

**GENDER ISSUES IN TRADE:
AGRICULTURAL VALUE CHAINS:**

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED TO DATE??



**Prepared for the Continental Conference on Mainstreaming
Gender into Trade Policy
12-14th November
Accra Ghana**

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GENDER ISSUES IN AGRICULTURAL VALUE CHAINS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED TO DATE?

“Women are the backbone of farming in Africa, just as they are in most of the world. ..And so we need a good collaboration to make sure that women are equal partners with men farmers all the way through the process... to enable... farmers who are women to make a contribution that will transform agriculture, add to the gross domestic product of their country, give them more income to educate their children to have a better life.” Hillary Clinton 2009

GENDER: A PRE-DETERMINANT IN AGRICULTURAL VALUE CHAINS

Women remain primarily invisible in the work they do in value chains, yet contribute enormously to its output and value. Gender issues fundamentally shape the totality of production, distribution, and consumption within an economy but gender issues have often been overlooked in value chain development.

From production to processing to disposal, ‘gendered patterns’ of behaviour condition men’s and women’s jobs and tasks, the distribution of resources and benefits derived from income- generating activities in the chain, and the efficiency and competitiveness of value chains in the global market. This represents a missed opportunity as it prevents women farmers from achieving higher productivity.

The high participation rates of women in domestically-oriented and commercial food production, from small producer to plant worker face persistent gender inequalities that hinder their progress and reflect a ‘missed opportunity’ that could promote higher productivity and enhance the economic potential of both women and men. This relates as easily to agro-industry value chains as down to small producer farmers and even family production.

There has been considerable study of value chains analysis but one recent study by the GATES¹ project, part of USAID stands out for its clarity and practicality. Much of the findings in this paper are drawn from this source. It begins with an organizing framework for undertaking a Gender Analysis to capture issues facing women producers at all levels in value chains.

GATES states

¹ GATES refers to Greater Access to Trade Expansion and is a five year study by the Development and Training Services of the USAID. The Website is http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/cross-cutting_programs/wid/.

“A gender analysis Involves collecting and analyzing sex-disaggregated data and other qualitative and quantitative information on gender issues, including access to and control over assets as well as beliefs, practices, and legal frameworks.”²

1. BELIEFS

Emphasis is placed upon *beliefs and perceptions* about women’s participation in value chains, as it is these assumptions³ that impact so heavily upon women farmers. The chart below explains many of the barriers that women face:

| BELIEFS AND PERCEPTIONS | INFLUENCE FEMALE PARTICIPATION |
|---|---|
| Beliefs about men and women as economic actors | Women own and manage many informal and formal businesses, but perceptions that their roles are secondary impede their access to a range of opportunities to build social capital and meet new clients, when a still held belief underscores that husbands / family male members are perceived to be the decision-makers. These affect their interactions with banks, government officials, potential buyers, and peers. |
| Beliefs about appropriate work | Beliefs and assumptions about women contribute to the congregation of women into unskilled positions within processing plants associated with export-oriented high-value such as horticulture but where women were congregated in low paid routine assembly work only |
| Beliefs about men and women as association members | Social attitudes toward women routinely limited their participation in project activities, including their membership in producer associations and despite their obvious roles few efforts were made initially to reach out to them. Data confirms this over all low rate of participation in management. |
| Beliefs about regulations | Some studies suggest that discriminatory beliefs about women lead to a differential treatment by regulatory officials, where gender- based intimidation practises were used significantly |

2. LEGAL FRAMEWORKS & RIGHTS

² GATES pg 20

³ Pg 21 -22 of GATES OVERVIEW

In a similar way, gender roles influence how women are regarded, treated and reinforced by formal and informal laws, policies, and institutions.

| LEGAL FRAMEWORKS | RIGHTS |
|---|--|
| <p>Many formal and customary laws and institutional practices erect barriers against women that affect their access to legal documents, ownership; inheritance, actual representation, and due process of law⁴</p> | <p>This is shown in a myriad of ways that preclude women’s ability to actually own land and derive its benefits. The Kenyan Law of Succession, which governs inheritance rights, terminates a widow’s inheritance rights if she remarries, but a widower’s rights remain intact. In Uganda, although legal provisions permit women to inherit 15 percent of matrimonial property upon the death of her husband, women are often not consulted about the transfer. Some plots of land are registered only in the name of the registered landowner (i.e. head of household)not user of land, and customary law upholds this.</p> |

This is another missed opportunity as secure property rights create incentives increased agricultural productivity, for agricultural investment and outputs and as a cascading asset⁵ often not available to women or linked to their marital status and enforcing discriminatory practices, especially under customary law.

3. PRACTISE: Formalization of Transactions/ Household Financial Management.

In the process of formalizing market linkages, and as value chains formalize business transactions along the chain, shifts in household financial management practices can occur to the detriment of women.

| PRACTISE: FORMALIZATION OF TRANSACTIONS | IMPACT ON WOMEN |
|---|--|
| <p>Household dynamics may be affected. Participating in contract farming or warehouse receipting programs may require using a bank account.</p> | <p>Individual farmers may open bank accounts in the registered farmer’s name, usually the man’s. This shift in family practice reduces women’s access to income by mediating her access to income through her husband. In some communities, women safeguard the cash</p> |

⁴ Pg 23 GATES overview

⁵ meaning that land is often important for facilitating access to services, goods, and membership in the value chain. For example, land facilitates access to credit and membership in related organizations and associations, related to production, marketing and technical and training assistance

| | |
|--|--|
| | from crop sales. They may not have control over its use but will hide the cash and use some of it for household expenditures |
|--|--|

4. POWER: A CROSS-CUTTING DIMENSION

Lastly gender relations and the power structures inherent in these can also work against women in supply chains.

| | |
|--|--|
| Power over women’s labour | the power of a husband to direct how his spouse allocates her labour and draws on rights to that power that are accepted in the community, part of a system of customary practice, and enshrined in statutory law. |
| Power is infused in value chain operations | wherein men and women have different types and degrees of power to control, to enforce, and to shape the decisions over themselves and others. |

Women are seen to be highly discriminated against in participation, legal rights and access to productive resources, limiting their power⁶.

⁶ These differences affect women’s and men’s opportunities to engage in collective actions or to associate with others; to participate in affairs of the household, community, municipality, and nation; to use individual economic resources; to choose employment; to vote or run for office; or to enter into legal contracts

PART TWO : EVIDENCE BASED FINDINGS ON WOMEN IN AGRICULTURAL SUPPLY CHAINS



Failure to pay attention to who has access to land; which crops are considered “male” or “female” crops; which can be grown by small producers as well as large producers; and, which crops require new inputs or extensive technical assistance may result in programs that increase exports but do not necessarily reduce poverty among the rural poor. Failure to consider gender concerns into project and policy designs may exacerbate this outcome. Source: *Improving Opportunities for women in smallholder based supply chains*, Chan and Barrientos

These findings by GATES are further corroborated by recent research commissioned by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation seen in *Improving Opportunities for Women in Smallholder-based Supply Chains: Business case and Practical Guidance*⁷ by Man-Kwun Chan and Stephanie Barriento. Case studies were undertaken with women in a variety of supply chains including the Gumutindo Coffee Cooperative Enterprise (Uganda) and Karagwe District Cooperative Union (Tanzania), and two Fairtrade certified coffee cooperatives: Findlay’s and Eastern Produce (EPK) in Kenya and Kuapa Kookoo cooperative (cocoa) in Ghana.

Their research shows that by increasing women’s participation in smallholder sourcing and support programs, it can improve crop productivity and quality, grow the small holder supply base, and improve access to high-value markets. They collected issues faced by women, and then evidence that increased productivity could result if the constraints women face are lifted. The potential is there.

⁷ *Improving Opportunities for Women in Smallholder-based Supply Chains: Business case and Practical Guidance* funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation 2009.

FINDINGS of women in Agricultural Supply Chains⁸

Women are less likely to benefit from companies' smallholder sourcing and support programs than men, as the following trends and statistics show.

- **Fewer women are members of company contract farming schemes than men.**

For example, a study of the fresh fruit and vegetable sector in Kenya showed that fewer than 10 percent of smallholder contracts were with women farmers. A separate study of French bean contract farming schemes in Senegal showed that there were no female-headed households involved at all.

- **Many companies source from established producer groups, yet women are typically underrepresented in both the membership and governance of these groups.**

A study in Ethiopia showed that only 2 percent of women, as opposed to 13 percent of men, are members of agricultural cooperatives, and men are five times more likely than women to hold a leadership position within a cooperative.

- **On male-owned farms, female family members do much of the work, yet receive little of the income from crop sales, and have little say about how that income is spent.**

One study of sugar farming contracts in Africa found that women held less than half (43 percent) of the contracts yet provided the majority of the labour on 60 to 70 percent of the contracted plots. *Husbands are not inclined to share the revenue.*

- **Women are much less likely than men to benefit from technical training and extension programs.** UNAIDS estimates that women receive only 5 percent of extension services worldwide.

- **Sustainability certification schemes are also less likely to benefit women than men.**

Women are typically underrepresented even in Fairtrade where female participation in certificate schemes currently stands at⁹ between 12 and 18 percent respectively.

⁸ *Improving Opportunities for Women in Smallholder-based Supply Chains: Business case and Practical Guidance funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation 2009*

⁹ For example, women's membership of the Gumutindo Coffee Cooperative Enterprise (Uganda) and Karagwe District Cooperative Union (Tanzania), and two Fairtrade certified coffee cooperatives.

2. CHANGING THE TIDE: MAKING THE BUSINESS CASE

Women's underrepresentation in company smallholder schemes is not only a social problem: it *is also a lost commercial opportunity*. Research demonstrated that increasing women's participation in companies' smallholder sourcing and support programs can deliver a number of business benefits:

WHAT BENEFITS DO WOMEN BRING TO SMALLHOLDER SOURCING?.

2.1 How do women farmers affect maintaining and improving quality?

The research found that women smallholders, as compared to men, typically pay greater attention to crop quality, and so deliver better-quality products.

► **Evidence: Women smallholders often produce better-quality products.**

Field research findings: In four out of five case studies, respondents mentioned the quality of women's crops as a key benefit, reporting that in their experience women consistently deliver better-quality crops than men.

FINDING 2.2 Increased Productivity by Improving Women's Access to Technical Training

Ensuring that women as well as men receive technical training can be key to improving productivity, because women typically do a substantial proportion—often the majority—of the work on smallholder export farms in Africa. This includes farms that are owned by and registered in a man's name.

► **Evidence: Training female family members of male outgrowers can increase productivity.**

Eastern Produce Kenya Limited: Eastern Produce (EPK) sources a third of its tea (green leaf) from 8,000 smallholder outgrowers, 90 percent of whom are men. However, recognizing that female family members do much of the work on the outgrower tea farms, EPK ensures that these women are invited to technical training sessions as well as the men. Women who were interviewed reported that, after receiving training on tea husbandry, they started picking their tea three times a month (they previously thought they could only pick once a month), which led to a significant increase in productivity

"If you see the green leaf from the woman and the man, without doubt you will choose the woman's."

SAMWAL SANG, ASSISTANT OUTGROWER MANAGER, FINLAYS, KENYA



Women and men cocoa farmers taking part in a Video Viewing Club (VVC) training session in Ghana. A study showed that female VVC participants increased their cocoa yields by an average of 59% after completing the training.

FINDING 2.3 Growing the Supply Base

The study showed that women can be particularly effective at recruiting new members to Outgrower schemes and producer groups. Successfully attracting female members can therefore help to establish new Outgrower schemes, as well as expand existing operations.

►**Evidence: Women are effective at recruiting new members to Outgrower schemes and producer groups.** Source: Finlays, Kenya: David Kirui, Outgrower Manager for Finlays in Kenya, “when they first established their Outgrower scheme it was the women who joined first. The women then persuaded the men to join, convincing them that it was worthwhile making the commitment to Finlays because it would benefit them in the long run, for example by securing a better price.

“Our women members have been more successful at recruiting new members than Kuapa Kokoo’s formal membership campaigns.” Source: Regina Corlety, Gender Officer, Kuapa Kokoo, Improving Opportunities for Women in Smallholder-based Supply Chains - Executive Summary

FINDING 2.4 WOMEN PRODUCERS AS NEW REALITY

Moreover, successfully bringing women smallholders into supply chains is likely to be even more important in the longer term, because men are increasingly leaving rural areas in search of alternative employment, leaving the women to take charge of smallholder farms.

►**Evidence: Women are increasingly taking charge of rural households and family farms.**

In Ghana, female-headed households now make up 35 percent of the total, with 53 percent of these being in rural areas. Across the Southern Africa region, women-headed households make up 42 percent of the total.

Finding 2.5 Strengthening the Brand and Accessing Premium Markets by Women

Supporting marginal women producers offers a new branding and marketing angle for companies that are aiming at premium markets, where a company or product's perceived ethical credentials have as significant impact on consumer purchasing decisions. Peets Coffee, a U.S. specialty coffee retailer, recognizes this potential and the commercial benefits to be gained.

►**Evidence: There is positive branding potential from supporting poor women producers.**

Example Peets Coffee's sourcing relationship with the Nicaraguan women's cooperative Las Hermanas, which is featured prominently on the company's website, has generated positive media coverage as well as goodwill and positive feedback from customers. Moreover, as Shirin Moayyad, Director of Coffee Purchasing at Peets Coffee, explains, "What cannot be measured—the intangible benefit—is the goodwill it imparts."

PART THREE: POLICY CHECKLIST: RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CASE STUDIES

Increase Women's Membership and Participation in Smallholder Sourcing Schemes

To address the typically low level of female membership in contract farming schemes and producer groups:

- Ensure that the membership criteria for contract farming schemes and smallholder supplier groups offer equal opportunities for women and men .
- Proactively recruit for women members.
- Encourage men to give a share of their land or crops to their wives, so that women can join the group or scheme in their own right.
- Introduce quotas for women's representation on boards and committees of contract farming schemes and producer groups
- Explain the importance and benefits of women's representation to men, to help overcome likely cultural barriers and resistance to change.

1. Ensure that More Women Benefit from Technical Training, Extension Services,

To help combat women's low participation rates in technical training and extension programs:

- Ensure that women farmers, including female family members of male contract farmers, are directly invited and encouraged to attend training and extension sessions, for example by setting quotas for women's participation in training sessions.
- Make sure that training and extension methods are appropriate for women Recruit a mix of female as well as male company extension staff wherever possible, because experience shows that female trainers and extension workers are usually more effective than men at reaching and training women farmers.

2. To help ensure that women and men benefit equally from sustainability certification programs supported:

- Where certification schemes are linked to smallholder producer groups or cooperatives, encourage women's membership and participation in the governance of these groups).
- Make sure that women can benefit fully from any training that is provided under these schemes, such as training about record-keeping, management systems, and organic farming methods
- Ensure that any extra labour demand on women (and men) that results from adoption of the certification standards will be assessed and managed.
- Where certification generates a premium paid to the group (such as Fairtrade certification), ensure that premiums are spent on projects that benefit women as well as men, for example by ensuring that women are represented on the committees that are responsible for allocating premium funds.

CONCLUDING OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GENDER IN VALUE CHAINS

Support Women's Economic Advancement

- Gender equitable and competitive value chain practitioners consider how to empower women as lead entrepreneurs: setting an example for other women, contributing to upgrading, and leading systemic change in agricultural value chains.

Promote gender equitable market solutions as smart business.

- The private sector can be a catalyst in promoting gender equality goals when it understands *the business potential for doing so*. Gender equitable and competitive value chain practitioners facilitate understanding of how addressing gender issues in value chain development is "*smart business*" and support the development of solutions that create equal opportunities for men and women.

Design equitable benefit sharing mechanisms.

- Gender equitable and competitive value chain practitioners consider not only men's and women's participation in value chains but also how men and women will benefit from participation. They understand the gender issues in benefit-sharing mechanisms related to the distribution of profits, wages, and non-monetary compensation and ensure that men and women are adequately rewarded for their contributions to the value chain.

Include men in defining the “problem” and the solution.

- Programs can bring both men and women to the table to clarify their roles in, for example, producer association governance or to define equitable criteria for hiring, promotion, and compensation within firms.

Women’s contributions to supply chains can make a difference but needs the nurturing and support form both policy and practice to do so.

SOURCES:

Summarized by Nancy Spence (ESDA).

1. Greater Access to Trade Expansion The Development and Training Services of the USAID. [http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/cross-cutting_programs/wid/ortransition.usaid.gov/our.../GATE Project Final Report 11-09.pdf](http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/cross-cutting_programs/wid/ortransition.usaid.gov/our.../GATE_Project_Final_Report_11-09.pdf)
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