

# WHY WE WORK WITH RURAL WOMEN

Rural women make up over a quarter the world population and majority of the 43 per cent of women in the global agricultural labour force. In Nigeria that number translates to about 48 Million and 40 Million respectively. Evidence indicates that if these women had the same access to productive resources as men, they could increase yields on their farms by 20 to 30 percent, raising total agricultural output in these countries by 2.5 to 4 percent. This would reduce the number of hungry people in the world by around 12 to 17 percent. Rural women are active agents of economic and social change and environmental protection yet continue to face serious challenges as a result of gender-based stereotypes and discrimination that deny them equitable access to opportunities, resources, assets and services. Hence, they are constrained in their roles as farmers, producers, investors, caregivers and consumers.



Rural women and men produce and add value to goods that they trade in local and export markets either as farmers, wage workers or as processors or vendors along different value chains. However, they face difficulties accessing and competing in markets. Rural women often lack timely market information, face challenges in negotiating prices with buyers and have difficulty physically accessing markets due to limited transport opportunities and restrictions on their mobility. Empowering rural women is key not only to the well-being of individuals, families and rural communities, but also to overall economic productivity. They play crucial roles ensuring food and nutrition security, eradicating rural poverty and improving the well-being of their families.