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Inclusive business models

Empowering women in urban agriculture in Burkina Faso

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Introduction

1.1 Aims and scope of the book

When I was 11 years old, my parents separated. My mother, brothers (two younger and one older), young sister and I had to leave Dédougou, the city we were living in, and we had to resettle in our village Mamou. My mother was five months pregnant with my last brother who was born in my village four months later. My late older brother was 15 years old and was given a plot of land that belongs to my father's family, not my mother because as a woman she does not have access to land. We were too young to be able to exploit this land in a way that enabled to feed us. In our village, my mother was struggling day after day to feed us, with some help from my late grandmother. She tried to market various kinds of local food including 'street vending'¹. However, each activity undertaken failed, and she had to restart another one hoping that this would work. No change happened! She did not have money to sustain such activities that required a certain initial funding. As the pressure and need to feed her family and allow me and one of my young brothers to go to school grew, she was forced into the harvesting of timber and non-timber forest products (such as, for example, shea nuts and butter and wood) as the main way to get money. Often, she worked on other's farms to have cash or food for us. In addition to her difficult living conditions, she had to face people's insults because she did not want to live with a man anymore. Many times, I saw her 'crying' alone in the middle of the night because of the difficulties in her life. This situation lasted for 16 years (1992 to 2008). Afterwards, I was able to support her with money I was earning after my master's degree, as I was working as a consultant in a small private company. Today, she is still alive and, fortunately, I can afford the things she needs for the rest of her life.

This is my story. It illustrates a sad face of the reality that exists worldwide, particularly in low-income countries where (poor) women face socio-cultural, economic and political barriers daily and struggle hard to improve their living conditions because of gender considerations. Although my story happened in a rural area, it also happens in urban areas as many women in poverty reside in cities (UN-Habitat, 2007). Therefore, this research focuses on women in poor urban informal settlements².

1 My village is not a developed area and street vending glorifies what she used to do.

2 Informal settlements, slums and non-developed areas are three concepts that will be used interchangeably in the rest of the book.

Indeed, there is a duality between the developed and non-developed parts of urban cities across the world, as the living conditions of populations from the non-developed areas deeply differ from those who live in developed ones. For example, in 2014 more than 881 million people (30% of the world population) in developing countries lived in informal settlements where there is extreme poverty, inequality and deprivation of all kinds (UN-Habitat, 2016, p.51) These informal settlement dwellers struggle hard to improve their living conditions (Robineau, 2014). This is particularly the case for more than half of the women who belong to the poorest group of people (UN-Habitat, 2007). Like my mother, they are mainly engaged in survival entrepreneurship to earn an income (Vossenbergh, 2016; Pouw, 2017). However, unlike my mother, urban women have less access to natural resources, such as forest, land and water, as they fall under different rules (Blood et al., 2016). Poor urban women lack access to capital, land and technical know-how as well as gardening, processing and storage facilities, information and business linkages (Dolan, 2001). Yet, urban women engage in agriculture and deploy their own knowledge and experience when working the land, which was passed on to them from generation to generation and through their social circles. Poor urban women often use polluted water for urban agriculture causing suboptimal yields and crop pollution (WFEs Project, 2015). For example, 13% of agricultural sites and 32% of horticulturists use waste/polluted water and are exposed to air and water pollution and reduced access to water and sanitation services (Ouedraogo et al., 2018, p.2570). Consequently, poor urban women are often trapped in a vicious cycle of poverty.

Thus, this research aims to:

- Understand how poor women engage as survival entrepreneurs (WSEs) and build their business strategies within urban food chains. In particular, the research assesses their strengths, weaknesses and opportunities, and analyses how existing business strategies build up women's capabilities and help them transit to women food entrepreneurs (WFEs);
- Identify the conditions for an agribusiness to be gender-aware and inclusive; and
- Design and empirically test a gender-aware inclusive business (GAIB) model for WSEs and show how inclusive business can contribute to women's economic empowerment.

Before moving further, I define WFEs as women engaged in growth-oriented food entrepreneurship; I differentiate WFEs from WSEs as women engaged in survival food entrepreneurship (see 8.5.3).

This chapter explains the problem addressed in this research (see 1.2), identifies the research questions (see 1.3), discusses the policy relevance (see 1.4), the theoretical perspective (see 1.5), presents the methodology (see 1.6), and ends with the book outline (see. 1.7).

1.2 Problem statement

1.2.1 Gender Inequality: Economic exclusion

Overview of women's economic exclusion and gender inequalities

Economic exclusion and gender inequality are two interconnected problems that many women worldwide still face today. The gender inequality index, which measures the reproductive health, empowerment and labour market participation, is estimated at 0.441 worldwide against 0.468 for least developed countries. This indicates that women have lower access to the labour market, are less empowered, and have weaker reproductive health than men (UNDP, 2017, p.38). There is an urgent need to overcome this gender inequality if humanity wants to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted in Agenda 2030 (UN, 2015). A number of facts and data show the magnitude of this reality, and are organised under five dimensions: employment/work or labour market, education or human capital, political, social or cultural and economic (or access to economic opportunities) (Moorhouse, 2017).

First, in the labour market, many women still face economic exclusion because they evolve in the informal sector and they are paid less and valued less than men (Business for Social Responsibility-BSR, 2017). For example, “more than 740 million women are workers in informal employment worldwide, and more than 90% are in Sub-Saharan African countries (SSA)” (International Labour Organisation-ILO, 2018a, p.17). In addition, there are 4.6% more women in informal employment than men, and this reaches 7.8% when excluding agricultural workers (UN Women, 2018, para.9; ILO, 2018b, p.10). This data shows that women are predominant in the “informal and vulnerable” labour sector (UN Women, 2018, para.9).

Second, women have less chance than men to participate in the labour market at the world scale (UN Women, 2018, para.7). Data shows that 63% of women between 25-54 years participate in the labour market compared to 94% of men (UN Women,

2018, para.7; UN Women, 2018, p.40). In addition, when including women below 15 years and above 55 years, 48.5% of women participate in the labour market worldwide (UN Women, 2018, para.7; ILO, 2018a, p.6). Furthermore, “women are more likely to be unemployed than men” (UN Women, 2018, para.8). For example, in 2017, the rate of women unemployed was 6.0% compared to 5.2% for men at global scale (UN Women, 2018, para.7; ILO, 2018a, p.7).

Third, women earn less than men worldwide. The gender wage gap is estimated at 23% implying that women are paid 23% less than men on average (UN Women, 2018, para.10; UN Women, 2018, p.43). Women also dedicate “around 2.5 times more time on unpaid care and domestic work than men” (UN Women, 2018, para.11; ILO, 2017, p.15). This data shows that women are entirely responsible for unpaid care and domestic work, whose monetary value could reach 10 to 39% of GDP (UN Women, 2018, para.11; UNRISD, 2010, p.1).

Fourth, with regards to education or human capital, “women account for only 38% of human capital wealth³, versus 62% for men worldwide; and account for a third or less in low and lower-middle income countries” (Wodon & De la Brière, 2018, p.2). In addition, differences between women and men in terms of “earnings lead to losses in wealth of USD 23,620 per capita (pc) globally” (Wodon & De la Brière, 2018, p.5). In 141 countries the loss in human capital wealth due to gender inequality is estimated at USD 80 trillion, compared to a situation whereby women would earn as much as men (Wodon & De la Brière, 2018, p.5). That is, human capital wealth could increase by “21.7% globally, and total wealth by 14%” if gender equality in earnings would be achieved (Wodon & De la Brière, 2018, p.5).

Fifth, politically, only a limited proportion of women participate in decision making both at the local and national level worldwide. For example, only 18% of ministers are women, and the departments they manage are usually linked to social issues; whereas 24.1% of women are members of parliament in the world (European Parliament, 2019, p.1). This means that women are largely excluded from the top decision making.

Sixth, economically, there is unequal access to jobs or business opportunities between men and women. For example, women own 1/3 of all businesses across Africa, which are more likely run as microenterprises in the informal sector and are engaged in low-value-added activities (African Development Bank Group, 2015,

3 Wealth refers to the “accumulated assets” (Rakopoulos & Rio, 2018). This is different from Wellbeing which include “these materials assets and subjective and social wellbeing” (Steel et al., 2018).

p.5). In the formal sector in SSA, women hold 4 of every 10 jobs and typically earn only 2/3 the salary of their male colleagues (African Development Bank Group-AfDB, 2015, p.11). Also, “while 65% of men have an account at a formal financial institution (bank), only 58% of women worldwide do” (UN Women, 2018, para.14; Demircuc-Kunt et al., 2014, p.6). This shows that women have less chance than men “to have access to financial institutions or have a bank account” (UN Women, 2018, para.14).

In addition, women have less chance to engage in entrepreneurship as they face more disadvantages in starting a business. For example, “in 40% of economies, women’s early-stage entrepreneurial activity is half or less than half of that of men” (UN Women, 2018, para.16; Global Entrepreneurship Monitor-GEM, 2017, p.28). Data also shows that household responsibilities drive poor women to start small businesses in the food sector because of a lack of other options, and these responsibilities likely reduce the growth potential of their business (IDRC, 2016). For example, in SSA, women and children bear the main negative impacts of fuel and water collection and transport as they spend 1 to 4 hours a day collecting biomass for fuels (World Bank, 2011, p.12). Women spend at least 16 million hours a day collecting drinking water against 6 million hours for men and 4 million hours for children (UN Environment, 2019, p.253). Females are most burdened by the scarcity of clean water and sanitation; “they are responsible for water collection in 80% of households without access to water on premises” (UN Women, 2018, para.19; UN Women, 2018, p.36). In such conditions, it is difficult to manage “menstrual hygiene” when there is a lack of water, soap and gender-specific sanitation facilities (UN Women, 2018, para.19).

Seventh, culturally and socially discriminatory social institutions (including formal and informal laws, social norms and tradition) “limit women’s voices in society and their influence over policies”, they also accentuate gender inequality worldwide and in SSA particularly (BSR, 2017 p.28; IDRC, 2016). For example, over 2.7 billion women are limited by the law to get the job of their choice as men (UN Women, 2018, para.6). Out of 189 countries, 104 are still constrained by the law which restricts women from working in specific jobs, and “59 countries lack laws on sexual harassment in the workplace, and in 19 countries the laws allow husbands to prevent their wives from working” (UN Women, 2018, para.6).

In addition, women are less able to access to social protection (UN Women, 2018). Worldwide, almost 40% of women in wage employment do not have access to social protection (UN Women, 2018, para.13; ILO, 2016, p. xiii). Particularly, for women in “formal employment, having insufficient maternity leave” is risky as it may affect

their health and that of their newborn, and thus lose their jobs (BSR, 2016, p.25). For example, of the “44 SSA countries with data, only 18 countries conform to the International Labour Organisation’s (ILO) recommendation to provide a minimum of 14 weeks paid maternity leave” (BSR, 2016, p.25; UNDP, 2016, p.66).

Eighth, women and girls are burdened the most by energy poverty and are exposed to the “effects of the lack of safe, reliable, affordable and clean energy” (UN Women, 2018, para.21). For example, combustible fuels as a source of “energy caused 4.3 million deaths in 2012” because of polluted air, among which women and girls represented “6 out of every 10 deaths” (UN Women, 2018, para.21; UN Women, 2015, p.87). Overall, these global facts on women’s economic exclusion shed light on the problem in the agricultural sector and value chains.

Gender inequality: Exclusion of women from agricultural value chains

Several facts describe the unequal and exclusionary conditions of women in agricultural value chains. First, worldwide, approximately a third of women’s employment is in agriculture (including forestry and fishing) (UN Women, 2018, para.19), thus pointing out the importance of women’s labour for this sector (United Nations Economic and Social Council-E/CN, 2018, p.4). Specifically, at the food production level women comprise over 40-43% of the agricultural labour force worldwide as farmers, entrepreneurs and labourers (IFC, 2016, p.20; FAO, 2014b, p.35). Data also shows that in 97 low-income countries, female farmers only received 5% of all agricultural extension services, and only 15% of those providing these services are women (Farming First and FAO, 2012, p.12). Besides this, just 10% of the total public budget allocated to agriculture, forestry and fishing goes to women (Farming First and FAO, 2012, p.12). Women are thus largely overlooked by private and public sector actors and institutions in food value chains.

Second, in the agricultural value chain, women’s positions are largely influenced by gender inequality, which hinders their empowerment. Women are also important contributors to agribusiness supply chains (FAO, 2011); they produce 60-80% of the world’s food, and are inherently better stewards of the environment than men (CGIAR Online, 2017) because: (a) women are greater champions of environmental management compared to men, and (b) women are custodians of vast repositories of inherited knowledge about land and water ecosystems (UNDP, 2018). In many farming communities in SSA, “women are the main custodians of knowledge on crop varieties, as they can cultivate up to 120 different plants alongside the cash crops managed by men” (Global Agriculture, 2015, para.10; FAO, 2003, p.38). However, women’s agricultural productivity and yields are 20 to 30% lower than

men's because of the often-interlinked constraints such as restricted access to quality seeds, equipment, hired labour, technology, training, credit and markets and lack of voice and empowerment in decision making (FAO, 2014b, p.35). For example, women account for only 12.8% of agricultural landholders in the world (FAO, 2015, p.7). In addition, women's low agricultural productivity because of gender differences in "access to and control of productive and financial resources yearly costs Malawi up to USD 100 million, Tanzania USD 105 million and Uganda USD 67 million" (Global Agriculture, 2015, para.3; UN Women and World Bank, 2015, p.3). In contrast, alleviating these gender inequalities could yearly lift more than "238,000 people out of poverty in Malawi, 119,000 people in Uganda, and 80,000 people in Tanzania" (Global Agriculture, 2015, para.3; UN Women and World Bank, 2015, p.5).

Third, at the level of post-harvesting, processing and storage, women are usually responsible for key processing activities (IFC, 2016). For example, data from the World Health Organisation (WHO) show that women are responsible for household food preparation in 85-90% of cases in a wide range of countries (FAO, 2011 p.14).

Global political awareness on gender inequality and women's economic exclusion

The global facts presented above show the urgency of fighting against gender inequality and women's economic exclusion worldwide. Apart from a human justice perspective, there are sound economic reasons for enhancing gender equality. This has contributed to raising the policy makers' awareness to address this socially embedded and time resistant concern (gender). The new international development agenda under the sustainable development goals (SDGs) of the United Nations represents the formal framework to address gender inequality (UN, 2015).

In particular, SDG5 aims to: "achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls", and clearly states the will/ambition of the international community on this issue—to mobilise, on an equal basis, all the productive resources, for the process of wealth creation in order to achieve poverty alleviation and to 'leave no one behind', particularly in SSA (UN, 2016; Overseas Development Institute (ODI), 2015). In addition, leaving no one behind means the inclusion of specific vulnerable groups such as women, children, people with disabilities, elderly, small-scale farmers, fishers, indigenous people, migrants and refugees in the development process (Van Hees et al., 2029; Van Tulder, 2018). The great majority of SDGs end their formulation with the provision 'for all' (Ready for Change, 2016, p.25). SDG5

(achieving gender equality) and SDG12 (inclusion in value chains) clearly show the relevance of considering these groups of people from the bottom of the pyramid into the inclusive business component of inclusive development (see 1.5).

In the African continent, the African Union post-2015 development agenda clearly states in its third pillar, “people-centred development”, the political commitment to gender equality and women’s empowerment. This engagement is to provide adequate resources to strengthen women’s voices, and to ensure full and equal participation of women in all decision-making bodies. This includes eliminating gender stereotypes in appointments and promotions and building women’s productive capacities as agents of change (Common African Position, 2014).

Hence, given the great potential of and constraints faced by women in value chains (and businesses), strengthening their position in order to increase their rewards in the agribusiness value chain is an imperative defended by the political discourses both at the global and regional level (UN, 2015; Common African Position, 2014). However, the way towards the achievement of this goal is still missing, as well as the kind of comprehensive knowledge on how to do so from women’s own perspectives and experiences.

1.2.2 Gaps in knowledge

Although the literature on development and women’s engagement in agribusiness is rich (see Chapter 2), there are three gaps in knowledge at both the theoretical and methodological levels.

First, little is known about the conceptualisation and theory of value chain development from a gender-aware and inclusive perspective, except Laven and Pyburn (2015) and Ros-Tonen et al. (2019), who show that: a) gender inclusive agribusiness cannot be done by companies alone, but requires facilitators such as CSOs, NGOs and the State; and b) value chain participation involves “adverse incorporation and exclusion” and is therefore not inclusive for all farmers (Ros-Ton et al., 2019, p.14). They also argued that inclusiveness is not a state of being, but a process.

There is a broader literature on value chain development strategies in poverty contexts over the past decades, both from scholars and practitioners (e.g., FAO, 2014a; Sarkis, Zhu & Lai, 2011; Singer & Donoso, 2008; Ketchen Jr. & Hult, 2007; Zhang, Vonderembse & Lim, 2002; Freeman & Liedtka, 1997). This literature focuses on value chain strategies that emphasise the creation and capturing of value from the chain by various stakeholders involved, but without considering

the specific characteristics and conditions of each. For example, poverty conditions of actors and gender inequalities are not systematically addressed. Consequently, this leads to a rather generic understanding of value chain dynamics.

Another body of literature has emerged more recently emphasising gender inequality in value chain development strategies (e.g., Laven and Pryburn, 2015; Pruzan-Jorgensen, 2016; Daci-Zejnullahi, 2014; Traub, 2014; Coles & Mitchell, 2011; Farnworth, 2011; Riisgaard et al., 2010). It focuses on gender inequalities between actors involved in the value chains for a better understanding of the exclusion of female actors. However, a systematic connection between gender inequality and in-and exclusion, as a process and outcome, is rarely made. Inclusiveness is a more comprehensive concept, as it considers social and environmental relations more broadly (Gupta et al., 2015; Gupta & Vegelin, 2016). Therefore, there is a need to conceptually and theoretically rethink how gender awareness and inclusiveness in value chain development strategies can be incorporated. The outcome can be a more nuanced and relevant approach to the value chain literature from a perspective of inclusive development and the SDGs.

Second there is insufficient evidence of how business models for inclusiveness in urban food value chains affect WSEs/WEs' capabilities and functioning. The literature on inclusive business models is historically embedded in the consideration of ethics in business (Likoko & Kini, 2017; London & Hart, 2011; Sullivan, 1998; Stainer & Stainer, 1998). It emphasises the need for corporate actors and institutions to be more aware of the situation of the poor and their communities that are involved in agribusiness on an unequal basis, and to consider their dignity and rights. In particular, this literature argues for creating equal opportunities and specific conditions for the poor to participate on equal terms through better employment, trade and contractual relations in their capacity as workforce or input providers (IFC, 2016; SNV & WBCSD, 2011). Furthermore, the way to develop effective, viable, innovative and affordable businesses which are able to improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of women has been analysed (Sopov et al., 2014). However, this literature fails to show how inclusive business models integrate the poor's capabilities, particularly women's capabilities. In other words, the ways these businesses can help to improve the capabilities of women entrepreneurs in value chains using the capability approach (Sen, 1992.) are still insufficiently investigated, particularly in the urban context.

Third, there is a lack of theory-based evidence on how gender-aware and inclusive business (GAIB) models can contribute to the economic empowerment of women in the food sector. Particularly, the causal relationship between the impact of

such business models on women's capabilities and the achievements of economic empowerment, is empirically underexplored. What is known concerns business interventions that foster women's capabilities (agency and abilities) without paying particular attention to women facing both gender issues and poverty conditions (Farnworth et al., 2015; Farnworth, 2011; Coles & Mitchell, 2011; Riisgaard et al., 2010). Furthermore, little is known about a capability approach to designing an inclusive business model that is gender-aware for women's economic empowerment, which is geared at improving their capabilities and functioning along the chain.

This research seeks to fill these gaps in knowledge, by the design and field-testing of an economic empowerment model of women in the urban agribusiness, with the aim to call for public policy interventions to support inclusive business in the sector (Negro, 2015).

1.3 Research questions, focus and limits

1.3.1 Research questions

To address these gaps in knowledge, my main research question is: How can gender-aware inclusive business (GAIB) contribute to the economic empowerment of WSEs/WFEs in the urban food value chains in low-income countries, and what do GAIB imply in practice?

This main research question is supported by seven sub-questions addressed in the intermediate Chapters. They are:

- 1) How can value chains be conceptualised from a gender-aware and inclusive perspective?
- 2) What do urban food value chains look like and what position do BoP women take therein?
- 3) How do current business strategies of WSEs/WFEs contribute to building their capabilities collectively?
- 4) How do current business strategies of WSEs/WFEs contribute to building their capabilities individually?
- 5) What are the conditions for a business model to be gender-aware and inclusive for poor women in value chains? What does an empirically tested gender-aware inclusive business model imply?
- 6) How does a gender-aware inclusive business contribute to empowering or achieving WSEs/WFEs' functioning in the urban context?

7) How do public policies contribute to empowering WSEs/WFEs? What are their strengths and weaknesses?

1.3.2 Focus and limits

This research focuses on women's economic empowerment in the urban agribusiness value chain, examining the business strategies currently and potentially deployed, which enable women to overcome the prevailing gender inequalities and constraints amidst resource scarcity. In this research, women's empowerment in a value chain encompasses "business development interventions that focus on improving vertical linkages along the value chain (in production, processing and trade functions) in order to improve their terms of participation" (Riisgaard et al., 2010, p.6). Hence, empowerment aims at "increasing the capabilities of a target group in order to improve their terms of value chain participation" (Riisgaard et al., 2010, p.7).

This research uses spatial and temporal analysis. First, the spatial scale is the urban area, particularly the country's capital (Ouagadougou), which interconnects to peri-urban and rural areas. The empirical research focusses on three quarters within the city: Tampouy, Tanghin and Kossodo. Second, the temporal scope covers 2016-2018, during which the field research was conducted. However, a look back at the history of women's empowerment and gender inequalities and trends in urban agribusiness, particularly over the period 1960-2019, is part of the contextual and policy analysis.

This research finally targets the women in urban agriculture, particularly those from the informal settlements of the capital city Ouagadougou. The majority (40.4%) of women are poor and involved in urban agriculture (Delaunay & Boyer, 2017, p.73), most commonly as small producers, processors and/or marketeers or traders. As such, it is worthwhile understanding how a more inclusive business model could contribute to their individual and collective economic empowerment.

The major limits of this research include: (a) The non-addressing of the interaction between Ouagadougou and the other areas in the country. The current focus sheds light on only part of the urban food value chain, not its totality. (b) The focus on pre-existing women's groups who produce vegetables, thereby excluding non-organised women producers from the informal settlement in the urban food value chain.

1.4 Policy relevance and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

The policy relevance of this research is tied to the current international and national (local) development policies, which are now shaped by the SDGs in the UN Agenda 2030 (UN, 2015). The SDGs are a “novel way of addressing an increasingly volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous world” (Van Tulder, 2018, p.10), because the old paradigm was marked by inaction towards positive change notably the problems of bystander⁴ effect and choice paralysis⁵ (Van Tulder, 2018, p.19). This requires adopting an inclusive approach capable of bringing positive change, which relies on open, inclusive and balanced societies, sufficient common goods provisions and dealing with institutional void and complexity. This new paradigm has six characteristics.

First, since open globalized societies have failed to create sustainable development conditions because multiple systemic crises (social, political and economic) still occur in the world (Van Tulder, 2018) possibly because democracy, national sovereignty and global economic integration appear to be incompatible (Rodrik, 2007); explicit inclusive strategies are needed.

Second, inclusive societies need policies that promote social and ecological inclusion and take a relational approach instead of inclusive growth policies to achieve inclusive and sustained development (OECD, 2014), since the aim is to reduce inequalities (between the rich and the poor) and include the poor in these policies (UN, 2015; ODI, 2016).

Third, “balanced societies” consider that development should involve the State, civil society organisations (CSOs) and the market (companies) (Van Tulder, 2018, p.52). These spheres of society should be complementary and jointly “responsible for inclusiveness and sustainability” (Van Tulder, 2018, p.52), as institutions have a strong impact on development and how they benefit people across the societal spectrum (Sen, 2015; Acemoglu & Robinson, 2009; Rodrik et al., 2004). This is also supported by the ‘resilience thinking’ suggesting a multi-actor network approach to the system of governance (Baud & Hordijk, 2009).

4 Bystander effect is “the reduction in helping behaviour in the presence of other people” (Hortensius & De Gelder, 2018 p.249).

5 Van Tulder (2018) argues that “Choice paralysis implies that people and organisations, when confronted with complex problems, tend to get stuck in negative sentiments, doubt, denial and passivity. They do not act or they look the other way – even in the face of demise” (p.19)

Fourth, a balanced society supposes a supply of sufficient 'common goods' (combining public, private and social goods) (Van Tulder, 2018, p.52). However, because of the nature of such goods and since the "potential beneficiaries" cannot be excluded (ibid), the involvement of all three societal actors is required.

Fifth, institutional void and complexity reflects the absence of societal checks and balances to "support companies and communities to live up to their full potential of contributing to inclusiveness and the common good" (Van Tulder, 2018, p.19; Khanna & Palepu, 2010). To do so, concerted actions from societal actors are needed with the creation of new arrangements to produce the "common goods for the society to thrive" (Van Tulder, 2018, p.18). These positive change and collaborative solutions are important in addressing the institutional void without exclusionary rivalry, but with collective actions.

Finally, the SDGs offer a great political opportunity for women who face gender inequality worldwide. Given that justice and human dignity are core elements of inclusiveness and reduction of inequality (Van Tulder, 2018; Gupta et al., 2015; UN, 2015), any development intervention should include women at the forefront. In addition, by calling for collective action by the state, businesses and civil society organisations, the SDGs first recognise women's assets and then open the door for more attention to the contribution of women to sustainable development. Also, by focusing on the inclusiveness and reduction of inequality, the SDGs open the door to the debate around the theory of inclusive development (see section 1.5.3).

This research particularly focuses on SDG5 – "achieving gender equality and empower all women and girls" (UN, 2015, p.18), through four main targets. First, target 5.1 on "ending all forms of discrimination against all women", can be qualitatively captured by the existence or not of legal frameworks that promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex and age (focusing on girls) everywhere (UN Women, 2018c, p.19).

Second, target 5.4 focuses on: "recognising and valuing unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructures and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate" (UN, 2015, p.18). This target is practically measured by the "proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location" (UN Women, 2018c, p.25).

Third, target 5.a to “undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws” (UN, 2015, para.7). This target is captured through three indicators:

“1) the proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex; 2) the share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure; and 3) the proportion of countries where the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women’s equal rights to land ownership and /or control” (UN, 2015, para.7).

Fourth, target 5.c focuses on “adopting and strengthening sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels” (UN, 2015, para.9). This last target is measured by the proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women’s empowerment.

This research will contribute to SDG5 and its targets and indicators by developing a practical framework (conceptual and analytical) and measurement of the level of inclusiveness and gender awareness of women’s agribusiness activities within the urban food value chains (see 1.5.3; 2.2.).

1.5 Theoretical perspective: inclusive development and inclusive business model

I now aim to develop the inclusive business component of inclusive development (ID). Inclusive development is “*development that includes marginalised people, sectors and countries in social, political and economic processes for increased human wellbeing, social and environmental sustainability and empowerment*” (Gupta, Pouw & Ros-Tonen, 2015, p.546). Three interrelated pillars come out from this definition of inclusiveness: human wellbeing, social and environmental sustainability, and political voice and empowerment (also referred to as social, ecological and relational inclusiveness). Inclusive development is different from inclusive growth, which is defended by neoliberals who call for fighting against poverty by including the poor in the market whilst keeping the capitalist vision of wealth accumulation unchanged (Hickey, 2010).

Hence, this research contributes to the theory of inclusive development through a better understanding of a women’s empowerment model that links together gender inequalities, inclusive business models within food value chains, and women’s capabilities enhancement, which are all part of the instruments to implement

inclusive development. Inclusive development is also relational (Pouw & Gupta, 2017), which requires investigating inequalities from the onset. As such, the value chain concept is identified in this research as the connection point of women's empowerment and inclusive development.

In so doing, the research contributes to inclusive development by first scoping the target group among the bottom of the pyramid population which faces gender inequalities (see 2.1.3). Second, it develops a more gender-aware and inclusive value chain as a framework for the collaboration of stakeholders in business by using the Foucauldian perspective of a human being (Foucault, 1979). Third, the research develops a conceptual model on gender-aware and inclusive business (GAIB), also formalized and empirically tested through an index to support empirical work related to the inclusion of the poor (see 3.1.2 and chapter 7). Fourth, the research combines the capability and firm level economic wellbeing approaches to the value chain to design an analytical framework of women's economic empowerment in the urban context (see 2.5. and 2.6).

1.6 Methods

1.6.1 Steps of the research

This research follows eight steps in the research design. Step 1 presents the epistemology adopted. Step 2 describes the mixed method approach used in the research. Step 3 reviews the literature that framed the research within the theoretical and empirical debate. Step 4 presents the conceptual framework adopted in the research. Step 5 presents the case study chosen while step 6 describes the multiple case-studies approach. Step 7 describes the data management process, and Step 8 presents the ethical issues of the research

1.6.2 Epistemology

This research adopts a post-positivist viewpoint with a critical intersubjectivity perspective to address the research problem related to gender inequality and women's economic exclusion from the formal value chain. First, critical intersubjectivity criticises the pure objectivity view (positivism). Objectivism asserts that ultimate reality is structured and formed in "itself" and thus encourages the belief that only one true picture exists which corresponds with the pre-formed ultimate reality (Fay, 1996). Second, while ontologically consistent with realism, critical intersubjectivity believes that humans are epistemologically limited, so that they can never be sure whether they have in fact understood reality. Instead, critical intersubjectivity considers objectivity in terms of inquiry. An

inquiry is objective not in the sense that the results mirror the objective world, but in the sense that its practitioners in their epistemic activity transcend their narrow subjective attachment and presupposition (Fay, 1996).

“Objective inquiry is one in which inquirers must forsake wishful thinking, discard agreeable interpretations when they cannot stand up to scrutiny, bracket their own perspectives in order to enter sympathetically into the perspectives of rivals, and critically examine the perspective which comes most easily to them” (Fay, 1996, p.212).

Why the use of the post-positivist approach in this research? On the one hand, with the complexity of addressing gender issues and women’s economic exclusion, a positivist economic approach will be limited to analyse this complexity based on quantitative methods only. For example, quantitative methods will be important when analysing the ‘real’, that is, physical components of the value chain such as crop, food, people’s physical characteristics and so on. On the other hand, as human beings are involved in value chain analysis, this requires a greater attention to their behaviour and attitudes towards each other. This means to better understand (knowledge of) people in the value chains both individually and collectively. This requires a critical intersubjectivity approach. Indeed, as post-positivists, we recognise that the way scientists think and work and the way we (human beings) think in our everyday life are not distinctly different. Thus, our ability to know the reality with certainty is fallible and there may be sources of error. Hence, qualitative methods can be used as source of triangulation to make the research inquiry as objective as possible.

1.6.3 Mixed methods approach

This research uses a mixed methods approach (see chapter 4). It combines qualitative and quantitative methods to collect and analyse data. Mixed methods enable better insight into a complex and multidisciplinary research problem, within a dynamic context. The combination of quantitative and qualitative methods and the use of different data sources allows me to triangulate my data. “Within-method’ triangulation essentially involves cross-checking for internal consistency or reliability while ‘between-method’ triangulation tests the degree of external validity” (Jick, 1979, p.603).

The first sub research question (see 1.3.1) is answered based on the literature review (see chapter 2). The second sub research question is answered mainly using focus group discussions with women groups, while answers to the third question are based on interviews (including life stories) and survey data. The fourth and fifth

sub research questions are answered using data from the focus groups, interviews and survey, while the sixth question is mostly based on secondary data in the form of policy documents and secondary statistics at the national and local level.

The focus groups are comprised of pre-existing women (and mixed) food entrepreneurial groups; whereas the individual interviews are comprised of men with women food producers working on the selected sites, and the other stakeholders involved in their food value chains such as consumers, inputs vendors, state services, and food marketeers. The individual interviews were conducted through a survey based on a semi-structured questionnaire and a reasoned sampling process (see Chapter 4). The life story method was also used to understand the living conditions of women food producers and how their businesses help them improve these conditions.

Regarding data analysis, four methods have been used: content analysis (of focus group discussions), descriptive policy analysis, descriptive statistics, and causality analysis through advanced quantitative methods (see chapters 4, 8 & 9). First, content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005), has been used to analyse the content of the focus group discussions in the fields of women's empowerment, gender-aware entrepreneurship and value chains, as well as inclusive business models. Second, ex-post⁶ or descriptive policy analysis has been used to describe and interpret past policies (Patton, Sawicki & Clark, 2016). Third, descriptive statistics have been used to summarise the quantifiable data that contributes to understanding the overall insight of the case studies. They also allow for the first level of comparative analysis between multiple case studies in this research. The focus groups' quantitative data has been used at this level. Finally, advanced quantitative methods have been used to deeply analyse the causal relationships between each of the key concepts involved in this research and then test the hypotheses that result from the theoretical framework. In particular, a composite index was constructed and tested based on empirical data. Here, most of the survey, life-story and individual semi-structured interview data has been used.

1.6.4 Literature review

This research is grounded in the rich offerings of secondary sources and existing literature over the period 1980-2019. First, the secondary sources have served different purposes and have been both qualitative and quantitative in nature. Particularly, databases such Google, Google Scholar, Scopus and Science Direct

6 Ex-post policy analysis refers to an historical analysis of past policies or the evaluation of a new policy as it is implemented (Patton et al., 2016, p.22)

were used to gather the secondary data. Second, literature was generally used to elaborate on the concepts of economic empowerment, inclusive business models, gender-aware and inclusive value chain strategies and women capabilities (see chapter 2) that fit with the context of urban entrepreneurship. As such, scientific databases (Google Scholar, Scopus) and grey literature, with a dominance of empirical literature, have been used as main sources. These sources have been used to analyse the urban scale matters as well as the analytical methods designing the research, whereas the second source allowed for the public policy analysis of the case study (notably education, agriculture, gender, land, funding policies). The main search items used comprised of “inclusive business”; “value chains or supply chains” “inclusive value chains development”; “gender-aware value chains”; “business strategies”; “capability approach”; “capabilities and functioning”; “gender inequality”; “women economic exclusion”; “institutions and entrepreneurship”.

1.6.5 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework in this research was derived from the critical assessment of the literature on the key concepts and the related theories or theoretical perspectives (see 1.6.4 and chapter 2). In addition, it describes the relationships or possible interactions between these concepts. The scheme on women’s economic empowerment model was designed using an online application (draw.io). Section 3.2 presents the conceptual framework.

1.6.6 Choice of case study

To implement this research, the case of Ouagadougou, capital of Burkina Faso, was used and the multiple case study approach was applied to identify the research sites (see Chapter 3). The case study approach allows one to “explore the real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information... and reports a case description and case themes” (Creswell, 2013, p.97). As such, gender inequality and women’s economic exclusion in Ouagadougou have been deeply explored. This case study is interesting because Ouagadougou is a city where modernity and tradition meet daily and influence the behaviour of individuals and institutions ruling the collective life and activities. This emerges from the study of WSE/WFE in groups and individually.

1.6.7 Multiple case-studies: women food producers’ groups

Three specific research sites were chosen which are representative of the three types of WSEs/WFE’s groups that are part of the whole vegetable food system in the city. Group creation story, group site size and group mixture (male and female)

are the main selection criteria we used. The first group, an association called “la Saisonnière” based in Kossodo, is a group of women working as food producers, processors and vendors. It is assimilated in a private enterprise since the space they work in is owned by the current leader of the group. The other women have simply joined the association because of their interest in its objectives.

The second group or association called Amicale des Forestières du Burkina Faso (AMIFOB)⁷ in Tampouy is a group of women who, due to their difficult living conditions, took the initiative to request a land space from the municipality of Tampouy to implement their agroforestry activities. This group includes married women and widows all engaged in food producing, processing and marketing.

The third group is based in Tanghin and is a mixed group that includes women and men who occupy the borders of the Tanghin barrage, and they are individually settled. In other words, when they obtained the agreement to produce on the site, they were not organised yet. Thus, with time, they organised themselves into associations which are all coordinated by a cooperative of vegetables producers led by men. The specificity of this site is that these people are only engaged in food production, and most of them have inherited the exploitation right of the land from their parents.

1.6.8 Data management

The data were collected on the ground by four enumerators (in addition to me) using a face to face semi-structured and open-end questionnaire. All data were processed from the paper questionnaires as well as digital recordings. Focus group discussions were conducted by three field researchers (including myself).

1.6.9 Ethical issues

This research was conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the AISSR. First, I prepared an ethical framework, which covered the potential ethical challenges to be faced on the ground as well as how they can be solved. This was approved by the AISSR ethical board (Annex 4).

Second, the key ethical challenges faced included several possible challenges (practicalities) in the field such as local language, habits, and cultural issues as well as the financial means to support the data collection in the selected sites. In

7 In fact, AMIFOB is the group of government workers in charge of environment protection: the site belongs to those people who hold the property rights of the site. The group Nabonswendé is the group of women currently exploiting the space, after they requested permission from AMIFOB.

addition, the gender and the power difference between the researcher (me) and the women's groups involved in the research were also some challenges to address. I dealt with them first by taking advantage of having been residing in Ouagadougou for more than twenty-four years. Thus, I have developed a good understanding of the social-cultural issues and dynamics among the urban populations. Therefore, some of these challenges were relatively 'easy' to manage and secure the reliability of the data and information I collected. I also had access to gatekeepers such as food producers, processors, and marketing organisations leaders (including women) on the selected sites.

Third, as this PhD research is part of a larger trans-disciplinary and interdisciplinary research project, I was able to benefit from this larger endeavour, particularly the financial resources. Thus, before executing the field-research, I made several field-familiarising visits and I organised stakeholder workshop presentations to seek farmers for engagement and to inform local farmers' associations and local communities about my research.

Fourth, during the PhD track, capacity building and knowledge exchange activities were organised by the larger project to foster local uptake of research outcomes and strive for co-designing innovative technologies and skills. I was particularly mindful about the power relationship between myself as a researcher and member of a larger project group and the research participants. For instance, during the ethnography studies, I was usually helping women watering the crops and offering drinks on the site, which is culturally meaningful for the sort of relationship with others. This created a pleasant environment and openness between the producers in the study group, the other actors and me.

Fifth, as my research also focuses on determining the conditions under which WSEs/WFEs can operate in a more inclusive food value chain, some stakeholders in the whole urban food chain could have felt threatened or potentially excluded. Therefore, depending on their position of influence in the chain, they would be able to influence the less powerful stakeholders and obstruct any changes for the latter. To deal with this situation, my approach was to engage with policymakers, local authorities, and development agency as key partners on behalf of the larger project.

Finally, to introduce the research to the participants, I simply focused on the fact that it is a research project that aimed to contribute to finding out how to allow the poorest of Ouagadougou to be involved in win-win businesses within an adequate food value chain.

1.7 Book outline

The book is structured as follows. Following the introductory chapter (Chapter 1), Chapter 2 addresses the question of what we can learn from the literature regarding the gaps in knowledge and how best can the literature be used to develop a conceptual framework for application in this work. It focuses on the literature and the concepts mentioned in section 1.6.4. The first section addresses the deep discussion (theoretical conceptualisation) on how to integrate gender awareness and inclusiveness at the level of value chain development and analysis in the context of inclusive development. The second section presents the discussion on inclusive business. The third section addresses the concept of gender awareness in business. The fourth section addresses the deep discussion on the concept of empowerment. The fifth section focuses the concepts of capabilities and functioning. The sixth section focuses on the concept of firm level economic wellbeing.

Chapter 3 describes the conceptual framework adopted for this research. It presents gender-aware inclusive value chains (see 3.1); defines gender-aware inclusive business (see 3.2); draws an integrated concept of capabilities/functioning and resources from the capability approach and the firm-level economic wellbeing (see 3.3); and presents the economic empowerment model (see 3.4). In so doing, the chapter answers to the first sub-research question.

Chapter 4 describes the methodological approach of the case study and presents the data collection and analysis methods used. It presents the epistemological stance (see 4.1); data sources and collection methods (see 4.2); data and research questions (see 4.3); and the analytical methods (see 4.4).

Chapter 5 gives an answer to the last sub-research question (see 1.3) related to policy context and how public policies contribute to empowering WSE/WFE. It presents the policy context (see 5.1); and reviews the set of development policies implemented in the country since 1990 to understand women's position in urban agriculture/agribusiness and gender considerations as well as their effects (see 5.2).

Chapter 6 gives an answer to the second and third sub-research questions (see 1.3) related to "urban food value and women position in" and WSE/WFE's collective capabilities and business strategies in the urban food chains of Ouagadougou. It presents the women's groups within the city (see 6.1); explores the collective capabilities (resources and agency) of WSE/WFE groups in Ouagadougou (see 6.2); describes the business strategies women implement together and how they

interact with their capabilities at the collective level (see 6.3); and examines how women's participation in urban food value chains generates rewards for them (see 6.4) before drawing conclusions (see 6.5).

Chapter 7 answers the fourth sub-research question (see 1.3) by presenting WSEs/WFEs' individual capabilities and business strategies in the urban food chains of Ouagadougou. It describes the socio-demographic characteristics of women at an individual level (see 7.1); presents WSEs/WFEs' socio-economic characteristics by focusing on the individual's (or household level) resources or capacities (see 7.2); addresses the life stories and engagements of these women in the current business and the way it builds up their capabilities (see 7.3); and analyses WSEs/WFEs' individual agency (see 7.4).

Chapter 8 provides an answer to the fifth sub-research question (see 1.3) by presenting the gender-aware inclusive business model, its design and applications. It addresses the necessary conditions for a business to be gender-aware and inclusive (see 8.1); the sufficient conditions of a business to be gender aware and inclusive (see 8.2); the test of the gender-aware inclusive business model to a case of lettuce production (see 8.3); and the empirical results for the three cases studies (see 8.4).

Chapter 9 answers the sixth sub-research question (see 1.3) by analysing the contribution to gender-aware inclusive business model to WSEs/WFEs' economic empowerment. It first presents the descriptive statistics of the impact variables (outcomes of the empowerment) (see 9.1); and second the impact of their business model (i.e., organic lettuce business) on WSE/WFE's materials and non-material gains, using econometric modelling (see 9.2).

Chapter 10 concludes the dissertation and is organised as follows. The first section analyses the findings of the work in order to answer the main research question (see 10.1). The second section focuses on the theoretical reflection based on the findings and extrapolation to the broader scholarly debate on this topic (see 10.2). The third section is dedicated to the methodological reflection (10.3) and the fourth section addresses the policy implications of the findings both at national and global level (see 10.4). The last section discusses the research recommendations and future research orientation (10.5).