



# COSTING THE GENDER GAP

In sub-Saharan Africa women comprise a large proportion of the agricultural labor force, yet they are consistently found to be less productive than male farmers. The gender gap in agricultural productivity-measured by the value of agricultural produce per unit of cultivated land-ranges from 4-25%, depending on the country and the crop.<sup>1</sup> The World Bank Africa Gender Innovation Lab, UN Women, and the UNDP-UNEP Poverty-Environment Initiative jointly produced a report to quantify the cost of the gender gap and the potential gains from closing that gap in Malawi, Tanzania, and Uganda.<sup>2</sup>

This report illustrates why the gender gap matters. Closing the gender gap of 28% in Malawi, 16% in Tanzania and 13% in Uganda could result in gross gains to GDP, along with other positive development outcomes, such as reduced poverty and greater food security. The identified gains, represented in the figures on page 2, send a strong signal to policymakers that closing the gender gap is smart economics. However, it is important to stress that these potential gains do not come without cost. Closing the gender gap will require changing existing or designing new policies, which may require additional resources.

REDUCING THE GENDER GAP CAN PLAY A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN POVERTY REDUCTION AND IMPROVED NUTRITIONAL OUTCOMES.

## ANNUAL COST OF THE GENDER GAP IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY



Figure 1

<sup>1</sup> World Bank and ONE, 2014

<sup>2</sup> World Bank. 2015. The cost of the gender gap in agricultural productivity in Malawi, Tanzania, and Uganda.



## AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY GAP

## CLOSING THE GAP CORRESPONDS TO

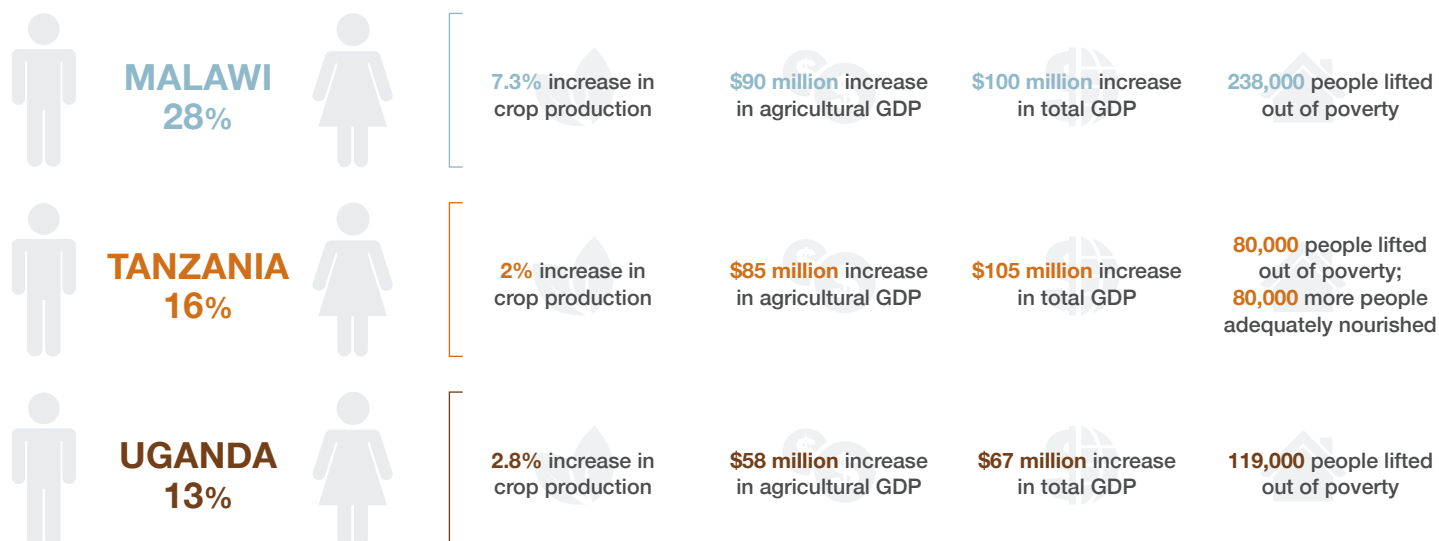


Figure 2



## WHAT CAUSES THE GAPS?

A large part of the gender gap can be attributed to **differential access to male family labor** in Tanzania and Malawi. One key reason for why women farm managers have less access to male family labor is that the majority of them are widowed, separated or divorced.

Women farmers are **less likely to grow cash**

**or export crops** than men who grow and sell these crops to the market for higher incomes.

Women's **access to agricultural implements and machinery** is significantly lower than that of men in all three countries.

### DETERMINANTS OF THE GENDER GAP IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY

DETERMINANT	MALAWI % of gap	TANZANIA % of gap	UGANDA % of gap
Qty of male family labor per household	45.19	97.34	n.a.
High-value crops	28.43	3	13.29
Agricultural implements	17.76	8.18	9.02
Pesticide use	0.97	12.03	4.45
Inorganic fertilizer use	5.32	6.39	3.04
Wealth index	3.29	-0.1	n.a.

*n.a. = not available, statistically significant factors are marked in bold.*

## POLICY PRIORITIES

1. Narrow the gender productivity gap due to lack of access to labor
2. Enable women farmers to move into cultivation of high-value cash crops
3. Improve women farmers' access to and use of non-labor inputs

The task now is to design innovative and cost effective interventions to achieve these priorities.

FOR MORE INFORMATION,  
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