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Gender Equity in Agriculture: Proposing Integrated Solutions to Address Women's Challenges in Rural and Urban Food Production Systems in Tanzania

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Agriculture is central to Tanzania's economy, and women contribute more than half of the agricultural labour force. Despite this contribution, persistent gender inequalities continue to constrain productivity, weaken food security, and limit inclusive economic growth. This study examines how patriarchal land tenure systems, unpaid care responsibilities, and insecure urban farming arrangements jointly restrict women's participation in higher-value agricultural production. Drawing on a systematic literature review and a comparative analysis of rural and urban food-production systems, the study proposed an integrated Gender-Transformative Approach (GTA) to address these barriers. The findings show that technical support alone is insufficient unless accompanied by structural reforms that strengthen women's land rights, reduce time poverty through labour-saving and climate-smart technologies, and transform social norms that sustain unequal gender relations. The study therefore proposes a Gender-Transformative Framework that links legal reform, institutional support, technological innovation, and community-level change. By addressing both rural exclusion and urban tenure insecurity, the framework offers a pathway to move women from subsistence production into commercial agricultural value chains and to advance gender equity in Tanzania's food systems. It is recommended that development projects should integrate legal reform, market support, access to technology, and social change within a single framework rather than treating women's productivity constraints as isolated problems.

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INTRODUCTION

Agriculture remains the backbone of socioeconomic development in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), contributing 20%–30% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and sustaining the livelihoods of more than 60% of the population (Modi, 2018). Within this sector, women play an indispensable role. In sub-Saharan Africa's agriculture and food systems, where women make up just under half (49 percent) of the workforce, gender equity is key to social justice and to unlocking inclusive growth, food security, and economic development. Achieving gender equality and empowerment of marginalised groups, especially women and poor farmers in agriculture and food systems, is both a moral imperative and an effective policy choice (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), 2025). This is because women in the region are deeply engaged with agrifood systems, providing indispensable labour, knowledge, and care for household members that sustain life.

In agricultural systems, women are involved from seed selection and preservation to meal preparation and trade. Ojo & Baiyegunhi (2023) argue that women's practices are embedded in cultural identity and foster collective memory, emotion, and community life, all of which form the fabric of family life. Women's experiences are intersectional and shaped not only by gender but also by age, class, ethnicity, location, disability, social and cultural

norms, and other overlapping factors. Over the decades, women's contributions to agriculture and food systems have been well recognised in global and regional frameworks and commitments. There is a strong track record of gender equality, gender mainstreaming, and gender-responsive policies in SSA (Ministry of Agriculture, 2023; Lapčević et al., 2025; FAO, 2025). This signifies a growing consensus and political will across the continent towards advancing women's rights, empowerment, and gender equity and justice, not only as a matter of principle but also as a practical solution.

Despite this significant contribution, a persistent "gender gap" in agrifood systems remains, according to Lapčević. (2025), if women farmers had equal access to productive resources such as land, credit, and technology, yields could increase by 20%–30%, potentially lifting 100%–150% of people out of hunger worldwide. This highlights both the scale of women's contributions and the untapped potential that structural inequalities continue to suppress, thereby undermining the necessity for sustainable development.

In Tanzania, agricultural systems are diverse, ranging from rural subsistence farming to emerging urban and peri-urban food-production nodes. In rural regions such as the Southern Highlands, women's labour is heavily concentrated in subsistence food crops, yet they remain excluded from the high-value cash-crop chains that drive

commercial agriculture and export earnings (Isinika & Mutabazi, 2010; Doss & Meinzen-Dick, 2023; Delanerolle et al., 2025). This exclusion perpetuates cycles of poverty and limits women's ability to benefit from the commercialisation of agriculture (Isinika & Mutabazi, 2010). Meanwhile, in urban centres such as Dar es Salaam and Morogoro, a feminisation of urban agriculture has emerged, with women increasingly engaging in vegetable cultivation and poultry production on marginal lands. However, these activities often occur in legal grey zones, where women face eviction threats, lack secure tenure, and operate without formal recognition or policy support (Wessels, 2025). This dual reality in rural marginalisation in cash-crop systems and urban vulnerability in informal agriculture illustrates the structural barriers that continue to undermine women's productivity and economic empowerment.

Scholars remain divided on whether decades of gender mainstreaming have meaningfully transformed women's participation in food production. On the one hand, critics such as Liani et al. (2024) argue that conventional programmes have been "gender-blind," focusing narrowly on technical inputs like seeds and fertiliser while ignoring the deeper structural power dynamics that perpetuate women's exclusion. On the other hand, Gakkhar et al. (2025) and Arora & Rada (2023) emphasise the "double burden" of labour, contending that women's productivity is suppressed not only by resource exclusion but also by the demands of unpaid domestic work and social reproduction. This debate highlights a tension between technical fixes and structural reforms, with both camps agreeing that women remain marginalised in sustainable agrifood systems. The World Bank (2023) underscores that Tanzanian land tenure, despite statutory protections, is still governed by entrenched patriarchal norms. Women's access to land is relegated to "secondary rights," mediated through male relatives, which in turn creates a systemic collateral trap that severs them from formal credit markets (Jeckoniah et al.,

2020). Wessels (2025) adds that localised "fields of friction" in resource management intersect with these barriers, reinforcing subsistence-level production. Thus, while some scholars stress the economic costs of exclusion, others foreground the cultural and social reproduction dimensions (for example, Jeckoniah et al., 2020; Acosta et al., 2025). The World Bank (2023) estimates that Tanzania loses nearly \$100 million annually due to the gender productivity gap, while Mpiima et al. (2026) warn that these inequalities deepen food insecurity by preventing women from realising their full potential, titling exercises towards holistic reforms integrating legal, social, and institutional change.

This study critically examines the existing literature on the structural barriers that suppress women's productivity in Tanzanian agriculture. Specifically, it investigates the multidimensional resource constraints, including land, finance, and digital tools, that impede women farmers' productivity; evaluates the impact of social reproduction and time poverty on women's agricultural performance; compares legal and environmental challenges in rural customary systems and urban municipal gray zones; and, lastly, provides implications for an integrated gender-transformative framework. By addressing these objectives, this systematic review aims to provide actionable insights into an effective, integrated, gender-transformative framework.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This paper is grounded in Social Reproduction Theory (SRT) and the Gender-Transformative Approach (GTA) in agriculture. The SRT posits that the formal productive economy, including agricultural markets, depends on a largely hidden layer of reproductive labour. This includes the daily tasks of cooking, cleaning, fetching water, and childcare, which are systematically and disproportionately assigned to women (Arora & Rada, 2023). In the context of rural Morogoro and the Southern Highlands, SRT helps explain the mechanisms underlying time poverty. National data

indicate that women in these regions contribute approximately 4.5 more hours per day to unpaid care work than their male counterparts (Tanzania National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), 2023).

This invisible labour is not merely a social burden but a direct agricultural constraint. As Mpiima et al. (2026) argue, these gendered expectations create a "double burden" in which reproductive duties frequently coincide with peak farming cycles. The resulting temporal trade-offs lead to critical inefficiencies, such as delayed planting and inadequate weeding, which directly fuel the 20–30% yield gap observed in female-managed plots. Ultimately, this productivity loss scales into a national economic crisis. The World Bank (2023) estimates that this gendered productivity gap costs the Tanzanian economy approximately \$100 million annually. By synthesising SRT with current economic data, it becomes clear that the "loss of productive potential" is not a result of a lack of skill, but rather the structural extraction of female time to sustain the household unit at the expense of the farm's output (Mpiima et al., 2026; World Bank, 2023).

The paper also adopts the Gender-Transformative Approach (GTA) in agriculture as its primary analytical framework, moving beyond the traditional Women in Development (WID) model. Whereas WID focuses narrowly on integrating women into existing economic systems, the GTA seeks to dismantle the structural barriers that create inequality in the first place. As Cheong and Bock (2026) argue, a relational approach is essential for social sustainability because it recognises that gendered roles are not static but are produced through ongoing social and economic interactions. Following the framework defined by IFAD, this paper analyses transformation across three integrated levels (Grant et al., 2022). First, the *agency* focuses on women's internal capacity, confidence, and financial literacy. Second, *structure* concerns the rules of the game, including reforms to the Village Land Act (1999) and municipal zoning

laws, so that women have equitable legal standing (URT, 1999). Third, *relations* concern the household and community power dynamics that shape whether women can actually exercise formal rights in practice.

While the Village Land Act (1999) was designed to formalise land tenure in Tanzania, a gap persists between statutory law and local implementation. Cheong and Bock (2026) argue that, for social sustainability in agriculture to be achieved, these structures must move beyond paper rights to functional capabilities. For example, the Act (1999) mandates that women have equal rights to acquire, hold, use, and deal in land. However, municipal zoning laws and the absence of gender-sensitive land administration mean that women often lack the financial literacy, legal support, and administrative access needed to navigate these systems (URT, 1999). Without reforms that make the institutional environment more accessible, the law risks remaining a hollow shell.

At the level of relations, the Village Land Act often fails in practice. In many rural communities, land continues to be managed through patriarchal lineage systems. Even where a woman is legally permitted to own land, her relationships with male relatives and community leaders may prevent her from exercising that right. As Mhache & Lyamuya (2019) suggest, social sustainability in agriculture is not merely about resource distribution; it is also a relational process in which the ability to use land depends on the negotiation of domestic and communal power dynamics.

A core tenet of the Gender-Transformative Approach is the recognition that women's so-called unproductive time, including domestic labour and caregiving, directly affects their productive agricultural capacity. The Women in Development approach might provide a woman with a tractor while ignoring the 10 hours of daily housework that limit her ability to use it effectively. By contrast, the GTA works with the household to redistribute labour so that women have the time and energy

required to benefit from productive assets (Grant et al., 2022). True transformation occurs when the focus shifts from the individual to the collective. This involves engaging men and community leaders in the redistribution of domestic labour and the challenge to deeply ingrained patriarchal land norms. Cheong and Bock (2026) therefore emphasise that social reproduction—the unpaid labour that sustains families and farms must be recognised as a core component of agricultural sustainability rather than treated as a secondary women’s issue.

EMPIRICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

The Productivity Gap and Resource Endowments

Empirical studies consistently reveal a persistent “gender gap” in agricultural productivity across Sub-Saharan Africa. Using the Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition method, Ojo & Baiyegunhi (2023) and World Bank & ONE (2014) demonstrate that female-headed households are between 11% and 44% less productive than male-headed households. Importantly, this disparity is not explained by ability but by unequal access to critical resources such as male family labour, secure land tenure, and high-quality inputs. In rural contexts such as Malawi and Ethiopia, nearly 80% of the productivity gap is attributed to structural inequalities (Tefera, 2020; Lapčević et al., 2025). Doss (2018) extends this argument to urban systems, showing that women’s lack of formal property rights prevents them from accessing credit markets, thereby limiting intensification. While these studies converge on resource exclusion as the primary driver of the gap, they differ in emphasis: some highlight rural land tenure, while others stress urban credit constraints.

The Reproductive Time Tax and Food Insecurity

Another strand of literature foregrounds the reproductive burden of unpaid domestic work as a hidden time tax on women’s agricultural performance. Tefera (2020) reports that rural women spend an average of 29 hours per week on

non-agricultural domestic tasks, compared with only 4 hours for men. Moser (1989) argues that this “time poverty” forces women into low-risk subsistence farming, as household responsibilities limit their ability to adopt labour-intensive, high-value crops. Here, the debate shifts from resource endowments to time allocation: while some scholars emphasise access to inputs, others stress that even with resources, women’s productivity remains constrained by the double burden of reproductive labour.

The Community Management Burden and Social Capital

Beyond household and farm responsibilities, women also shoulder the burden of community management. Ojo & Baiyegunhi (2023) note that women’s participation in community-based organisations and savings groups builds social capital while simultaneously adding another layer of unpaid labour. This creates a paradox: while social networks can empower women, they also risk “project fatigue,” where women withdraw from agricultural programs due to exhaustion. Scholars debate whether community participation is a net benefit or an additional constraint, highlighting the complexity of women’s roles beyond the farm.

Outcomes of Integrated Solutions

The literature increasingly suggests that “production-only” interventions, such as distributing seeds, yield limited results when structural and reproductive burdens remain unaddressed. Acosta et al. (2025) and Doss & Meinzen-Dick (2023). argue that integrated approaches that combine agricultural inputs with labour-saving technologies (e.g., rainwater harvesting, improved cookstoves) yield the highest returns. Evidence shows that when interventions address the triple burden of resource exclusion, time poverty, and community obligations simultaneously, household nutrition improves and women can reallocate time to market-oriented production (Mosha et al., 2022). While this

consensus points toward integration, debates remain on the scope and design of such interventions, with some scholars calling for technical fixes and others advocating for transformative social reforms.

Contribution and Gap

While existing studies (Wamboye, 2021; Riisgaard et al., 2021; Ojo & Baiyegunhi, 2023), highlight resource exclusion, time poverty, and community burdens, few have systematically integrated these dimensions into a holistic, gender-transformative framework tailored to both rural and urban food-production systems in Tanzania. Current interventions remain fragmented, focusing on inputs, time-saving technologies, or community participation in isolation. This study contributes by bridging these strands of literature, interrogating how socio-economic and legal barriers intersect, and proposing an integrated framework of Gender-Transformative Approaches (GTAs). In doing so, it addresses the unresolved question of how women can transition from subsistence-level farming to commercial agriculture, thereby advancing both gender equity and national food security.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a systematic literature review (SLR). To produce a credible and thorough review, this approach adopted a systematic review protocol that followed a standard process across the planning, conducting, and discussion phases. A combination of keywords and Boolean operators was used to capture a wide range of relevant studies. Search terms included “gender equality” OR “gender equity” AND “agriculture”; “women’s challenges” OR “food systems”; “food production systems” OR “inclusion” AND “agroecology” OR “food systems”; and “integrated solutions for sustainable agriculture.” Related terms were used interchangeably to ensure comprehensive coverage of the literature.

Inclusion Criteria: The study applied PRISMA-informed selection procedures to ensure a transparent and replicable review process. Studies

were included if they met the following criteria: (1) explicit focus on gender equality or gender equity in agriculture in Tanzania; (2) coverage of agricultural production in both rural and urban contexts; (3) application of a gender-sensitive or gender-analytical approach to agriculture or food systems; (4) empirical or conceptual relevance to the Tanzanian context; and (5) presentation of original or substantively novel contributions to scholarship on women, agriculture, or farming. Studies such as Mpiima et al. (2026) and Wessels (2025) were particularly useful for extracting qualitative themes on social reproduction and the double burden of labour.

Article Selection: Article selection followed the four-stage PRISMA process: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. During the identification stage, database searches yielded 780 records. After removing duplicates, 402 unique articles remained. In the screening stage, titles and abstracts were reviewed for relevance to gender equity or equality, agriculture, and women’s challenges in the agricultural sector. This process reduced the pool to 111 articles assessed for eligibility. During the eligibility stage, full-text reviews were conducted using the predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Ultimately, 29 articles met all criteria and were included in the final qualitative synthesis.

Data Extraction: For each included article, relevant information was extracted using a standardised framework. The extracted data focused on structural barriers such as the collateral trap and social reproduction, the benefits and barriers women face in accessing resources, especially land, and the ways in which land rules and regulations shape Tanzanian women’s rights to own and use land.

In addition, the study adopts a comparative case study design to examine women’s experiences across two distinct geographical and economic contexts. The rural case focuses on the Southern Highlands and Morogoro, highlighting subsistence

and cash-crop dynamics, while the urban case focuses on Dar es Salaam and Morogoro municipal grey zones, where women engage in informal production of vegetables and poultry. This comparative lens makes it possible to identify where patriarchal land tenure in rural areas intersects with, or differs from, municipal tenure insecurity in urban areas. The analysis is further supported by institutional reports and national statistics, including the National Bureau of Statistics (2023) time-use data and World Bank (2023) estimates of the agricultural productivity gap in Tanzania. A legal and policy review of the Village Land Act

(1999), the National Agriculture Policy, and municipal zoning bylaws was also undertaken to identify enforcement gaps and institutional inconsistencies.

Analytical Framework: The Integrated GTA Matrix

To address the study objectives, the data were analysed through a Gender-Transformative Approach (GTA) matrix. This framework moves beyond simple input counting to examine transformation across three levels: agency, structure, and relations.

Table 1: A Gender-Transformative Approach (GTA) matrix

Analytical level	Focus area	Indicators analysed
Agency (Individual)	Capacity & Literacy	Access to digital tools, financial literacy, and confidence in market negotiation.
Structure (Environment)	Legal & Institutional	Land titling efficiency, “Collateral Trap” mechanisms, and urban zoning laws.
Relations (Household)	Social Reproduction	Distribution of unpaid care work (hours/day) and decision-making over crop income.

Data Analysis Techniques

The study employed two primary analytical techniques. First, thematic content analysis was used to categorise qualitative barriers into themes such as secondary rights, the time tax, and project fatigue. Second, a gap analysis was conducted to compare the statutory protections provided by Tanzanian law, such as equal land rights, with the fields of friction described in the literature, namely the realities of local implementation.

Ethical Considerations

As this is a desk-based study utilising existing literature and public datasets, the primary ethical focus is on data integrity, accurate attribution, and representative citation. The study seeks to ensure that the experiences of rural and urban women, as reported in primary studies, are interpreted responsibly, contextualised appropriately, and credited accurately to avoid misrepresentation of the socio-cultural realities under examination.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Multidimensional Resource Constraints and the Productivity Gap

The findings from the literature review clearly reported that agriculture is a principal source of livelihood for the Tanzanian population. It provides more than two-thirds of employment and almost half of Tanzania’s GDP (Jeckoniah et al., 2020). The sector is female-intensive, with women comprising most of the agricultural labour force (54%). Agriculture also accounts for a larger share of women’s economic activity than men’s: 81% of women, compared to 73% of men, are engaged in agricultural activity. In rural areas, that number rises to 98% for women. The findings also revealed that women play an essential role in agricultural production (World Bank, 2023). In addition, the literature review and comparative case analysis show that women farmers in Tanzania have low crop productivity and low income. A central finding of this review is that low agricultural productivity

among women is constrained by a multidimensional resource deficit, primarily in land, finance, and technology. The findings are consistent with a study by Wamboye (2021), who also found that 81% of the female population works in agriculture in Tanzania, compared to 55% in the rest of sub-Saharan Africa.

According to Modi (2018), women constitute a substantial share of the agricultural labour force, about 49-60% in Tanzania, yet they are significantly less likely than men to hold secure land rights. Despite the essential role that women in Tanzania play in smallholder agriculture and the importance of land ownership to agricultural development, women seldom own the land they cultivate, and when they do, they own less land than men (Wamboye, 2021; World Bank, 2023). This disparity persists despite formal legal protections, as customary and household arrangements frequently limit women's effective control over, transfer rights to, and ability to use land as collateral. The literature review further shows that in Tanzania, women own only about 19% of titled land, with smaller average holdings (0.21–0.3 ha compared to 0.61–0.7 ha for men), and they face greater insecurity in exercising their rights to sell or mortgage plots (World Bank, 2023).

Regional evidence reinforces this pattern: econometric studies across Malawi, Tanzania, and Uganda show that male-managed plots often exhibit higher total factor productivity (TFP) and efficiency, partly due to better access to land markets, labour, and inputs (FAO, 2025). Closing the gender gap in access to resources (including non-land inputs) could boost women's productivity by 20–30% and raise overall agricultural output by 2.5–4% (Bryan et al., 2024). These structural weaknesses create a persistent “collateral trap”: insecure tenure restricts access to credit, improved seeds, fertiliser, irrigation, and mechanisation, locking women into low-output, subsistence-oriented systems (Modi, 2018).

The findings therefore support the argument that productivity gaps persist because women face simultaneous disadvantages in agency, structure, and household relations rather than isolated deficits in inputs alone (Mosha, 2025). This pattern is consistent with wider regional evidence that women constitute a large share of the agrifood workforce while continuing to experience weaker land rights, heavier care burdens, and lower visibility in decision-making spaces. Effective interventions must therefore address both formal legal reforms and the informal institutions (customary norms, household power dynamics) that mediate the realisation of rights. Input provision alone is insufficient without tackling these foundational barriers.

The Impact of Social Reproduction, Time Poverty, and Agricultural Performance

The second major finding is that unpaid domestic and care work directly constrains agricultural performance. Women's farm labour occurs alongside intensive responsibilities for childcare, cooking, water and fuel collection, and household maintenance (Abdelali-Martini & Dey de Pryck, 2015). This generates severe time poverty, which disrupts labour allocation during peak agricultural seasons (planting, weeding, harvesting, and post-harvest activities) and limits the adoption of labour-intensive or higher-value enterprises.

In Tanzania, women devote approximately 3-3.7 times as much time to unpaid care and domestic work as men, spending an average of 6–7 hours daily on these tasks in some contexts (FAO, 2025). Sub-Saharan African data similarly show that women spend about 4 hours 25 minutes per day on unpaid care, compared with 1 hour 23 minutes for men (Arora & Rada, 2023; Cheong & Bock, 2026). This “triple burden” (productive, reproductive, and community roles) is not external to agriculture but fundamentally shapes output by constraining market orientation and technology uptake (Moser, 1993).

These patterns support Social Reproduction Theory, which posits that the unremunerated extraction of women's time sustains economic systems while reproducing gender inequities (see Arora & Rada, 2023). Interventions limited to seeds, fertiliser, or training yield only modest gains because they overlook this foundational constraint (Blackden & Wodon, Q. (Eds.), 2006). Programs that reduce domestic drudgery (e.g., through labour-saving technologies, improved water infrastructure, or care redistribution) are essential for sustainable improvements in productivity.

Rural Customary Exclusion and Urban Grey-Zone Vulnerability

Comparative analysis reveals that rural and urban food-production systems impose distinct yet parallel institutional insecurities on women, both of which undermine long-term accumulation and market advancement. The finding revealed that in rural areas (e.g., Southern Highlands and Morogoro), women typically access land through male relatives or patrilineal systems, rendering their rights secondary and contingent on marital status, widowhood, or household dynamics (WFP/Tanzania, 2024). This discourages investments in soil fertility, irrigation, or commercial crops. Customary norms often prevail despite statutory equality, with 82% of land administered under customary tenure that disadvantages women in practice (Grant et al., 2022).

In urban and peri-urban settings like Dar es Salaam, women engaged in vegetable cultivation and poultry production face grey-zone vulnerabilities stemming from legal ambiguity, informal land agreements, and planning systems that fail to recognise urban agriculture (World Bank and UN, 2015). Farmers often operate on vacant or flood-prone lands awaiting development, with insecure tenure exposing them to zoning conflicts (Peterman, 2011). This short-term orientation limits scaling, infrastructure investment, and resilience, even as

urban agriculture contributes significantly to city food supplies and household livelihoods.

These are not isolated issues but interconnected forms of institutional exclusion that confine women to precarious, low-return niches. Policy must integrate rural tenure security with urban governance reforms that formally recognise and protect agricultural spaces.

Implications for an Integrated Gender-Transformative Framework

The evidence strongly supports integrated, gender-transformative approaches (GTAs) over narrow, production-focused interventions. Women's disadvantages are legal, economic, temporal, and relational; single-dimensional fixes are inadequate. Structurally, this requires robust implementation of women's land rights, improved administration, and formal recognition of urban agriculture (World Bank and UN, 2015). At the agency level, priorities include financial literacy, market skills, digital access, and climate-smart, labour-saving technologies. Relationally, change demands shifts in household and community norms regarding decision-making, income control, and the distribution of care work (Mhache & Lyamuya, 2019).

The proposed Integrated GTA Matrix is validated by this synthesis: legal reform without social change leaves rights unused; technology without time relief underperforms; and market access without tenure security increases risk. Coordinated interventions that link land rights, care systems, urban planning, extension services, and norm transformation offer the most credible pathway to moving women from subsistence to commercial agriculture in Tanzania.

Overall, gender inequity in Tanzanian agriculture is reproduced through interlocking constraints, including rural patriarchy, urban informality, and social reproduction rather than isolated barriers. This explains the limited impact of fragmented programs and underscores the need for institutional redesign. This study contributes a coherent

explanatory framework and a practical policy tool for achieving inclusive productivity growth, enhanced food security, and women's economic empowerment.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that gender inequity in Tanzanian agriculture is sustained by a combination of structural, relational, and temporal constraints, rather than by limited access to inputs alone. The review shows that women's lower productivity and weak participation in commercial agriculture are closely linked to insecure land rights, restricted access to finance and technology, the burden of unpaid domestic and care work, and institutional exclusion that characterises both rural customary systems and urban gray-zone farming. These constraints operate together, keeping many women concentrated in low-return, subsistence-oriented activities despite their central role in food production. The findings, therefore, confirm that fragmented interventions are unlikely to produce durable change. Instead, meaningful progress requires a gender-transformative pathway that links legal reform, labour-saving technologies, social norm change, and institutional recognition of women's productive roles. By integrating Social Reproduction Theory with the Gender-Transformative Approach, the study offers a practical framework for improving women's agricultural productivity while strengthening food security, economic inclusion, and social justice in Tanzania.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results and discussion, the study recommends a coordinated set of legal, institutional, and programmatic interventions to address the interlocking barriers that limit women's productivity in rural and urban food-production systems in Tanzania.

- Strengthen implementation of women's land rights. Policymakers should move beyond statutory guarantees by improving gender-

sensitive land administration, simplifying titling procedures, expanding legal aid, and ensuring that women can register, inherit, control, and use land without reliance on male intermediaries.

- Expand women's access to finance, technology, and extension services. Public and private agricultural programmes should prioritise credit products that do not rely solely on land collateral, support women's access to climate-smart and labour-saving technologies and strengthen extension systems that respond to the needs of both rural and urban women producers.
- Reduce time poverty through care-responsive rural and urban infrastructure. Government and development partners should invest in water access, energy-saving technologies, childcare support, and other services that reduce unpaid domestic labour and allow women to participate more fully in productive and market-oriented activities.
- Promote household and community-level norm transformation. Gender-transformative interventions should actively involve men, local leaders, and producer groups in reshaping social norms around land control, decision-making, income use, and the distribution of unpaid care work.
- Formally recognise and regulate urban agriculture. Municipal authorities should incorporate urban and peri-urban agriculture into planning and zoning frameworks, provide secure access to appropriate production spaces, and reduce the legal uncertainty that exposes women farmers to eviction and underinvestment.
- Adopt integrated gender-transformative programming. Future policies and projects should combine legal reform, market support, technology access, and social change within a

single framework rather than treating women's productivity constraints as isolated problems.

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