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THE WOMEN OF BAIDOA

Understanding livelihood-related urban-rural connections for women from Displacement Affected Communities (DACs) in South-West State of Somalia

EiWG Meeting

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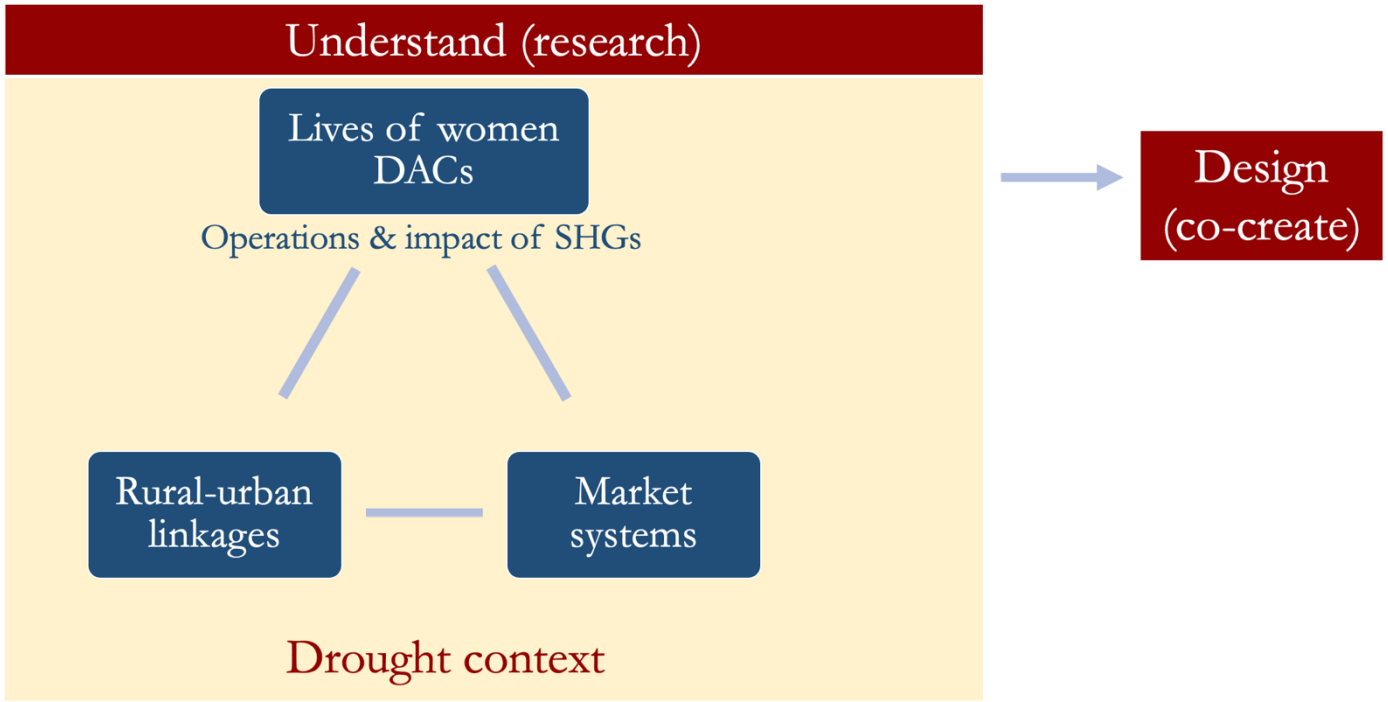
DANWADAAG Towards Durable Solutions to Displacement

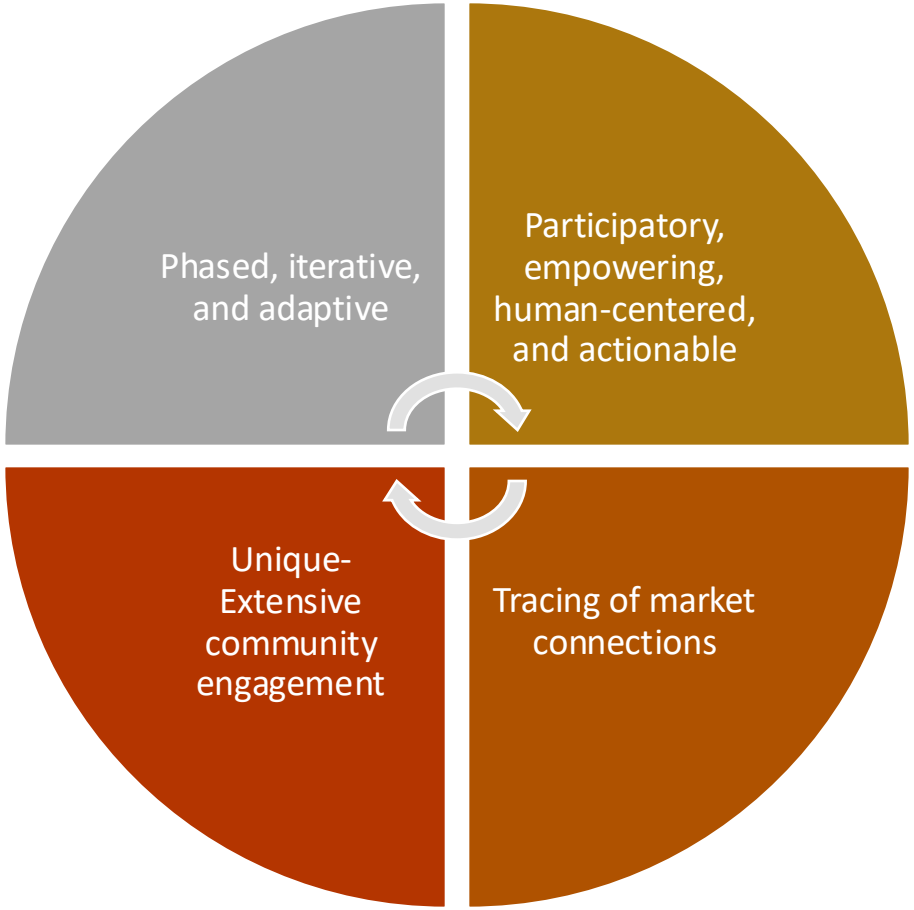
BRCiS Building Resilient Communities in Somalia

Methodological Approach

Main Research Question:

How can connections and fluxes of goods, services, money, people, and information circulating between rural and urban displacement-affected communities (DAC) in Southwest State be utilized to improve livelihood opportunities and protect, stabilize, and grow the income of said communities?





Our Approach

Sampling

- 4 IDP women-only SHGs
- **Locations:** Urban Baidoa Town + Awdiinle (~30km) and Hudur (~130km)
- Snowball & purposive sampling of SHG members and their market connections
- 71 interviews + workshop:
  - 39 members from 4 SHGs
  - 22 market actors
  - 18 stakeholders

Mixed methods data collection

- **Three phases of data collection:** Started with a workshop-style FGDs and a brief profiling of the women followed by **tool design & field data collection (Including half-to-full-day IDIs in homes and places of business)** and concluded with co-design workshop

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DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographics of women DAC SHG members

Living status

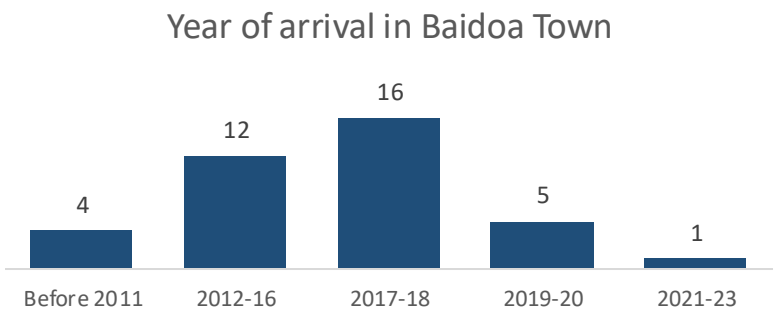
- All but one were in protracted situations. Some returnees.
- Most displaced due to drought and/or insecurity

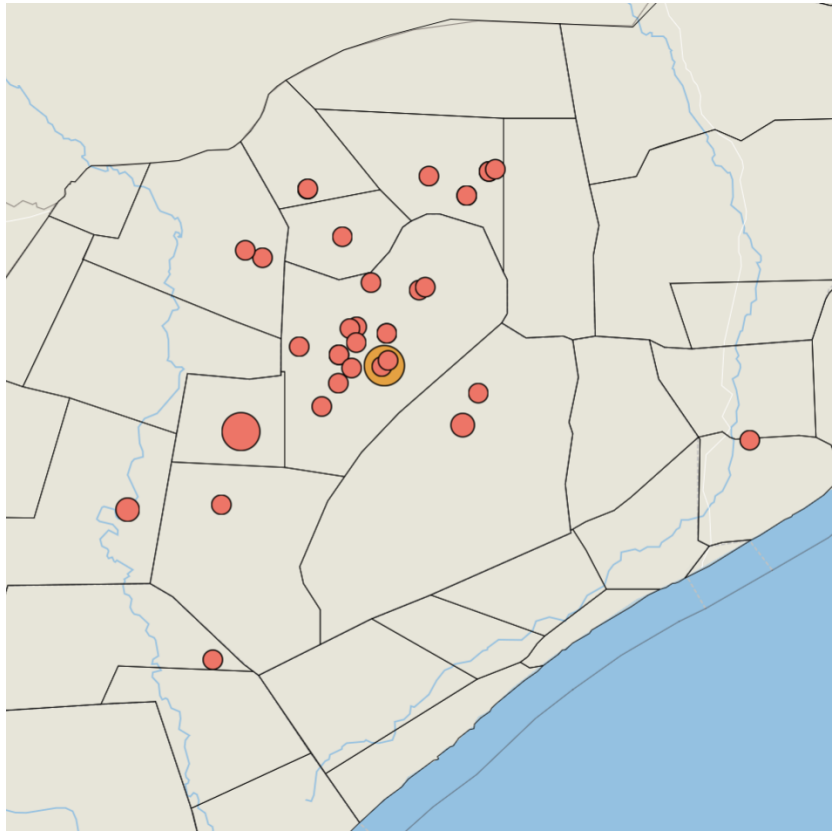
Family status

- Mostly married (several polygamous), ~1/4 widowed
- Nearly all are mothers, some care for orphans

Education level

- Most have no education
- No basic arithmetic's





Main Findings

Land Tenure and Housing Security

Reduced Concern over Eviction - approximately one-third of the sample has experienced eviction before

Most have benefitted from Land Tenure system

Interest in Dual Residency – remain in urban settings but maintain rural residency too.

Social and Economic Connections

Strong Rural Ties with family members staying in villages and frequent communication, exchange of goods or money, and visits.

Trade-based Livelihoods – focus urban market opportunities.

Financial Inclusion and Support Systems

Limited access to Financial Services

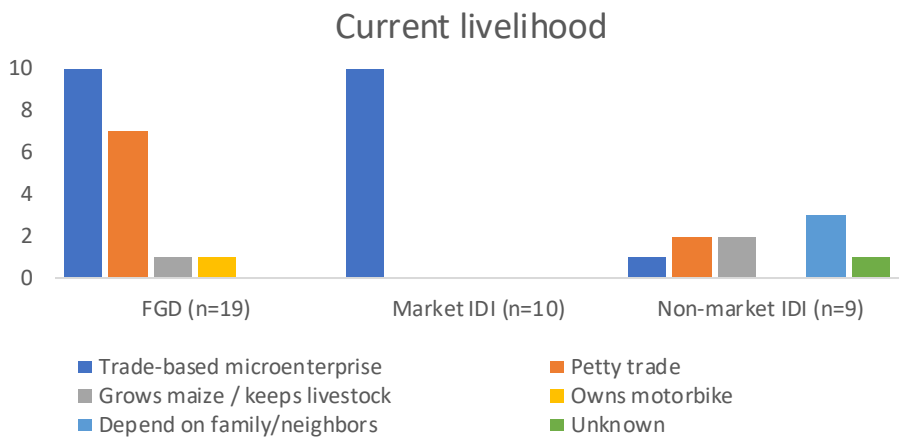
Important role of Savings Groups - in empowering women economically, despite barriers to participation for many.

Hormuud Telecom, mobile phones is critical for both personal and market-related use i.e. calls and mobile money transactions.

All women have mobile phones but only 4 had smart phones.

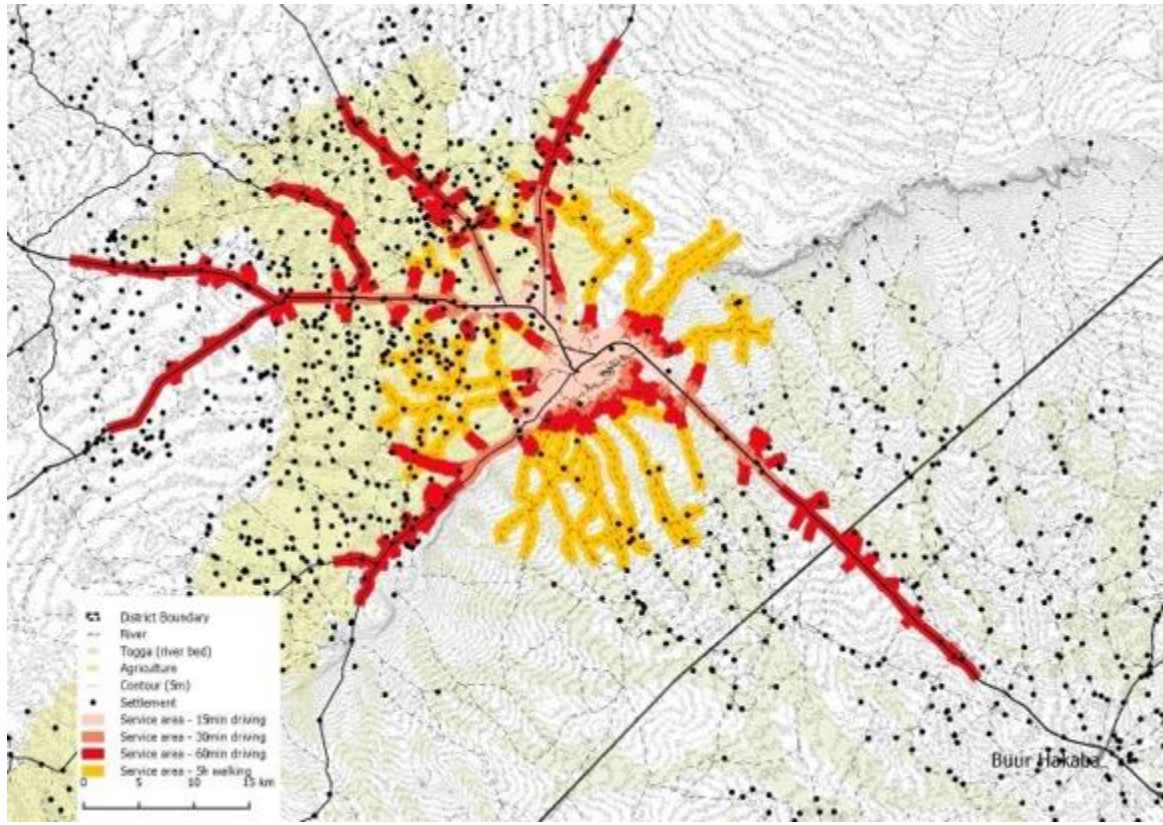
Livelihoods of Women of DACs in Urban Setting

- **Most of the women DAC SHG members have a trade-based livelihood-** Primarily selling vegetables, cereals, cloth, firewood/charcoal, and other various goods
- 1/3 of FGD participants viewed their **livelihoods as being stable**
- Many **work in or near their homes** while others prefer operating in markets
- **Type of business decision based on low barriers to entry, limited operating costs**, but that are regularly used in local households and therefore in continuous demand. These often have **poor profit margins**
- Mostly work near home, **allowing simultaneous childcare**
- Often started with small financial capital support (received $42.50 -$350)
- Only ~2/3 of FGD participants regularly earn enough to meet their basic needs- Weekly incomes of those with more stable businesses ranged from $11 to $80, median of $20. Overall average is likely much lower.

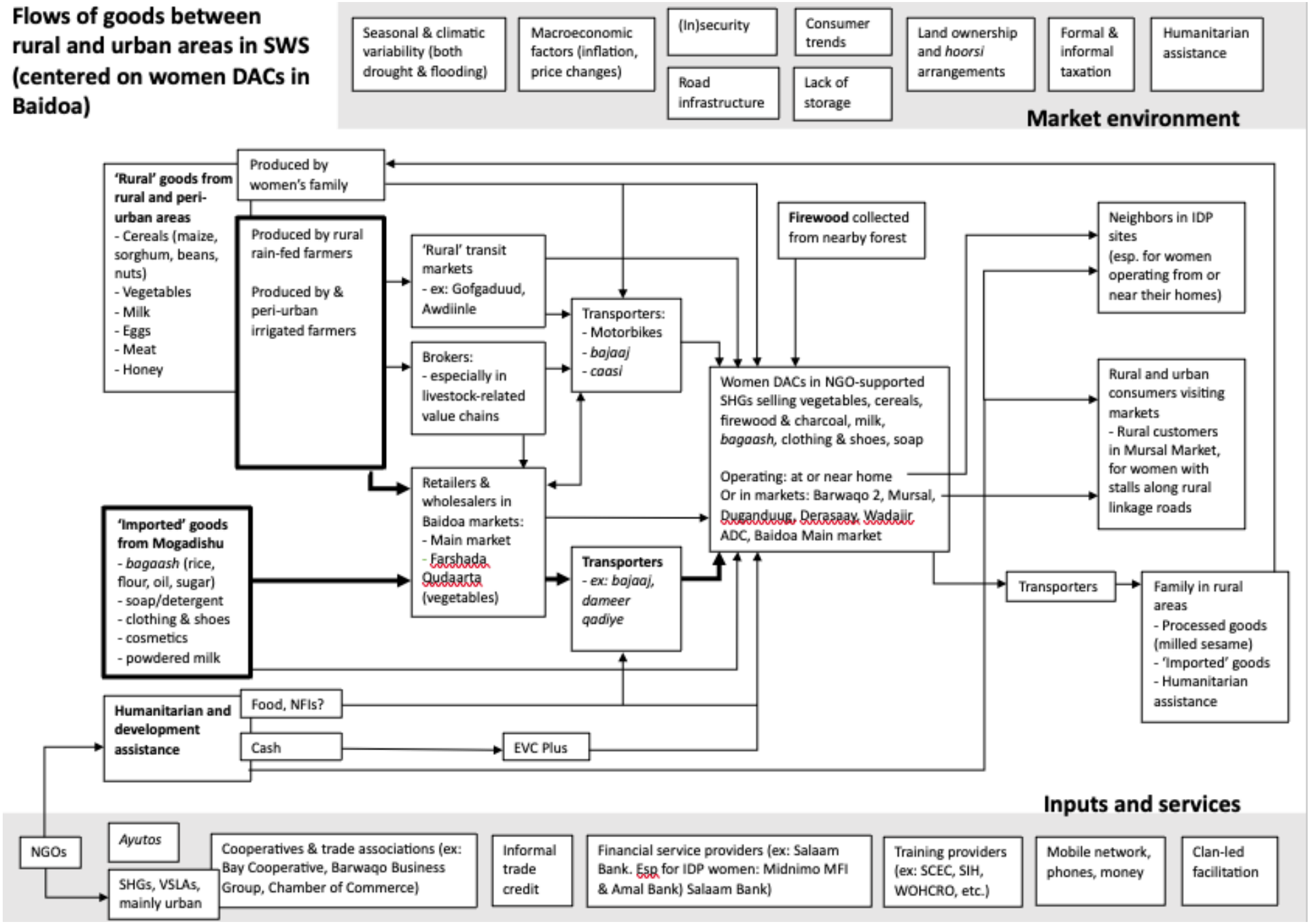


Market Connections between Rural & Urban Settings of DACs

- Trade between **urban and rural** can be an opportunity for **business growth for DACs**
- **Rural goods are increasingly being sourced from peri-urban areas**
- **Imported goods, sold in Baidoa Town and demanded in rural areas, are important parts of the rural-urban trade system** that are not often discussed or studied
  - *Bagaash* (imported food items like rice, flour, pasta, sugar, salt), powdered milk, cosmetic products, soaps/detergents, clothing & shoes
- **Most women source from wholesalers or retailers in Baidoa with some products** i.e. local cereals coming from rural locations



Flows of goods between rural and urban areas in SWS (centered on women DACs in Baidoa)



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Summary of challenges for women & rural-urban system

Providing for family's basic needs

- **Lack of support services**
  - Limited access to capital, lending, and business support services
  - Constrained social and market networks
  - Poor urban infrastructure
- **Livelihood Risks**
  - Market fluctuations & macroeconomic trends
  - Climate and weather shocks (e.g., flooding)
  - Changing customer preferences
  - Discrimination and exploitation
- **Security & mental well-being**
  - Fragile town security
  - Safety issues in rural areas affect travel and family.
  - Previous acute trauma
  - Continued stressors
- **Low literacy**
  - Unable to read and write
  - No basic arithmetic skills
- **Rural-urban challenges**
  - Insecurity & "taxation" along roads to and in rural towns
  - Poor road infrastructure, esp. during rainy season
  - Climate shocks; seasonal production
  - Whole economy is highly leveraged
- **Impact of Aid**
  - Individual aid dependency reported by stakeholders
  - Local economy partially driven by aid
  - Artificial demand sustained by cash assistance

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Dreams and Aspirations

Family Well-being

- Providing nutritious food for their families.
- Ensuring safety and education for their children.
- Ownership of land and homes.
- A sense of belonging in their communities.

Economic Resilience

- Starting and maintaining businesses.
- Saving money for future needs.

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Recommendations

Recommendations to support women DACs

Layering NGO activities and capital investments – Longer term projects and being there for the women for the long-ride of becoming self-sufficient and growing their income

Explore additional business support and peri-urban agriculture with women DACs - Consider the urban→rural flow of goods (i.e.. imported goods and value addition)

Investigate scaling existing / developing new financing options for women DACs – working with MFIs, specialized training agencies, credit officers and local banks

Expand women's networks - with market actors: wholesalers, retailers, transporters, input suppliers, FSPs, training organisations, employers, restaurants and hotels, government, donors, NGOs, and successful DAC businesswomen as role models

Provide psychosocial support & counseling; adopt trauma-informed approaches to all activities through multi purpose centers that provide i.e. child care and literacy training programs

Increase participatory engagement with DACs - women can be empowered and mobilized to contribute to developing potential solutions

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Co-design Workshop
Empowering Women to Co-create Program Interventions

Co-creation methods and approach

3-day workshop in Baidoa

Participants

16 SHG members

10 stakeholders from FSPs, training orgs, & government

8 NGO representatives

Human-centered design approach

Illustrated visuals

Use of a hypothetical case

Flipping power dynamics

Efficient and Cost-Effective Livelihood Models for Women

Explores pathways to support the creation of practical, scalable livelihood models that are not only efficient but also cost-effective for women in DACs.

Livelihoods for DACs in urban context - Women's preference visa vi NGOs project design

The Women from DACs: Business acumen, financial inclusion, skill development (urban opportunities)

NGO Program Design:

Innovate climate resilience i.e. buy them kitchen stoves & continue rural livelihoods i.e. Kitchen garden to grow own food (rural based)

Donor interest, obsession with innovation and continuation of rural livelihoods vis-à-vis urban market opportunities for DACs- how can we balance to make a genuine impact on the lives of people?

Program concepts to support women groups

01- Duration: 2024-2028

02- IPs: UN, NGOs & Micro finance institutions

03- Beneficiaries: IDP women and the host community

Program Priority 1: Promoting Women's Opportunities in Agricultural Value Chains

Enhancing IDP women's participation in local cereal value addition, sesame oil pressing, and peanut packaging. addressing milling gaps in peri-urban and suburban areas.

Program Priority 2: Empowering IDP Women through Urban Farming Cooperatives

Promoting urban agriculture by forming cooperatives that will manage urban farming activities, creating income-generating opportunities, and promoting social capital and empowerment through cooperative management.

Program Priority 3: Support improving, stocking, and diversifying of grocery shops through revolving funds

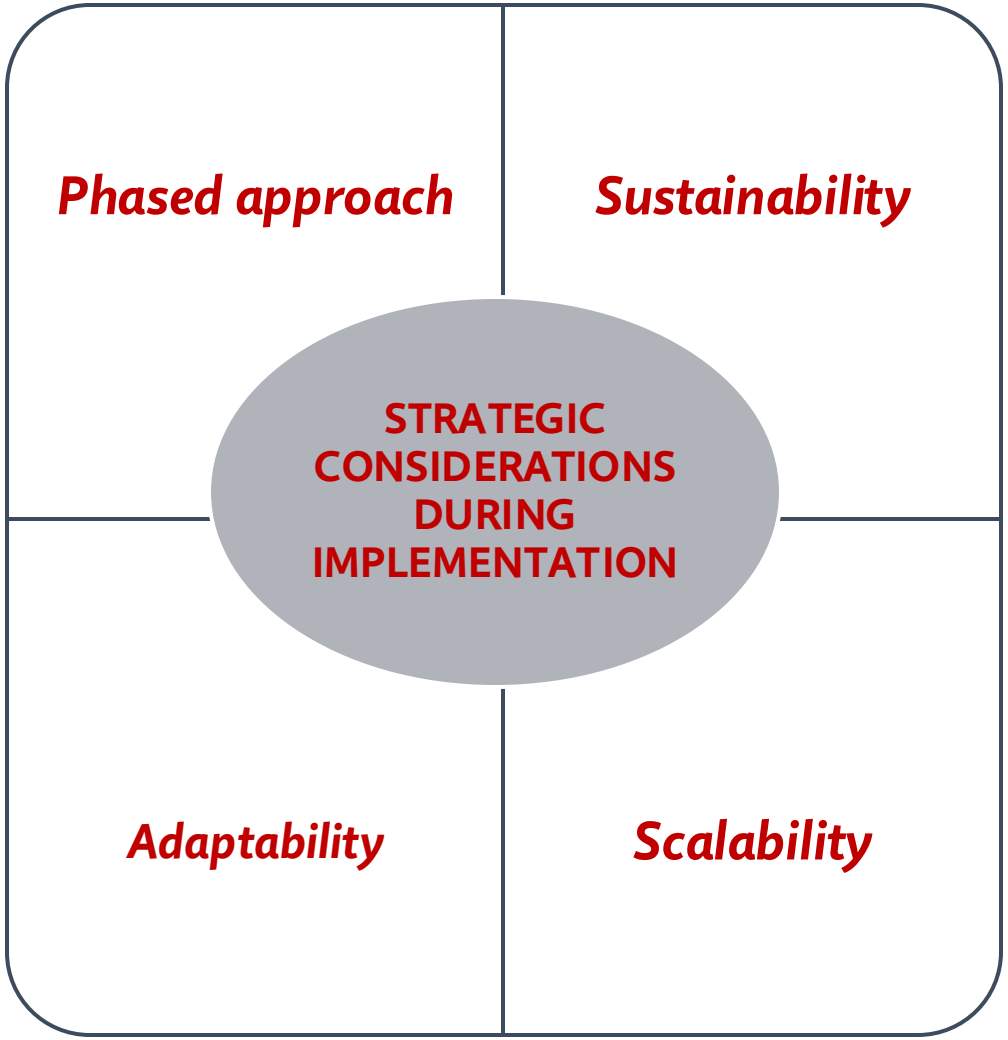
Support the improvement, stocking, and diversification of grocery shops through revolving funds, enhancing the profitability of these shops, with a specific focus on increasing income for women, thereby improving their quality of life..

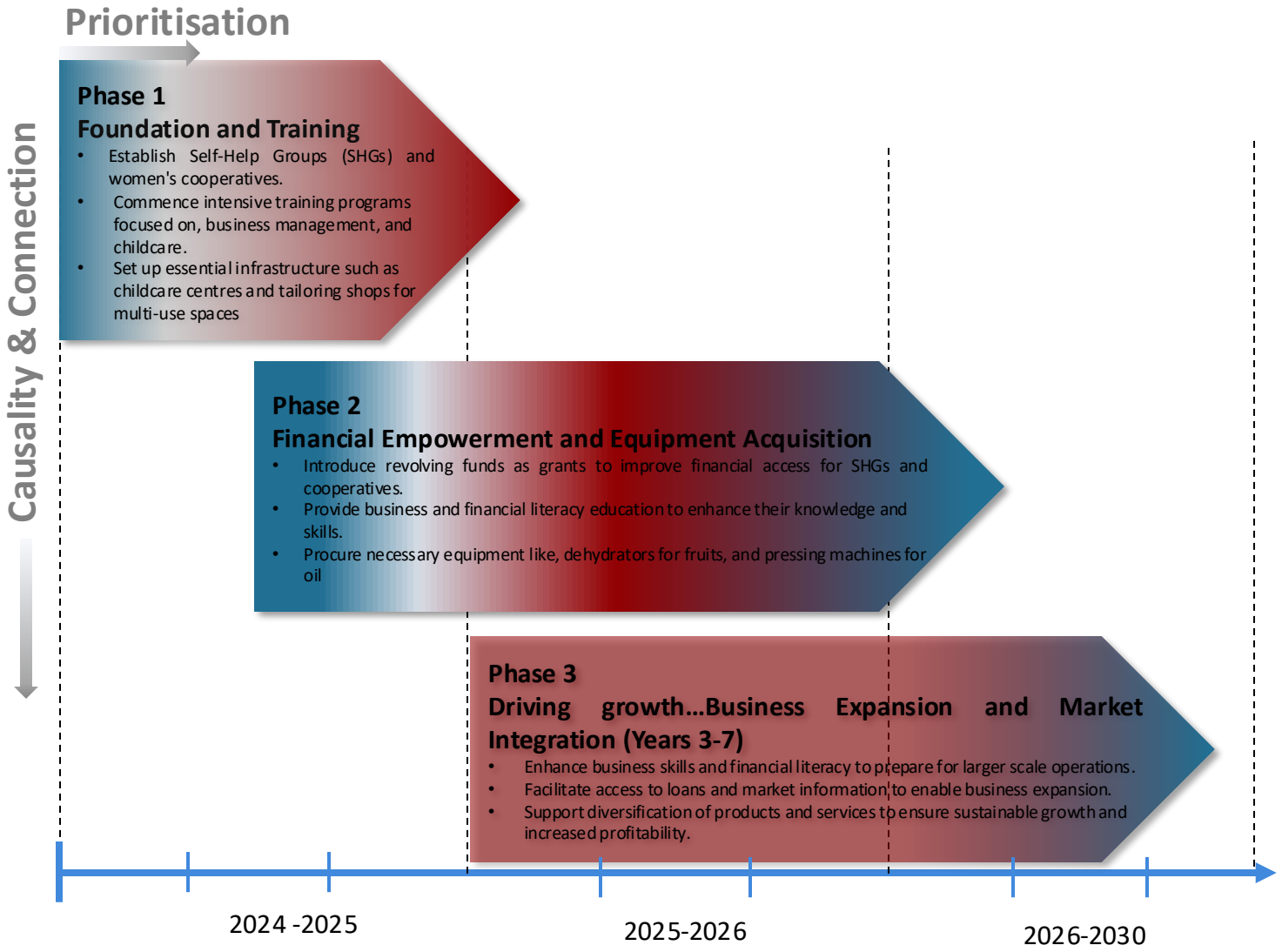
Cross-cutting programs

Enhancing Access to Financial Services

Empowering IDP Communities through Multi-Functional Spaces

Phased Implementation Approach





Stories of the Baidoa Women from DACs

https://stories.nrc.no/businesswomen-of-baidoa

Full Report: https://www.nrc.no/globalassets/pdf/reports/women-dacs-lives/womens-lives-livelihoods-and-linkages.pdf

Q&A