

Policy Dialogue on Gender Action Learning Systems (GALS)_Report

September 07th, 2021 Online



1. Introduction

On September 07th, 2021, COCOF (*Conseil Consultatif des Femmes*); Oxfam Rwanda and the Economic Policy Research Network organized an influencing workshop on gender actions learning systems (GALS). The event was held online through ZOOM and Youtube channel of EPRN. The event was held on zoom and attended by 141 participants from different sectors public, CSOs, academics, researchers, Private sector and media houses in Rwanda. More 80 persons followed the event through YouTube.

This workshop was to raise awareness among government institutions, civil society organizations, private sector, UN agencies and community groups community and leaders on Gender Action Learning System (GALS) methodology as a potential planning tool that can be adopted and used during District Performance Contract “IMIHIGO” to make them gender sensitive, from local to district levels; and strengthen capacity of local leaders, Government personnel and other stakeholders to involve citizen, especially women, in government programs and policies as well as challenging them to take into account women’s rights concerns and other issues including gender sensitive planning and policy formulation;

2. Opening remarks

In her welcome remarks, the Country Director (Interim) of OXFAM, Immaculee Mukampabuka thanked all participants attended the event for having responded positively to the invitation. She reminded that GALS is a community-led empowerment methodology that uses principles of inclusion to improve income, food and nutrition security of vulnerable people in a gender-equitable way. The methodology is implemented using tools in form of DRAWINGS for effective illustration and easier adoption across board (youth, illiterate and vulnerable communities).

Mrs Immaculee pointed out that the uniqueness of the model is that it positions both females and males as drivers of their own development rather than recipients of aid.

She further noted that the Gender Action Learning System has been developed under Oxfam’s Women’s Empowerment Mainstreaming and Networking (WEMAN) programme since 2008 in Uganda, Sudan, India and Peru. Its use in value chain development was first piloted in Uganda in 2008 and then in Rwanda in February 2012 through local Implementing partners that include DUHAMIC-ADRI, BAIR, DUTERIMBERE with IFAD funding. The methodology was later mainstreamed in other different Oxfam projects including COCOF implemented projects.

The key achievements of GALS include:

- More than 13,000 Women and men, young boys and girls reached underwent GALS training and adopted it in different value chains programming, the changes are enormous at different levels
- Scale-up; Different organizations adopted the model USAID HINGA WEZE, PLAN International, IFAD funded projects;
- Created GALS forums at District level as well as the network at National level and applied it during the performance contract development

The guest of honour, Mr Prosper Mulindwa, the Director General in charge of planning, Monitoring and Evaluation at the Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC), mentioned that even though Rwanda is performing well in terms of gender mainstreaming in public institutions, there are some areas to be strengthened especially in private sector. He emphasized that GALS is among other existing initiatives to enhance gender equality. He congratulated COCOF, OXFAM and EPRN for having organised this event and commended participants to come up with recommendations to scale up the GALS methodology.

3. Accounts of proceedings

In his presentation, Mr Desire Nibagwire of COCOF indicated that Since 2012, Oxfam in Rwanda supported her local partner organizations and NGOs including COCOF, to integrate GALS methodology into soya, maize and horticulture value chains among rural smallholder farmers in different Districts of Rwanda especially in Kamonyi and Muhanga, particularly for pineapple value chain.

He highlighted that GALS is one of the innovative household methodology (HHM) developed by a British woman called Linda Mayoux, that effectively improves intra household gender relations. The methodology consists of a set of principles related to participation and leadership, summarized into a series of visual gender sensitive diagramming tools that are used for visioning, analyzing, change planning and tracking by individuals or household members.

Mr Desire also summarised COCOF's key GALS achievements as follows:

- Using these methodologies, farmers supported by COCOF through Oxfam funding achieved some results including higher productivity, better access to services and markets, increased household assets, increased investments in education for boys and girls and a reduction in the food insecure months. He noted that the increased households' incomes are used to buy or rent land for farming, to hire casual farm labour and to buy improved seeds which result into boosting small trade.

- Some of the key areas of change include reducing alcohol abuse and domestic violence, men taking up domestic chores like fetching water and firewood, and food preparation. This reduced women's workload and enabled them to spend more time on business or leisure.
- Women can now openly discuss with male family members about family planning, decisions about product management, expenditures, etc. Women also take up leadership positions and increasingly acquire, own and control productive assets (property).
- The common visions developed at group and cooperative levels led to collective businesses, stronger community organisations and better links with buyers and input suppliers.

Creation of the “Rwanda GALS Network” - GALS Sustainability and Scale Up

During discussions' session, the representative of COCOF, Mr Desire, informed participants how a strong idea came from series of workshops hosted by Oxfam, IFAD and other stakeholders in Bukavu and Goma (DRC), in Kigali, Muhanga and Rubavu (Rwanda) and in Rome (Italy) discussing on GALS scaling-up. The idea was to initiate a Local, National, Regional or International GALS networks/forums to reinforce GALS benefits and create a strong foundation for sustainability.

It is in this regard that the Rwanda GALS Network (RGN) was initiated through support from Oxfam; with a **Vision** of a *just Household without Gender inequalities*, and a Mission of *creating a strong foundation for sustainable social economic growth for Rwandan community*.

Objectives of the RGN are as follows:

- providing capacity development and knowledge management on Household Methodologies including GALS;
- contextualisation of GALS methodology in different domains including development of GALS manuals contextualised to any domain;
- quality assurance, certification and public recognition of GALS methodology;
- A framework for networking with other local, national and regional as well as global GALS stakeholders for peer to peer capacity development.

The platform is coordinating the existing GALS Learning centers (made up by existing and new GALS champions at the district level, local partner NGOs, staff/Consultants and other private sector and local

government) for a prompt collaboration and management for efficiency transfer and exchange of knowledge gained through learning workshops.

The network is supporting organizations, either currently engaged in GALS or seeking to integrate this methodology into their programs, through their inclusion in a network to cooperate and coordinate relevant actions, training and technical advances.

RGN is composed by members from District GALS Forums and Consultants/staff experts in GALS. A national committee has been elected to represent 30 members of the general assembly. The Secretariat is headed and hosted by DUHAMIC ADRI.

In her presentation, Vestine Mukandayisenga from DUHAMIC ADRI indicated that from the support of RGN members and through funding from different organisations, so far there are 34 GALS facilitators/staff, 2,780 active GALS champions and 41,700 estimated direct beneficiaries who participated in GALS. Here below is a detailed table:

No	Organization	GALS Facilitators/Staff	Active GALS champions	Estimated Direct beneficiaries shared GALS	Districts of interventions	Organizations interested in GALS supported and to be supported
1	DUHAMIC-ADRI	13	877	13,155	Kamonyi, Muhanga, Rulindo, Nyamagabe, Gakenke, Musanze, Rubavu, Nyabihu, Rutsiro, Burera, Gicumbi, Rwamagana, Kayanza, Nyagatare	CNFA/PLAN INTERNATIONAL, WORLD VISION, GOODNEIGHBORS, WFP, RDO, MINAGRI/RDDP, RGB, MINAGRI/KIWP, ADISCO/BURUNDI, CARITAS Rwanda
2	DUTERIMBERE ONG	5	362	5,430	Muhanga, Rulindo, Nyamagabe, Rutsiro, Nyagatare, Huye, Nyaruguru, Kirehe	APROJUMAP, AMI, CDJP Gikongoro, CDJP Kibungo, INADES Formation Rwanda, ARCT, CENTRE IGITI CY'UBUGINGO, CEJP
3	YWCA	4	380	5,700	Ngoma	
4	ADEPE	4	363	5,445	Nyaruguru, Rubavu	5 organization interested but not yet supported
5	SAFE	2	320	4,800	Kirehe	
6	COCOF	3	250	3,750	Kamonyi, Muhanga, Nyamagabe	Muhanga District Imihigo
7	MINAGRI/SPIU	1	128	1,920	Ruhango, Nyanza, Huye, Rwamagana, Kayanza, Gicumbi, Burera, Musanze, Nyabihu	
8	Independent Consultant	2	100	1,500	Nyaruguru	ARDI
	TOTAL	34	2,780	41,700	20 Districts	

Source: DUHAMIC ADRI periodic report, September 2021

It is noted that there were some sharing of testimonies by participants from RGN members including GALS champions from district forums who were gathered physically to easily interact with participants online. One of the touching testimonies was given by Dativa Mukanyandwi who narrated that after being trained in

GALS, her family has continuously experienced positive changes in which she started to jointly plan with her husband unlike before, that resulted into family harmony and consequently, resulting into increased agriculture productivity and improved conditions of living. She boasted that today her family is considered as a role-model family in the village due to GALS trainings.

For the panel discussion sessions, three experts spearheaded brainstorming as recorded here below:

- Mr Silas Ngayaboshya, Director-General of Gender Promotion and Women Empowerment at the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF) in Rwanda shared Rwanda policy agenda on women's participation in decision making and transformative leadership;
 - He admitted that there are still some constraints still hindering women participation in decision making at household, community and national levels that can be addressed using the GALS approach.
- Mr Aimable Ntukanyagwe, Country Programme Manager - International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in Rwanda shared experience of how IFAD mainstreamed GALS model in dairy value chains project currently, implemented in 12 districts of Rwanda to ensure both women and men are empowered to participate and transform agriculture sector and reduce vulnerability to climate. Aimable appreciated IFAD's positive results in GALS adoption and recommended it to be replicated in all projects and development interventions and noted that, due to resource constraints, IFAD could not cover entire country and called other players to join them to scale the model to the whole country.
- Mr Raymond Kamwe, from the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI) discussed on the following topics:
 - Shared experience they have gathered while implementing GALS in MINAGRI projects funded by IFAD. He emphasised that they have relied on facilitators (RFFS) of whom about 40% are women.
 - He emphasized that GALS should be implemented in all districts to reach more famers.

4. Recommendations

After brainstorming sessions, participants came up with the following key recommendations:

- i. The government, should replicate the GALS model in different aspects, like through planning processes, especially performance contract planning (IMIHIGO) focusing on gender justice including GBV and economic indicators and economic;
- ii. Other International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) and the Private Sector (PS) should also focus on replicating GALS. This is supported by the fact that various notable examples of other projects/organizations have adopted this methodology and have exhibited good results from increased participation and ownership amongst project participants, including Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP);
- iii. Gender Equity should be embedded in all interventions. This is based on the fact that gender equity requires empowering both women and men to achieve equal decisions making power, access to and control over assets and income, leadership, and sharing tasks.
- iv. There is a need to scale up GALS methodology to the local communities for more gender balance and equity, job creation and poverty alleviation as well as decreasing gender inequalities in different interventions/reach out to more households;
- v. The supporting organizations/players should ensure that GALS champions are continuously supported to scale up GALS methodologies from the grassroots' levels.
- vi. The supporting organizations/players should enhance fundraising for Rwanda GALS' Network (RGN) and other organisations;
- vii. Participants called for GALS research to provide scientific evidence on GALS model, application and areas to strengthen.

5. Closing remarks

In her closing remarks, Ms Kabasinga Asiya, the President of COCOF, expressed her gratitude to all participants, and thanked OXFAM for having supported the GALS initiatives. She emphasised on the need for continuation and scaling up of the GALS initiatives.

Done at Kigali on 08/09/2021.

Annex 1: Agenda

Tuesday 07 th September 2021		
Moderator: Seth Kwizera, EPRN		
Time	Activity	Responsible
8:45 – 9:00	Participants joining (logistics)	Oxfam/IT
9:00 - 9:15	Welcome remarks	Immaculee Mukampabuka/ Oxfam CD (a.i)
9:15 – 9:25	Keynote address by the Director General of Local Government Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation	Mulindwa Prosper/DG MINALOC
9:25 – 9:40	Overview of GALS: (Overview, Key achievements, Challenges, Lessons learned, Recommendation to Scale up GALS to the community)	Desire Nibagwire /COCOF
	Q&A	All participants
9:40 – 10:10	Testimonies: (DUHAMIC-ADRI, OXFAM NOVIB, MUHANGA District JADF, 2 GALS Champions from Gakenke/Rulindo, Nvagatare/Kirehe)	Representative of concerned institutions
10:10 – 11:00	Panel Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIGEPROF (GALS and women's economic empowerment) • MINAGRI (GALS and climate change) • IFAD (GALS and Value Chains) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Silas Ngayaboshya/DG MIGEPROF • Raymond Kamwe/MINAGRI • Aimable Ntukanyagwe/IFAD
11:00 – 11:40	Questions and answers	All participants
11:40 -11:50	Commitments and recommendations	Willis Okul (EPRN) and Godfrey Gakwandi (OXFAM)
11:50 -12:00	Closing Remarks	KABASINGA Asiya/COCOF President

Annex 2: Key contact details about Rwanda GALS Network

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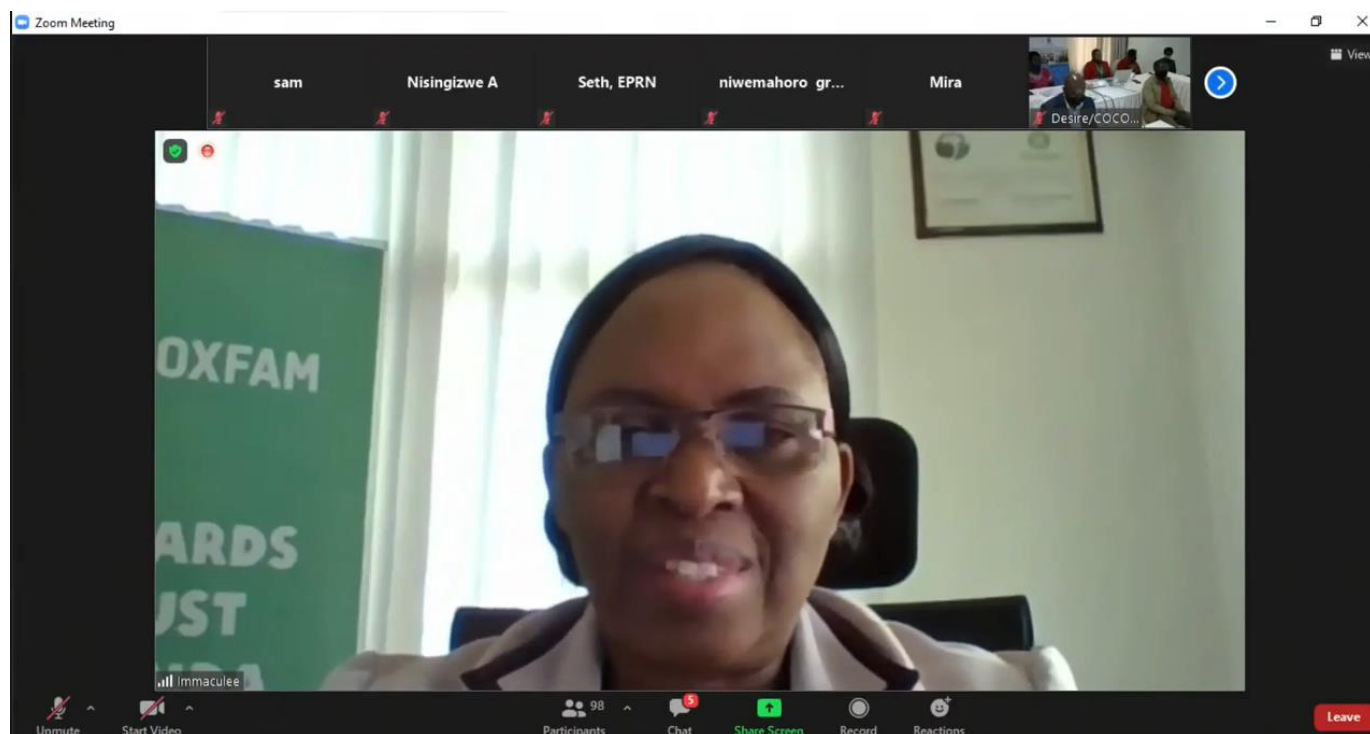
Godfrey Gakwandi

Program Manager-Agriculture Value Chains

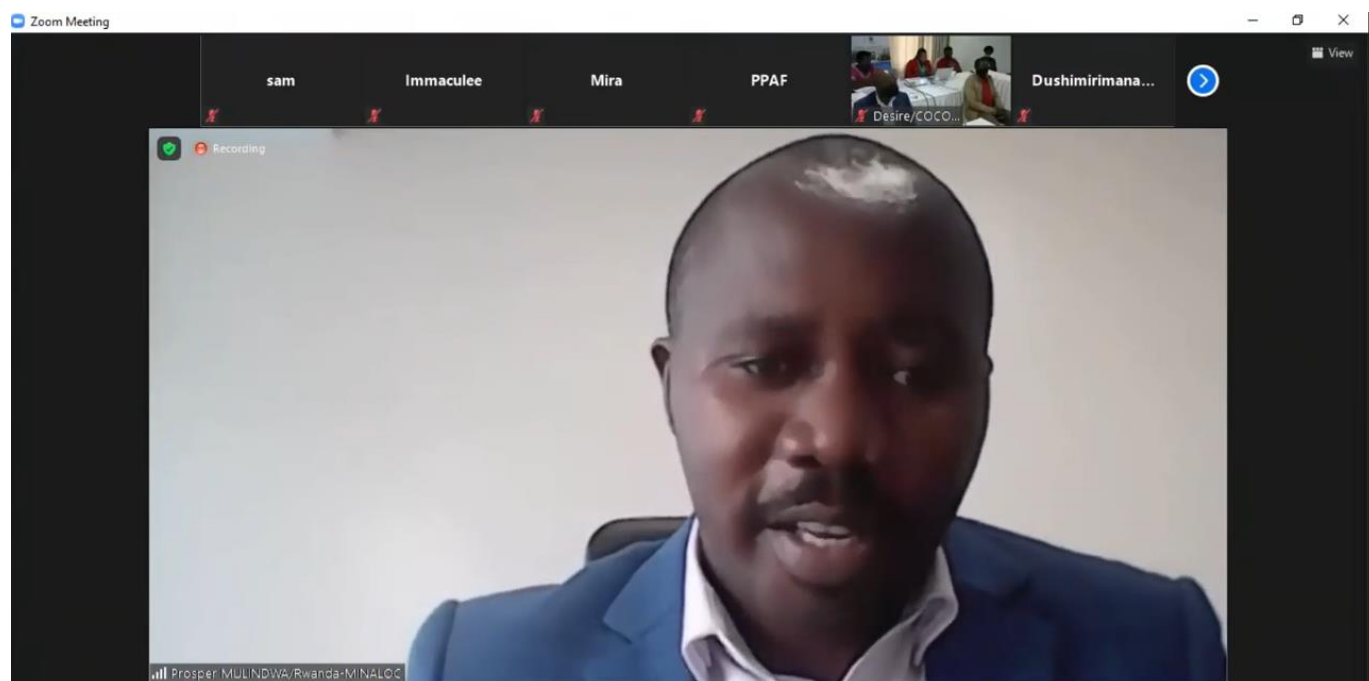
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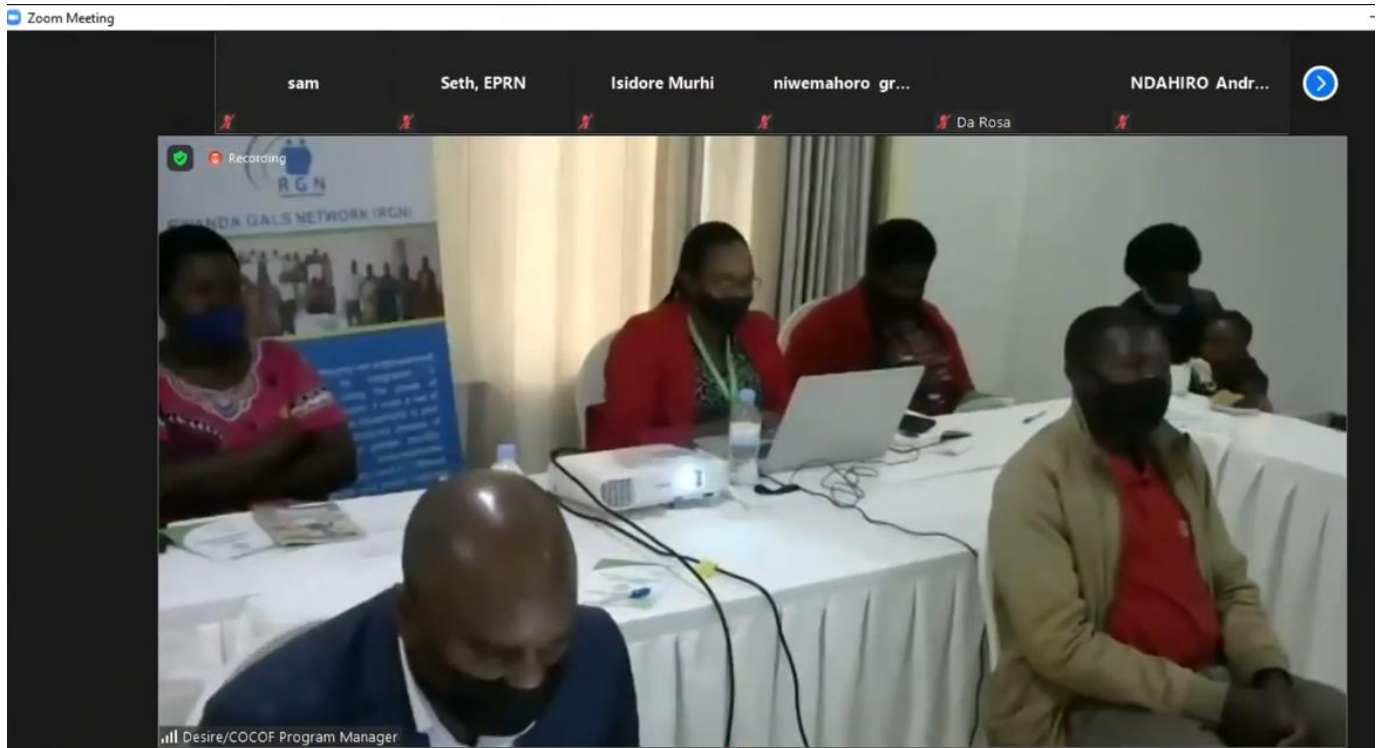
Annex 3: Workshop Photos



Mrs Immaculee Mukampabuka (Ag Oxfam CD) giving welcome remarks



Mr Prosper Mulindwa, DG MINALOC (guest of honor) giving opening remarks



GALS champions following the workshop.



Mrs Kabasinga Asiya, COCOF Presidents giving closing remarks

Annex 4: Media article in Kinyarwanda on GALS Workshop

<https://mobile.igihe.com/amakuru/u-rwanda/article/hagaragajwe-ko-ubwuzuzanye-bw-abagize-umuryango-mu-buhinzi-ari-ipfundo-ry>