator and (ii) the researchers were not able to focus exclusively on the capacity building and scientific aspects of the programme.



*(b) Provision of more dedicated qualitative support*

Two member projects felt that support for the qualitative elements of the research was insufficient or inconsistent. This view was reflected by stakeholders working across the portfolio. All member projects were satisfied with support for the quantitative research.

*On the qualitative side, it could be improved a little, in terms of co-ordination and timeliness – GAAP member project*

*(c) More clarity on the issues involved in 'retrofitting'*

GAAP added relatively small research modules to larger projects that were already underway. This meant that projects had to adjust their baseline surveys using recall data or other methods. The issues involved in this 'retrofitting' or 'piggy-backing' approach are discussed in more detail in section 5.2, below. Member projects did not express dissatisfaction with the management of this design, but several stakeholders working across the portfolio felt that communication of these issues at the start of the GAAP process was not clear enough.

*It was not really communicated on GAAP's part as to what [member projects] needed in their baseline, and how hard it would be to go back and fill in data gaps. And just being really clear with everyone that the findings might be limited by retrofitting and poor quality data. The retrofitting problem was inevitable, but it could have been handled better... In phase 2, you could only select grantees that are at a certain stage or at conceptual stage. I think we're savvy enough that we could find enough grantees at an early stage – GAAP stakeholder*

## 5 Perceptions of methods and scientific findings

This section outlines the views of stakeholders on the scientific methods and findings of GAAP. The methods were considered complex and sometimes resource intensive, but were also considered robust. The 'piggy-back' approach was felt to create issues for data quality in some projects. Despite this complexity, the methods have been demonstrated to be feasible in a wide range of contexts.

GAAP was considered to produce strong 'practical' findings, demonstrating that a gendered approach improves outcomes for asset projects and/or provides insights into outcomes that would otherwise be overlooked.

Stakeholders discussed scientific findings on three levels:

- **'Patterns of ownership'**, describing how men and women own and control assets. Many stakeholders felt that basic findings about asset ownership were not surprising, but the research also produced a more complex and nuanced picture than was anticipated.
- **'Impact on empowerment'**, showing the impact of member projects on gender equality. Some projects were felt to be conducted over insufficient time to show clear impacts. Other projects found unintended consequences, and these findings were highly valued.
- **'Models that work'**, providing guidance on models that effectively increase women's empowerment in any project. Most stakeholders felt that GAAP did not provide generalisable findings, which is in part due to the contextual nature of gender norms.

The synthesis process for findings across the portfolio is being conducted at the time of writing this evaluation, and therefore perceptions of the scientific findings have not been fully evaluated.

### 5.1 Feasibility of methods

Interviewees reported that the methods were complex and required long, household-level interviews. This was felt to be one reason why many the member projects had not conducted this type of research before.

*When you collect data on gender and assets, it requires a lot of time. You are dealing with issues that are sensitive. So it needs a lot of time, good methodology and trained enumerators – GAAP member project*

*In other projects where we have been trying to get sex-disaggregated results, there is an element of resistance because there is a perception that it takes time and is expensive. But in GAAP, we had the resources to make it work – GAAP core team*

*One of the challenges was that there was a huge research burden. There was already a lot of research for the baseline and endline, and we had a round of operations research to monitor the quality of implementation... These were very detailed household surveys with large sample sizes – GAAP member project*

Despite this complexity, the GAAP survey modules were successfully implemented in a wide range of contexts and most projects produced data that was considered valid by the member projects and the core team.

## 5.2 Strengths and weaknesses of the ‘piggy-back’ design

GAAP added relatively small research modules to larger projects that were already underway. These modules represented a small proportion of overall project funding, ranging from 0.04% to 6.7%, and averaging 1% across the portfolio. The projects already had baseline data. This approach allowed GAAP to access data from a wide range of projects with a limited amount of funding, and also to conduct research based on a longer time period. GAAP therefore ‘leveraged’ its time and resources.

*GAAP was an attempt to develop a set of partnerships that would enable it to move on a short time horizon with limited resources, engaging national and international researchers. This involved challenges and not all projects were perfectly matched to the methodology. But overall it was a sensible strategy and was managed well – Academic*

Member projects felt that this design created problems with data quality. The baseline surveys of some projects did not include sufficient data to conduct valid analysis, and in these cases the projects had to reconstruct the data.

*We were already asking who made primary decisions about the use of [the assets]. But working with GAAP, we revised completely the gender module and asked about control over each asset that was reported. Our enumerators took the baseline data with them to each household, and asked the households to recall the gender ownership. This was a tricky thing to do. There was a lot of measurement error. People will misremember – GAAP member project*

*GAAP came when we were already implementing the project. Timing was an issue. We were in the last nine months of our project. While we learned a lot, we couldn’t integrate that much and there were data collection gaps – GAAP member project*

*The grants selected were already underway, so there’s so much retrofitting that has to be done to get the right baseline data to be able to say something about the grants, and the retrofitting ... certainly sacrificed some of the quality of the data – GAAP stakeholder*

## 5.3 Perceptions of key findings

Interviewees distinguished ‘practical insights’ from ‘scientific findings’. Practical insights are findings that show that agricultural programmes should use gender-sensitive approaches, while scientific findings contribute to a body of knowledge about gender, assets and agriculture.

### *(a) Practical insights (‘assets matter’)*

Member projects and other stakeholders felt that GAAP provided clear messages that (i) agriculture projects working with assets need to consider how those assets will be used by men and women, in order to make sure men and women both benefit, and (ii) assets provide a meaningful measure of empowerment and measuring sex disaggregated assets gives insights into outcomes that would otherwise be missed. GAAP has therefore provided a strong case that measurement of sex-disaggregated assets forms an important part of evaluation for agriculture projects.

*The useful lessons are more project lessons – that gender really matters and you have to think about the gender piece of assets... [GAAP] demonstrates the on-the-ground and practical impacts you can have when you think about the gender aspect of assets. Projects will do better when you look at gender... The econometrics may not be highly robust, but it shows that these approaches have real impact – **Academic***

*(b) Scientific findings: patterns of ownership, impact on empowerment and models that work*

Interviewees talked about scientific findings of GAAP on three levels: (i) patterns of control and ownership, giving descriptive data on which assets men and women own and control; (ii) impact on empowerment, showing how the projects changed gender equality, as measured by assets; (iii) models that work, showing which interventions increase women's empowerment, and how other agriculture projects can use them.

*Patterns of ownership*

Many stakeholders felt that the basic findings conformed to expectations, showing that men control larger assets such as land and dairy cows, while women control smaller assets such as chickens and jewellery.

*At a scientific level there are not fabulous new results, but it has added depth and nuance to existing knowledge – **Academic***

However, interviewees also felt that GAAP showed complexity in intrahousehold decisions and the way assets are owned and managed. This complexity was seen as a new finding. In particular, several projects highlighted joint ownership and the different ways that joint ownership works across cultures.

*One of the interesting pieces that came out of GAAP is what joint vs. individually owned means. When is joint ownership good or not good? What does it mean? The project has raised these questions in ways they haven't been before. How can we do more to understand these questions? – **Academic***

*GAAP produced a nuanced understanding of how you define ownership. What might be de jure ownership may not be operational ownership. Some projects emphasised that. It also highlighted joint ownership, which is very different to individual ownership. Joint ownership is likely to be satisfactory for many women... but may be more or less desirable in different countries – **Academic***

*When we talk about access to and control of assets, most of the examples are from Africa, where men and women have separate plots, so it's easy to collect information about who has what. When we are dealing with Asia, both men and women work together in the same plot. So when you ask questions about who owns and controls the land, it's not easy to understand. If you get the bit of paper, it may say the man owns the land, but women perceive that they own the land as well. – **GAAP member project***

In addition to joint ownership, stakeholders felt that 'ownership' of assets is complex due to different cultural definitions of ownership the highly contextual nature of gender roles in agriculture.

*While there are signed documents, whether they are respected and remain valid, or can be torn up, whether these are long term transfers or temporary transfers – there are lots of questions about whether women have full control over the land – **GAAP member project***

### *Impact on empowerment*

Results in this area also showed complexity. Many projects had a simple hypothesis that households where women are given assets or are more empowered are more likely to participate and benefit from projects. However, the results tended to be more complex. In some cases, unintended consequences were identified, such as an increased burden on women's workload looking after new dairy cows and knock-on effects on women's time to look after children. Both member projects and wider stakeholders valued these findings highly.

*We used the asset indicator to create a measure of the bargaining power that women have within the household. Were the households where women had more control at baseline more likely to adopt? It turned out to be a much more nuanced story – it wasn't a very simple, straightforward story. The households that were most likely to adopt were the households that reported joint control, but the woman was in the lead... At the end, our punchline wasn't as crisp. It's a more complicated story than we anticipated – **GAAP member project***

*The findings that are most salient for me are the unintended consequences that have been captured by the improved methodology. I'm thinking about some of the livestock grants that were studied, while returns to overall household income may have improved, women's labour increased with that... We always suspected that was true, but this told us – **Gender expert at a funder***

Some member projects felt that GAAP did not cover a sufficiently long time period to observe changes in empowerment, and if feasible, it may be valuable to revisit the GAAP member projects to collect further data.

### *Models that work*

Stakeholders feel that GAAP has not yet produced clear guidance on how to increase women's empowerment. Study designs were intended to evaluate interventions (some used randomised controlled trials, for example), so this was not related to methodological issues. Gender roles in agricultural settings are highly contextual, making findings hard to generalise, which is one reason for the limited guidance on 'models that work'. Another reason is that some interventions did not work as expected, or produced findings that were more complex than anticipated. Finally, GAAP has not yet completed the process of synthesising findings.

Funders expressed demand for this type of guidance.

*For the most part, men own and control the assets, and women have access to them to meet their household needs. And that was repeated in all contexts – it seemed to be the common denominator. I am not sure our study was able to clearly determine how this asset gap within the household can be addressed. Not because we don't have ideas, but because there isn't an example where those ideas have been implemented and the change measured... It's still not clear what needs to be done to narrow the gap – **GAAP core team***

*We are trying to implement what we learnt from GAAP, but because we are targeting new geographic areas, the social characteristics of those farmers are slightly different – **GAAP member project***

*There is a tension between wanting to simplify and get clear findings versus the reality that rural Bangladesh is different to Tanzania... This also reflects the tension between researchers and funders. Funders would like to see how women get equal ownership – **Academic***

## 5.4 Future research questions

The future research questions proposed by interviewees differ most strongly between researchers and funders. Researchers are most interested in intra-household decision-making. Funders are more interested in ‘models that work’.

### *Researchers*

The researchers that took part in this evaluation expressed a broad range of research interests. They most commonly wanted to deepen investigation of intra-household decision-making and the concept of joint ownership.

*I'd like to look at the joint ownership question. Families and households are formed due to some convergence of interests, despite evidence that interests of men and women can compete. Knowing more about how joint ownership works and in what ways will be useful. It's different in places – in parts of Africa assets are more individualised or communalised – **Academic***

Interviewees also proposed a range of other research questions. For example, one interviewee discussed potential inclusion of a project from Latin America. Other interviewees did not discuss broadening the geographic scope of GAAP.

*I'd also like to see inclusion of a country in Latin America. They're ahead in so many ways. Brazil is a donor country at this point. There is a lot of recognition about how much more adaptable civil society is in Latin America. It also presents more opportunities to include non-traditional themes, such as gender-based violence. They have a big problem with it, but also more of a history in trying to address it – **Academic***

Some interviewees wanted future research to consider different types of asset, such as cell phones or human capital and technical knowledge.

*We need to do cell phones as an asset. There are so many donors that are looking at cell phones as a magic bullet for addressing a number of problems in the value chain. It's an area where we have all these issues of individual versus shared control. What does it mean for a women to have access to her own cell phone or a smart card? – **Consultant***

Another was interested in research related to irrigation:

*An understudied area is irrigation and gendered intervention. There is not enough appreciation of gendered differences in irrigation interventions; the different crops and how they affect gendered nutritional impacts, direct income and other areas – **CGIAR researcher***

Aside from the continued focus on models of ownership and joint ownership, which was mentioned by many interviewees, these diverse priorities appear to reflect the interests of individual researchers.

### *Funders*

Funders were more focused on practical messages about which models can improve women's empowerment. In general, they accepted the importance of ‘gender-aware’ programming, and while they appreciate additional evidence confirming that gendered approaches improve the quality of programming, this is not a priority for them.

Some funders were also interested in gender and assets research in a wider range of contexts, such as countries in crisis.

*Everyone in development knows what we're supposed to say, but when it comes to knowing how to make a difference for women farmers, it's much more difficult to know what to do... It looks the kind of consolidation and mechanisation and intensification that has happened has not benefited women, so is there a good model? The kinds of discussions around women entrepreneurs aren't realistic... I need specific stuff about how women can benefit from the investments we make – **Funding officer for a GAAP member project***

*My sense is that we don't really talk enough about the gendered use of assets in crisis situations. The classic model seems to be that women take care of cheaper assets like chicken and sheep. These are assets to be sold on the market where there's a drought or civil war. Is the model really true in places like Niger any more? What happens in places with high rates of outward male migration? – **Gender expert at a funder***

## 6 Impact on member projects

Impacts on member projects can be understood in three areas: ‘ways of working’, including improved management of the project, better research in other projects and increased gender awareness; ‘resources’, including skills gained by individuals, research tools and a network among other agriculture projects; and ‘insights’, including outcomes achieved at a project level, and general insights from across the portfolio.

Figure 3: impacts on member projects. H / M / L represent ‘high’, ‘medium’ and ‘low’ impacts, across the portfolio

Ways of working	Resources	Insights
Improved management of the project <b>M</b>	Skills gained by individuals <b>M</b>	Project-level (specific insights) <b>H</b>
Better research in other projects <b>M</b>	Research tools <b>M</b>	Portfolio-level (general insights) <b>L</b>
Increased gender awareness <b>H</b>	Network <b>L</b>	

Interviews with staff at member projects reveal patterns in the strength of impact across these areas, with the greatest impacts in increased gender awareness and project-level insights. These impacts are explored further in this section.

As well as these patterns across the portfolio, impacts differed significantly between member projects. A key driver of these differences was the starting point of the member projects, in terms of gender-orientation, capacity for research and evaluation and the model of delivery of GAAP (whether the research was embedded in the project or delivered by external consultants).

### 6.1 Starting points of member projects

#### *Gender sensitivity and awareness*

Some of the member projects were already strongly committed to gender-sensitive evaluation research, while others had not considered gender.

*When we started this project there was no concern about gender... Initially we were just interpreting our data in terms of the impacts created for households, without looking at any gender aspects – GAAP member project*



Some of the projects in the GAAP portfolio, including those implemented by HKI and HarvestPlus, specifically worked with women and families. This did not always mean they were aware of gender issues, and some reported that their focus on women meant they had previously assumed that they had gender 'covered'. GAAP allowed them to consider gender more holistically through collection of sex-disaggregated data or evaluation of gender norms in decision-making and participation in the project. In one case, resistance was reported:

*Gender questions were not well accepted by [the project], particularly gender-disaggregated assets data, because [the project] didn't want a long questionnaire and the economist took many of the questions out of the baseline survey. When GAAP started, we had to reintroduce it – GAAP member project*

#### *Research and evaluation capacity*

The impact of GAAP on member projects also depended on their capacity for research and evaluation. Some of the projects were research-intensive. HarvestPlus, for example, committed 29% of the budget for the 'Reaching End Users' / orange-fleshed sweet potato project in Uganda to research, and has the involvement of researchers from international research institutions. Other projects have been implemented with very little research and evaluation conducted before GAAP.

*[We] historically haven't done much impact evaluation or systematic research evaluation until the past three years or so. I think GAAP was the first opportunity to do something like that... As a new research team, it was our first time to be able to think about what kinds of protocols we would set up – GAAP member project*

For member projects with less research and evaluation capacity, GAAP represented a learning experience in terms of evaluation generally.

#### *Model of delivering GAAP*

In some cases, GAAP research was delivered by researchers employed by the member project and involved in the programme. For example, Land O' Lakes and Landesa mainly delivered the GAAP research in-house.

*[GAAP] helped us set up lines of communication with the field staff, so it was really beneficial for the organisation... [Staff in the country office] were very involved. – GAAP member project*

*During the GAAP initiative, many staff were involved in the process. Not only during the data collection, but also supporting the training of enumerators. Some were directly involved in carrying out focus group discussions and household surveys. It built skills of myself and many colleagues as well. The way they understand gender concepts and the way they carry out field work, they have gender in their minds – GAAP member project*

In other cases, the research was delivered by a researcher who was not otherwise closely involved in the member project.

*We didn't have anything to do with [GAAP] directly, except we had written a letter of support so [the researcher] could implement the project. Some of the country team worked on it more closely. And of course we got the report, so we learnt directly from that. So it was an add-on, a spin-off – GAAP member project*

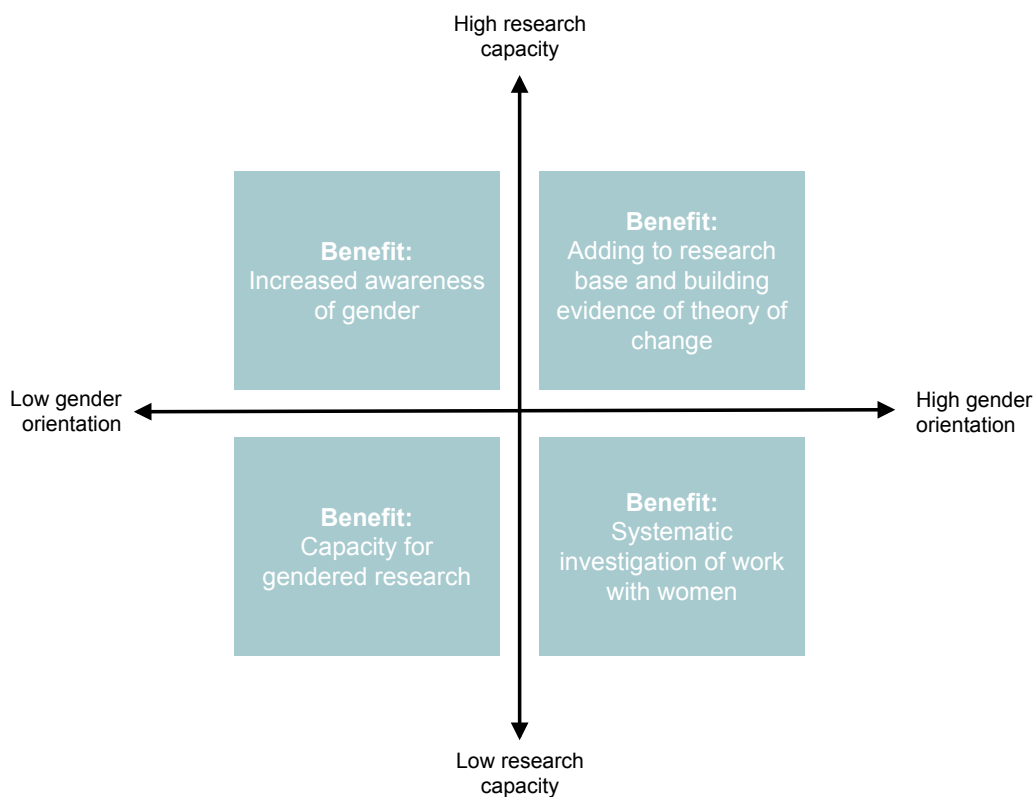
Where the GAAP research was more embedded in the member project, the project tended to report stronger capacity building impacts, with more skills learned by research staff and a greater take-up of research tools in other projects.

However, the model of delivery did not appear to have any bearing on the quality of the research and the validity or value of the scientific results.

### Segmentation

Two important drivers of the benefits that member projects experienced are their pre-existing research capacity and gender orientation. Drawing on the experiences of member projects in the GAAP portfolio, the following matrix shows a broad segmentation of the key benefits that projects may experience.

Figure 4: approach for segmenting member projects



## 6.2 Ways of working

### Improved management of the project

This refers to changes made to the design of the member project as a result of participation in GAAP.

One member project reported that GAAP highlighted elements of the programme that had not worked as planned, enabling them to fix some of these issues (such as assets not reaching female beneficiaries). Some member projects learnt about the ways that women engage with the project and were able to improve products, training or other types of support to increase their participation.

Although most of the member projects reported at least one impact that GAAP had on the management of the project, these changes were usually adjustments to the project rather than more radical changes.

*In the first few years, we were very focused on improving the technical information that went to farmers to improve productivity. Now we are putting equal importance on understanding the roles of men and women in this activity, and trying to understand the ideal gender-related sessions that need to go with the programme to generate awareness in the household and community – GAAP member project*

*We found that in some places, women had less exposure to the product and what it does, and only learnt about it from their husbands. We recommended that there should be specific trainings targeting women. We also found that women don't have enough money to buy the product, and so we now allow them to buy by making several small payments in a program called layaway. It has increased the proportion of women customers – GAAP member project*

*There are things that we now pay attention to that we may not have previously. The finding about land rights, for example – people are not always moving to the land. That came out of the GAAP survey. They might have been using the land productively, even though they're not physically located on it. Not everyone that gets given land moves. That opened the door with the project team to think about how we support people in these situations – GAAP member project*

*We are continuing to have two household members for the training... We decided to do this before we were involved in GAAP, but through GAAP found that the outcome from this decision was quite important, and it engaged more women in the programme. GAAP brought us more insights towards the benefits both men and women encounter when they are involved in the programme – GAAP member project*

*Women are not entitled to own the most valuable resources such as dairy cows... But [through GAAP] we found that the involvement of women in the business adds value to the products... Women are more conscious of quality, and they are now being considered as milk testers at the co-operative level. The farmers – co-operative members – are realising that women are playing an important role in their business. Women are more involved in the roles that were considered as technical areas and requiring more qualified people – GAAP member project*

#### *Better research in other projects*

This refers to the transfer of GAAP's research methodologies to other projects run by the same organisation.

Half of the member projects were able to identify another project where the evaluation methodology had already been influenced by GAAP. In some of these, specific questionnaire modules had been taken from GAAP. Many said that GAAP was 'systematic', and it has improved their understanding of what 'quality' research looks like.

*The impact of the whole GAAP initiative is more around how you evaluate the impact of programmes that give assets. What sorts of major tools do you use? What are the pros and cons of these tools, and what sorts of tools work best? We now have a second phase of [the project], and we're able to use the tools we used in GAAP – GAAP member project*

*Recently we have initiated a new study with [two donors], and I included a few questions around asset ownership and women, so we have started using that experience in other studies – GAAP member project*

*One of the things that we are now adopting is that in every other study we are including these gender aspects. So we are really changing our work in terms of impact assessment... It is useful because there is a lot of skew in the gendered adoption of technologies – GAAP member project*

*Before GAAP, gender was not a big focus. In hindsight that was a missed opportunity when designing a programme. Given what we found out and the benefits, we realised we have to incorporate gender. We even budget for that in the assessments and evaluation. It was an opportunity that was missed before and now we are capturing it going forward – GAAP member project*

*[GAAP] allowed us to focus on investing in the methodology and be careful about the work we were doing. That helped with the direct results, but also helped us as an organisation, because we've already been using some of the tools that we developed as part of the GAAP project for other projects – GAAP member project*

*We're using the tools now. We're doing the endline survey and we're looking in the same areas and with the same sample. That's exciting because we have a lot of great tools already built. We understand what we need to use, and we have a much more solid foundation with the GAAP methodology – GAAP member project*

*In terms of the influence of the GAAP initiative, when we moved onto the second phase, we made sure that the baseline was conducted with a gender lens. Our consultant was a gender specialist who could carry out the gender analysis at baseline – GAAP member project*

#### *Increased gender awareness*

This refers to a change in the perceived importance of gender in the design and evaluation of projects.

This was a strong benefit. Many interviewees reported that participation in GAAP has led them to consider other projects through a 'gender lens', which they had not done previously. The process of conducting the GAAP research led the member projects to understand the value of gender-based research in evaluating the impact of their work and identifying areas for improvement.

*We regularly review the impact of the programme, but before GAAP, the gender aspect of the impact remained to be addressed. Through GAAP, we assessed the impact of the programme on the gender dimension. Before, we just assessed the impact on the livelihood of the [beneficiaries] – GAAP member project*

*Gender was new to all the [member projects that I worked with]. So we needed to do a lot of training as we went on, and explained a lot of new concepts. So there was a lot of adjustment from the projects towards looking at things with a gender lens – GAAP core team*

*It helped us realise that we can and should focus more of our energies on gender-related projects. We all recognised that [the project] was not sufficiently focused on gender issues so GAAP gave us an opportunity to do some work on that... Within the policy and research part of [the project], we now have a conviction to do much more gendered research – GAAP member project*

*We were thinking about [gender], for sure, but I'll be honest, we weren't giving it as much priority as we should have, and certainly not as much as we did once we started working with GAAP. We were aware of the role that gender played and could play in adoption decisions. We didn't know for sure because we hadn't got any data – GAAP member project*

*We're trying to integrate gender better into our overall programme, and GAAP was a first step. We never get a chance to actively think about gender because our target populations are children under 5 and women of childbearing age, so we thought we have gender covered, but gender doesn't mean your target populations are women. Now we are learning there is a lot we need to think about, including decision-making in the household – GAAP member project*

### 6.3 Resources

#### *Skills gained by individuals*

This refers to research and evaluation skills gained by staff members in the member projects.

The findings here are mixed because the research was implemented in different ways and member projects had different levels of existing capacity. Some member projects used external consultants to carry out the research, limiting the capacity that could be developed within the organisations.

Some had established monitoring and evaluation teams, and GAAP added detailed research findings to a wider programme of research supported by experts. Others had conducted little evaluation previously, and GAAP provided an introduction to systematic evaluation.

The impact on organisational capacity was also limited by staff turnover. All member projects experienced some turnover within the three years of GAAP, but there were no member projects who felt that turnover was higher than normal, and there was some consistency in staffing in all projects. Based on the interviews conducted for this evaluation, turnover appears higher in monitoring and evaluation teams in country offices than in international headquarters.

*For our teams in [the country], they were not used to doing research or connecting to research that is rigorous. Usually, people come and do a quick assessment. So seeing how you really measure things and attribute things was useful for them. – GAAP member project*

#### *Research tools*

This refers to quantitative survey modules, qualitative methodologies, conceptual frameworks and other research methods that were transferred to the member projects.

Many interviewees found the GAAP methods to be valuable additions to their research toolkit, and plan to use them again. Some interviewees felt that because the research findings are context-specific and difficult to generalise, the research tools are the most important long-term benefit from GAAP.

*The lessons learnt from GAAP cannot be fully replicated to other geographical regions. But it still adds value, because of the way we understand the gender analysis – GAAP member project*

*Whatever lessons we learn, how they carry over to other contexts is quite limited. But what we learnt was about the methodology – what questions we should be asking – GAAP member project*

*IFPRI has been very generous in letting us duplicate the questionnaires and use them in other settings. In agricultural settings, it is a much more rigorous and detailed set of questionnaires that have been shared with us. The whole methodology – the randomised research – especially in Africa – those research methodologies have benefited the local team. The questionnaires are also available to people in other countries – GAAP member project*

## Network

This refers to connections between agricultural projects and increased awareness of other projects.

This area appears to have been a weaker impact. Interviewees did not report making new contacts among other member projects. Although they felt that the work of other member projects would be interesting and GAAP provided channels for communication, they did not prioritise building the network or learning from other projects. Few interviewees were able to relate detail about other projects. For all interviewees, the main interaction with other member projects was at GAAP workshops.

Many valued new contacts made with the GAAP core team, and some reported improved internal connections between their central research team and country-level research teams.

Member projects working with similar assets, particularly those working in dairy value chains (Care, Land O' Lakes and the East African Dairy Development Project), were more likely to express an interest in the work of other projects, even if they had not made direct contact.

*I mainly engaged in Addis Ababa. I skimmed the briefs. I found them somewhat useful – GAAP member project*

*When I go to the IFPRI website and see what [other projects] did, there's a lot to learn. What we didn't do as an organisation is involve ourselves in sessions other than those provided in the workshops, so that's a lesson learned – GAAP member project*

*I feel that we connected with the other teams mainly at the workshops. There was just a lot going on and short time to really get into what each team was doing. To be totally fair, the materials are available to read, the connections are there, we can always call or email. GAAP made the connections but in practice we didn't, I don't know if that was because of GAAP or not. They didn't require that it happen – GAAP member project*

*I got the sense that the intention of GAAP was a bit more horizontal collaboration with other projects. If that was the intention, it didn't come through as strongly as other components... I felt a bit of distance from other projects – GAAP member project*

## 6.4 Insights

### Project-level

This refers to findings that projects make about their own work, and the extent to which they addressed the research questions that were set at the start of the GAAP process.

The impact of project-level findings was limited by methodological issues, generalisability and the profile of GAAP within the member projects. Despite this, all interviewees from member projects were satisfied with the findings from GAAP and felt they had learnt valuable lessons.

When asked what they saw as the key findings, interviewees either talked about descriptive insights (such as 'we found that some assets are controlled by women and others are controlled by men), or inferential insights (such as 'the research helped us build the case that providing assets improves women's empowerment').

Two methodological issues were commonly mentioned with project-level findings:

- Some considered the timeframe of GAAP too short to observe relevant changes;
- Where baseline surveys did not include sex-disaggregated data, the processes for reconstructing data were felt to reduce the robustness of the findings.

*It was extremely valuable in adding to knowledge about the programme and how it influences women's time allocation and resource control... We really got a much more in-depth and data-based understanding of what happens. A lot of our previous research has been impressionistic and not comparing to control groups... We partially addressed our research questions in GAAP. I think we need a longer time-frame to be more secure in some of the answers, and to have a larger dimension of change to be more confident in the findings –*  
**GAAP member project**

For projects working across multiple sites, transferability of findings was felt to be limited due to the highly contextual nature of gender and intra-household relationships.

*In phase 2 of the same project, the context has changed dramatically. When we move into new geographies, gender dimensions change hugely. The tools we got from GAAP help us understand how we address these gender dimensions and how men and women are different –*  
**GAAP member project**

Visibility of GAAP research in organisations varies. For some, GAAP was 'too small' to gain significant attention from senior management, while for others, GAAP was considered important despite its size. Some reported that colleagues saw GAAP as 'technical'.

*GAAP is well understood by most of the project staff, but not by other staff in the organisation –*  
**GAAP member project**

*If there is a final report, we can put it on our website and make a story and I can circulate it to the programme management team, but so far the profile is limited. It's [been seen by] the country manager –*  
**GAAP member project**

Most projects were able to use project-level findings to make improvements to the design of the project. These impacts are discussed in the section on 'ways of working', above.

#### *Portfolio-level*

This refers to general findings about agricultural development, assets and gender that can be made across the GAAP portfolio.

Interviewees had low awareness of the findings of other member projects and were not able to discuss general findings across the portfolio. This reflects the low network impact of GAAP, and may also reflect the high diversity in member projects. Section 5, above, discusses GAAP's scientific findings in more detail.

## 7 Impact on wider stakeholders

### 7.1 Awareness among wider stakeholders

Wider stakeholders include gender experts in donor organisations, other staff at donor organisations that are involved in funding agriculture projects, researchers in the wider CGIAR community and academics.

Gender experts are aware of GAAP and consider it an important part of the ‘gender landscape’.

*It's tremendously valuable. In particular, we need to know what works and so I think the impact evaluations that they've been supporting attached to asset transfers and different types of interventions are really useful. So I'm really looking forward to the results – Gender expert at a funder / academic*

*GAAP is quite well cited and reasonably well-known. There's a lot of interest – Gender expert at a funder*

Some gender experts related GAAP to the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index. One funder who was not familiar with the details of GAAP though that the two were linked, while another who was more familiar felt that there should have been more integration. Note that the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index was developed two years after inception of GAAP, and could therefore not be included in the design (though IFPRI report that GAAP influenced the design of the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index).

*I'm aware that the Women's Empowerment Index fits in the larger initiative of the GAAP framework. I don't know too much about GAAP itself – Gender expert at a funder*

*I'm curious to see how the Women's Empowerment Index and GAAP will be linked. You'd think they would be complimentary, but they seem like stand-alone activities. The GAAP project isn't intended to be testing and applying the index, but it seems like there could have been more thought devoted to exploring the complementarity – Gender expert at a funder*

Three grant officers for GAAP member projects took part in this evaluation and none of them knew any details about GAAP or had seen outputs from GAAP. This is a small sample but may reflect limited awareness among relevant funders.

*I don't think I've heard of GAAP, and if I had it didn't stick in my brain – Grant officer for a GAAP project*

Based on interviews with staff at ILRI and IFPRI, there is good awareness in the relevant divisions but low awareness outside of these areas. As ILRI and IFPRI led GAAP, awareness is likely to be lower in other CGIAR centres.

*There have been opportunities of exposure, but I would not say that people across the board know what is going on. However, [my team] are very familiar with it – GAAP core team*

The funders interviewed for this evaluation reported that they receive a lot of reports they consider similar to GAAP's outputs. These might be research reports related to gender aspects of agricultural projects or broader research reports. They would be unlikely to engage with an output unless it was promoted through appropriate channels (such as the funder's gender advisor) and in



a suitable format. Grant officers appear unlikely to engage with primary literature and prefer shorter (1-2 page) policy briefings.

*I get lots of that kind of stuff. If it came through the right person it might get more attention. Like someone I know well at IFPRI. We get a lot of this kind of stuff and it's a little difficult to sort through it all – Grant officer for a GAAP member project*

*I feel like much of what is shared is anecdotal – most of us are not going back to the primary literature and evidence and sharing it with partners. That doesn't mean it's not there – I'm sure if I went to our gender advisors then they could give us a good chunk of studies that would make the point - Grant officer for a GAAP member project*

*Could there be a one-page fact sheet? – Gender expert at a funder*

## 7.2 Priorities of funders

Funders are primarily interested in clear advice on which models can increase women's empowerment. Despite their perception that there are a lot of reports into gender and agriculture, there are perceived to be few that provide practical advice on models that work.

*In terms of applying the findings, there's the classic conundrum between research and programming in that they are running in parallel and it's difficult to find a balance between the two... When I look at the resulting set of papers, I don't know how to translate that to our staff. How does it fit into our value chain methodology? ... It's more useful for me to have a concrete set of recommendations ... The GAAP research was a great resource, but we are asking how we can generalise the findings from a case study in Mozambique to our policy? – Gender expert at a funder*

*Studies that demonstrate which approaches have been most effective in addressing gender will be useful and inform which approaches we take... We have some tools that are useful, but in some areas there is a need for more evidence of which models work – Grant officer for a GAAP member project*

While the funders that took part in this evaluation were already committed to gender-based research, they were still interested in additional evidence that helps them 'build the case'.

*The foundation has jointly funded a programme that gives assets to girls and women. It sounds like GAAP is very positive evidence that development programmes can increase women's control of assets. That would be hugely important in creating the case for these programmes – Gender expert at a funder*

*Some of that would reinforce an approach that we're already committed to. Further studies that reinforce this is essential to do good development – Grant officer for a GAAP member project*

## 7.3 Dissemination of methods via CGIAR centres

In addition to dissemination of methods within member projects, GAAP methods are being disseminated to some extent via researchers at IFPRI and ILRI. Some specific projects were identified where the GAAP approaches and survey questions were being used.

*We are currently doing some follow-up work in [three countries], looking at perceptions around ownership, because ownership is extremely important when we think about how people make decisions – CGIAR researcher*

*GAAP has helped me directly in new research. I'm doing some new research on [an agricultural commodity in South Asia]. It does have a gender slant and the survey is going into the field next week. We do ask questions related gender and assets – **CGIAR researcher***

## 8 Recommendations for future work

These recommendations are provided for any researchers designing projects with similar objectives to GAAP, including any future round of GAAP. The recommendations are based on the most common issues raised by interviewees.

*Table 3: Recommendations for future rounds of GAAP or other work with similar objectives*

Area	Recommendations
Overall design	<p>Alternatives to 'piggy-backing' include funding interventions directly and specifying intervention designs (much more costly, but providing consistency across the portfolio), or embedding research modules in individual projects at different times.</p> <p>Overall, 'piggy-backing' was considered an effective strategy for engaging with a portfolio of projects using limited resources. Recommendations for improving this approach are to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Communicate more clearly about the requirements for the baseline survey, and issues that may arise in 'retrofitting' data.</li><li>2. Attempt to construct a portfolio with projects at a more similar stage of development, ideally at a stage where GAAP can influence the baseline survey. Most stakeholders felt that this could be challenging but a more consistent mix should be feasible.</li></ol>
Portfolio make-up	<p>GAAP stakeholders have a wide range of interests in what type of projects are involved, including different geographies (e.g. Latin America), contexts (e.g. crisis) and assets (e.g. mobile phones). These reflect individual research interests rather than strong recommendations for future work.</p> <p>Recommendations for a future portfolio are to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>3. Create 'clusters' of projects, so that there are at least three projects focusing on any asset. This will allow more learning between projects and increase opportunities for synthesis of findings.</li><li>4. Consider how other funders can be involved. More funders will increase the number of candidate projects for the portfolio, and broaden GAAP's engagement with funders. All of the funders taking part in this evaluation felt that more funders would be beneficial, though a small number of other stakeholders recommended involvement of only one funder, to bring more consistency to the portfolio.</li></ol>

Area	Recommendations
Staffing	<p>The project management could be improved with additional staffing in three areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Include a single project manager/co-ordinator, who is not also a researcher, providing clearer leadership and releasing researchers to focus on capacity building and scientific aspects of the project.</li> <li>6. Include a dedicated qualitative research expert.</li> <li>7. Include a 'network builder', to improve links and learning between member projects.</li> </ol>
Research questions	<p>As with the portfolio make-up, stakeholders suggested a wide range of future research questions, reflecting their individual interests. The common research question related to concepts of ownership.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. Design research that allows analysis of concepts of asset ownership in different cultures, particularly 'joint ownership' and its impact on women's empowerment.</li> </ol>
Dissemination	<p>The funders that took part in this evaluation felt that GAAP has not yet produced clear, policy-relevant or programme-relevant outputs (though the practitioner's guide will be available in June).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. In addition to peer-reviewed literature, develop short (1-2 page) briefings that give simple messages to funders about development models that can increase women's empowerment ('what works?').</li> </ol>

## 9 Appendix: evaluation questions

- How well GAAP was managed;
  - How well was the application process run?
  - Did any applicants or potential applicants have any issues with the application process?
  - How effectively was GAAP managed?
- An assessment of the support provided by GAAP to the grantees;
  - What support did grantees need to deliver their projects?
  - Did GAAP provide support and capacity building that grantees needed?
  - What was the relationship between grantees and the GAAP core team in the design of GAAP projects?
  - Have grantees developed capabilities that they will be able to deploy in future projects?
- The extent to which gender assets research has enhanced the member projects' work;
  - What were the member projects' objectives for involvement in GAAP?
  - What have member projects learnt through GAAP?
  - Will member projects work in any different ways as a result of their involvement in GAAP, in terms of programme design or research methods?
  - Has a community or network developed from GAAP, and if so what value does it provide to its members?
  - Have any initial changes in implementation caused improved targeting or intermediate outcomes that grantees did not expect?
- Whether findings that are useful for actors outside GAAP have been produced;
  - What overall findings has the programme produced?
  - Are funders of agricultural development more likely to develop projects that build women's assets?
- Recommendations for any further phases of GAAP.
  - If there is a second phase of GAAP, what changes should funders and grantees make to the GAAP programme?