



GEAVET DIGI-BASED COACHING MODULE FOR WOMEN IN SUSTAINABLE AGRI-BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

DELIVERABLE 4.2

GEAVET PROJECT N° IO1129027

“INCLUSIVE GREENING EXCELLENCE IN THE AFRICAN EDUCATION AND TRAINING ECOSYSTEM”



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SECTION 2.2: MARKETING STRATEGIES AND BRANDING

2.2.1: Introduction to Marketing: Fundamentals of pricing, branding, and promotion for women in agriculture

Today's competitive agribusiness environment requires women in agribusiness to go beyond production and pay deliberate attention to marketing. This is because production alone cannot guarantee sales and profit. Essentially, marketing adds value to the production process and measures the monetary value of the activities that occur from the point of production to the time of purchase by the consumer.

a. Price

Pricing is one of the most important aspects of marketing in agribusiness. It is the process of determining the amount of business charges for a product or service. It determines whether farmers make a profit, break even, or suffer losses. Effective pricing requires an agribusiness owner to consider factors such as production costs, market demand, competitors' prices, and the value customers place on the product. Business operators need to adopt a cost-informed and market-oriented pricing strategy to ensure that the price reflects both the cost of production and the value perceived by customers while remaining competitive in the market.

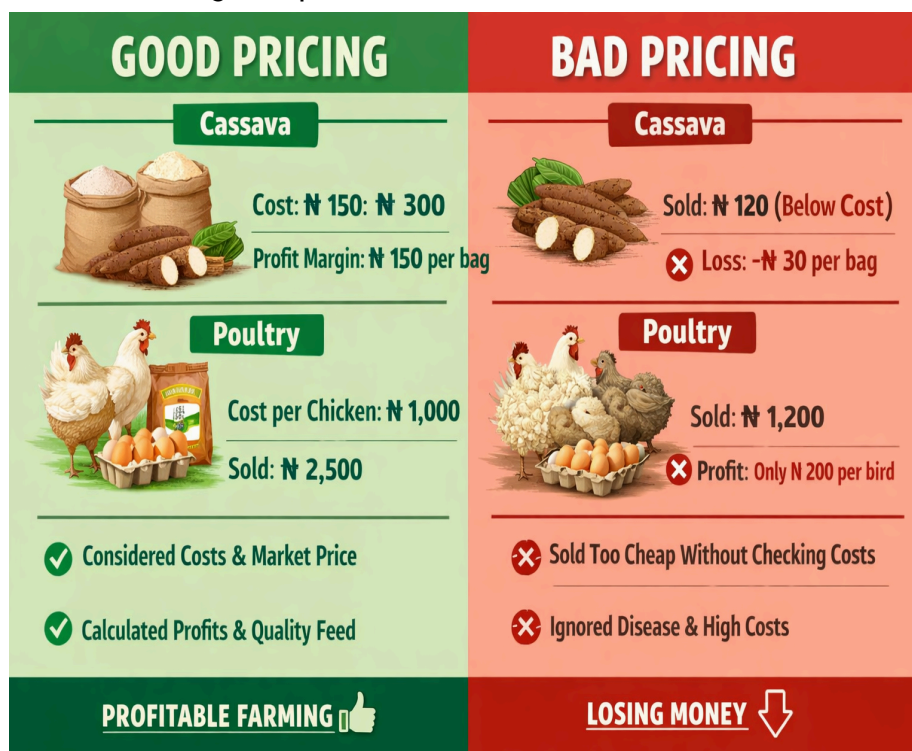


Figure 3: Examples of Good and Bad Pricing -AI-Generated

In determining the price of a product, it is important to ask the following questions: Who are the target markets? What are their demographic characteristics? Are they interested in value, quality, or low cost? Is the product being distributed wholesale or retail? What

is the estimated shelf life or life cycle of the product? Is the demand for the product high or low? Are there imposed regulations limiting or dictating the price range for products? Before pricing a product or service, it is crucial to calculate the cost of production of the product or service. If production costs exceed the price, it indicates inefficiency or a need to reassess the product or service's viability (PennState Extension, 2026b).

b. Branding

Customers have many choices in the marketplace. Branding refers to the characteristics that help identify a product and set it apart from its competitors. It influences purchasing decisions and significantly impacts customers' choices when buying products or services. It tells the story of who the business owner is and what she values.

Key elements such as a brand name, logo, tagline or slogan, design elements (such as shapes and colours), and tone of voice all contribute to supporting the brand and shaping its image among customers (Cowee and Cortis, 2005). However, branding goes beyond these basics; it encompasses every aspect of a customer's experience with the business, product or service, ultimately forming their perception. For a brand to be effective in performing the above-mentioned functions, the brand name must be simple, easy to pronounce, easy to remember, distinct and not be confused with those of competitors.



Figure 4: AI- generated images of brands showing brand name, logo, slogan and design element.

c. Promotion

Promotion includes all methods used to communicate with potential customers and convince them to choose products or services.

Flyers, publications, radio and television shows, and newspapers remain important promotional channels for reaching customers. These traditional media channels often provide credible, trusted information sources that customers rely on for business decisions. Trade shows and agricultural fairs offer unique promotional opportunities where customers can see, touch, and experience products firsthand.

Social media platforms such as YouTube videos, Instagram posts, X, TikTok and LinkedIn, as well as email and content marketing, are increasingly important in business promotion.

2.2.2: Online & Offline Marketing: Leveraging social media and digital platforms for business growth.

Marketing is usually categorised into online and offline marketing approaches, both of which play crucial roles in agribusiness growth. Offline marketing focuses on traditional, face-to-face/word-of-mouth, non-digital methods such as local market, farmers' cooperative meetings, community meetings, radio advertisements, agricultural fairs/exhibitions, banners, posters, flyers and billboards to reach customers.

Online marketing, however, is the strategic and promotional actions carried out on the internet to market products and services. It utilises internet-based channels such as social media (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok), WhatsApp, e-commerce platforms (Jumia, Konga), e-mail, websites, and Google Ads to reach customers. Women in agribusiness need to understand how they can complement the usage to enhance brand visibility, expand their market reach and scale sales.

Leveraging Digital Tools in Agribusiness

a. **Social media:** Social media platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, TikTok, are invaluable agribusiness marketing strategies. They provide access to a wide audience/users, allowing businesses to share success stories, updates, testimonials and educational content interactively and efficiently.

When to Use: Ideal for promotion of products and services, awareness creation for wide users, brand building and communication with customers.

How to use: Share clear pictures of products/services regularly, indicate prices, provide contact details, and respond quickly to messages. Share success stories, updates, and testimonials.

Target Groups: Retailers, local consumers, urban and youth consumers.

Strategy: Women can focus on trusted WhatsApp groups and community networks while youth can create short videos and engaging content.

b. Digital Tools- Digital Payments and Mobile Money

When to Use: When receiving payments, paying suppliers or managing transactions.

How to use: Encourage cashless transactions and maintain digital transparency.

Target Groups: Customers, suppliers, service providers, retail and wholesale customers, urban markets, youths and institutional buyers.

Strategies: Promote financial inclusion by using mobile wallets that require minimal banking infrastructure for women.

c. Agricultural products can be sold on **Digital Marketplaces and E-commerce platforms** (Jumia, TradeDepot, Twiga Foods, Mpesa, DigiExt, Fromyfarm, Konga, Amazon)

When to Use: When selling products beyond local markets.

How to use: List products with accurate descriptions, use detailed and high-quality images, add information on pricing and delivery options and a transparent description for trust.

Target Groups: Traders, Retailers, wholesalers, urban consumers, youths, institutional buyers, supermarkets, and hotels

Strategy: Women entrepreneurs can sell collectively through cooperatives to minimise risks and logistics challenges. Youth may explore online stores and wider regional markets.

d. **Business Website**

Establishing a robust online presence is the cornerstone of any successful digital marketing for agribusiness.

When to Use: When the business wants to create a strong online presence and showcase products or services. The strategy is to drive traffic through content marketing and ads.

How to use: the site must be professional, easy to navigate and mobile responsive. Include detailed product descriptions, high-quality images, prices, contact details, and customer testimonials; update regularly.

Target Groups: Retailers, wholesalers, agribusiness partners, urban consumers, exporters, investors, and institutional buyers.

e. **Online advertising and videos**

Use of YouTube and TikTok can broaden the audience, especially young, digitally savvy consumers. Also, use of storytelling through testimonial videos and live sessions where questions and answers are hosted live on new products.

When to Use: When launching new products or promoting products and services to reach customers searching online, organisations and agribusiness partners.

How to Use: Use simple advertisements, short videos, and clear messages showing benefits of products. Use targeted keywords, simple advertisements, and link them to the business website or contact page.

Target Groups: Online consumers

Youth can create short videos while women can tell stories based on their products.

f. **Use of Email Marketing:** Email marketing is an effective tool for agribusiness marketing as it provides personalised communication with the audience.

When to Use: When communicating with buyers, partners, suppliers, or institutions.

How to Use: Send professional messages with clear subject lines, attach product catalogues or price lists, and follow up regularly.

Target Groups- Retailers, wholesalers, organisations, agribusiness partners.

Strategies: Women should use it to build credibility.

Other networking tools, such as LinkedIn and Farmer Forums, can also be used to connect with buyers, researchers and service providers, market products and share business achievements. Women may encourage collective profiles or cooperatives to increase visibility.

2.2.3: Marketing Challenges: Gendered marketing barriers and strategies to overcome them.

Women play critical roles in both the agricultural and business sectors in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), but a significant “gender gap” exists in agricultural productivity and business performance. Women in agribusiness face multiple barriers, which are enumerated below:

a. Legal and regulatory frameworks of the business environment

The legal, customary practices and regulatory frameworks of SSA countries, often deny and restrict women from registering businesses, opening bank accounts, and owning property. In Nigeria, Tanzania, Malawi, Uganda and Kenya, where certain customary laws grant husbands exclusive control over marital property, married women encounter difficulties in using fixed assets as collateral to secure business loans (World Bank, 2019; Williamson *et al*, 2023). Similarly, in countries where laws have been enacted to ensure women's rights to land and other properties, many women still face significant challenges regarding their land rights. These restrictions reduce their ability to perform effectively in agribusiness. To eliminate such barriers, (ILO 2016) suggested strategies to include legal reforms that guarantee equal land and property rights, gender-sensitive financial policies, and simplified business regulations that encourage women's participation. Women can leverage collectively held land through cooperatives.

b. Access to Productive Resources

Reports indicate significant gender inequalities among agricultural producers in Africa regarding access to resources (Ali *et al.*, 2016; Aletheia *et al.*, 2020). Women farmers typically manage smaller land parcels than men, constraining their production scale and crop diversity. Even where access to land is not a constraint, limited access to family and/or hired labour also reduces women's agricultural productivity and production scale-up. Women-owned businesses in Africa have less inventory, equipment, property and other forms of fixed assets compared with their male counterparts (World Bank, 2019). The small size and limited assets of women's businesses increase their reliance on public infrastructure, making them more vulnerable to power outages and disruptions in water and sewage services (ICRW, 2019). The barrier can be addressed through bundled services that offer women credit, inputs, and technical advice. Additionally, training local manufacturers on women's specific needs can help develop their capacity to design women-friendly agricultural tools and equipment.

c. Access to credit and financial services

Women often have limited access to collateral (such as land titles), formal banking systems, and large-scale loans. This financial constraint restricts their ability to invest in packaging, branding, certification, transportation, storage, and digital marketing, which are essential for accessing higher-value markets and competing effectively in agricultural value chains. Lack of working capital weakens women in agribusiness bargaining power. Promoting gender-responsive financial products, formation of women business cooperatives to pool resources and negotiate better prices, expanding group-based lending, strengthening women's land and property rights, improving access to digital financial services, and providing targeted financial literacy and business development training are options for mitigating the barrier.

d. Access to technical advisory and business support services.

Women in SSA countries receive fewer advisory and business support services than men, contributing to the gender gap in agribusiness marketing. A World Bank study (2019) based on evidence from several African countries revealed that gender and social norms, rather than business training, were more effective in increasing profits when compared with managerial training. A strategy to address this barrier is to link agribusiness technical advisory and business support with other interventions that tackle the socio-cultural issues women face (David, 2021). Women can also leverage digital platforms for extension advice, partner with non-governmental organisations and advocate for gender-sensitive policies that guarantee equal access to extension and business services.

e. Access to markets and trade opportunities

Access to markets and trade opportunities remains a major barrier for women in agribusiness despite initiatives such as the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which promotes gender and youth-inclusive trade (AfCTA, 2020). Women often lack market information, face mobility restrictions, struggle to meet quality and certification standards, and have limited access to finance and formal buyer networks, resulting in lower prices and fewer high-value opportunities. Addressing this barrier requires gender-inclusive market information systems, stronger women producer organisations, improved digital literacy, and leveraging digital trading platforms that connect women to reliable buyers and better markets.

f. Safe working conditions

Jacobson and Joeques (2019) found that women traders experience various forms of gender-based violence, ranging from verbal sexual harassment to rape, while carrying out their business activities. Women in agribusiness can address barriers related to unsafe working conditions and sexual harassment by taking proactive steps to protect themselves and strengthen their working environment. They can work in trusted networks or cooperatives, operate in secure, well-regulated market spaces, and

establish clear professional boundaries when dealing with customers and suppliers. In addition, seeking support from business associations, women's groups, or relevant authorities, documenting incidents, and advocating for safer workplaces can help reduce risks and promote more respectful and secure business environments.

2.2.4: Activity: Develop a simple marketing strategy for a local agribusiness (including social media ideas).

STEP 1. Participants are requested to develop a simple marketing strategy for their business using the 4P approach, where Product: What product/service are you selling? What makes it special? Price: Is the product affordable and competitive?

Place: Where will the product be sold? Promotion: How will customers know about it?

STEP 2. For the promotion, participants are requested to choose two digital tools and provide reasons for their choice. Participants will be asked to create a short promotional message or photo idea with a caption for their product or service.

STEP 3. The activity concludes with participants sharing their simple marketing strategy with the larger group and receiving feedback.

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