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# Gender and Rural Development

Aspects, Approaches and Good Practices



Published by:

**giz** Deutsche Gesellschaft  
für Internationale  
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

# Gender and Rural Development

## Background

At least 70% of the world's very poor people live in rural areas in developing countries (IFAD 2011). Their livelihoods usually depend either directly or indirectly on agriculture, with women providing, on average, more than 40% of the agricultural labor force. This female labor ration ranges from approximately 20% in Latin America to up to 50% in Eastern Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa (FAO 2011).

According to traditional patterns of work distribution within households, in most developing countries women are primarily responsible to meet the basic needs of their families. Women mainly produce food for household consumption and local markets, whereas men more often work in agricultural wage labor and cash crop production. Generally, women are responsible for food selection and preparation, and for the care and feeding of the children, and therefore play a key role in defining the coping strategies of poor households to ensure food security and to reduce risk. Women normally spend a higher share of their income than men on providing food, health and education to the family. Additionally, they expend a lot of time and hard work in procuring water and domestic fuel. For instance, in Lesotho women spend more than twice as much time as men and boys in fetching water and gathering firewood.

Alongside the above described responsibility for reproductive tasks, women are also engaged in productive tasks such as agricultural work, raising cattle, seed management, planting, as well as the processing and marketing of agricultural products. In livestock farming, women feed the animals, clean the stalls and compost manure. When raising poultry, sheep, goats or rabbits, they are responsible for breeding and tending to the animals'

health. It is women who cultivate the kitchen gardens, and who sustain the family when harvests are poor. The activities performed by women are often unpaid. War, disease, HIV/AIDS and the migration of male family members to urban areas or foreign countries are forcing more and more women to take on additional roles that were originally performed by men, with many assuming sole responsibility for agricultural production. Given the importance and variety of their tasks, women are important bearers of knowledge related to the sustainable use of natural resources, including strategies for adapting to climate change and conserving agrobiodiversity.

However, in spite of their important and diverse contributions, women in agriculture and rural areas have less access than men to productive resources. Gender inequality is present in many assets, inputs and services: e.g. access to or control over land, financial services, productive resources, and extension or marketing services. For example, men represent 85% of agricultural landholders in Sub-Saharan Africa. In Ghana, Madagascar and Nigeria men own more than twice the units of livestock compared to women. Similar gaps exist in access to fertilizer, mechanical equipment, new technologies, extension services and credit (UNDP 2012). Several studies have shown that gender inequality related to food security is exacerbated during crises: Women tend to become the "shock absorbers" of household food security, e.g. skipping meals, to make more food available for other household members. Moreover, women are often underrepresented in rural organizations and institutions, and are generally poorly informed regarding their rights. This prevents them from having an equal say in decision-making processes, and reduces their ability to participate in collective activities, e.g. as members of agricultural cooperatives or water user associations.



Photo left: Female livestock owner selling hens' eggs and generating income in Ivory Coast.  
Photo right: Female farmer in Nepal carrying her yield.



Photo left: Woman farmer in Niger managing her cooperative's saving box.  
Photo right: Policy makers in Madagascar discuss gender aspects in their national strategies.

Due to the above factors, among others, female farmers produce less than male farmers. This situation imposes costs on the agriculture sector, the broader economy and society, as well as on women themselves. Gender inequalities result in less food being grown, less income being earned, and higher levels of poverty and food insecurity.

Politicians have taken note of these facts and figures. Gender equality is clearly recognized as a human right on an international level. Over the past several years, UN member states have entered into a number of commitments. The Rome Declaration on Food Security, resulting from the FAO World Food Summit in 1996, affirms the obligation to promote the equal rights and duties of men and women regarding food security. The Millennium Development Goals underline the fact that, without gender equality, it will be impossible to reduce by half the number of people who suffer from hunger by 2015. With its Development Policy Action Plan on Gender 2009 - 2012, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) has committed to strengthening the economic empowerment of women and, in particular, to highlighting the need for gender-specific answers to the negative impact of climate change on agriculture.

## Steps to Action and Best Practices

For agricultural growth to reach its potential, gender disparities must be addressed and effectively reduced. FAO (2011) estimates that closing the gender gap in agriculture would generate significant gains for the agricultural sector: If women had the same access to productive resources as men, they could increase yields on their farms by 20–30%. This, in turn, could raise total agricultural output in developing countries by up to 4%, potentially reducing the number of hungry people by 100-150 million.

Promoting gender equality has been a fundamental principle of German development policy for many years. When carrying out rural development measures on behalf of German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ),

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH ensures that impacts on both men and women are investigated as an integral part of results monitoring and evaluations, that the findings are included in relevant reports and, most importantly, used to adjust current practices. The following general measures and steps to action have proven to have a particularly positive impact on gender equality in agriculture and rural development. These measures are explored in more detail in a series of fact sheets on relevant themes, such as rural extension services, access to land, food & nutrition security, value chains, animal production, management of natural resources and fisheries & aquaculture.

## Capacity Development

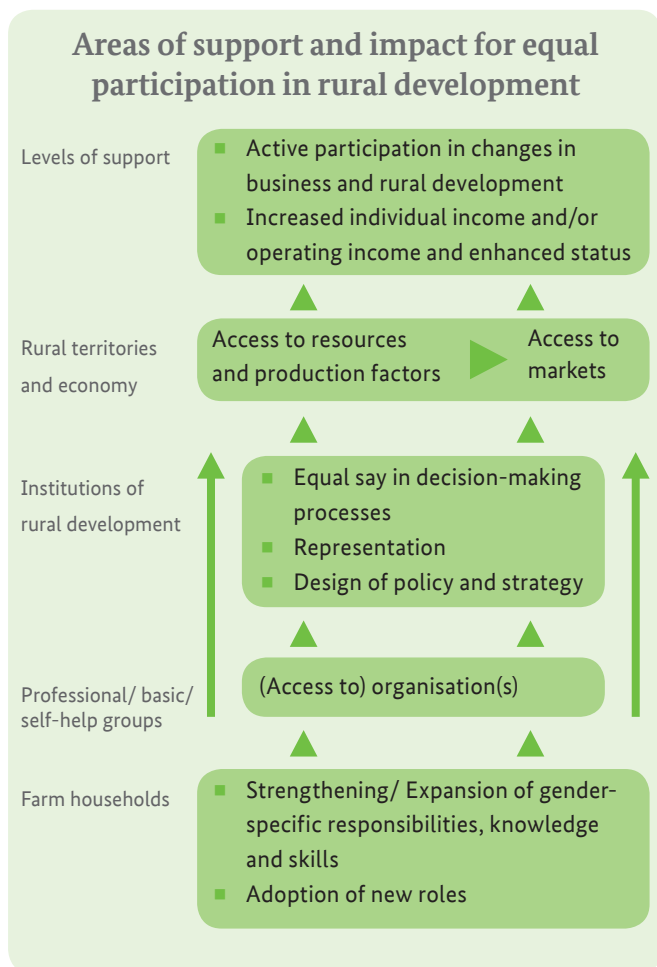
Due to their frequently lower standard of education, women are generally less likely than men to know and understand their statutory rights. On behalf of BMZ, GIZ is therefore actively setting up education and training programs for women in order to ensure that women have the capacities to effectively use agricultural land and means of production. GIZ also supports women to be systematically included into formal education programs on agriculture and rural development (for example, as agricultural extension workers), in order to raise their participation in decision-making bodies. Last but not least, GIZ is setting up and expanding rural women's organizations to help optimize production and distribution (for example, through the joint procurement of new machines or joint marketing of products).

## Policy dialogue and advice

Policy makers and legal draftsmen who intend to improve gender balance must take into consideration the crucial role of women in agricultural and entrepreneurial production and in the reduction of poverty. On behalf of BMZ, GIZ therefore supports developing countries in their efforts to improve the political and institutional frameworks regarding both formal and informal agricultural sector in order for men and women to have an equal share in agricultural development.

## Support participation of women in decision-making processes

Giving women an equal say in decision-making processes in rural development institutions improves their access to resources, factors of production such as land and capital, and to markets. On behalf of BMZ, GIZ therefore offers support for safeguarding and institutionalizing gender balanced representation in all administrative and decision-making bodies involved in agriculture and rural development.



## Create transparency and raise awareness

Openness and transparency regarding gender disparities in agriculture and rural development are needed to enhance the effectiveness of participation by women. GIZ achieves this by raising awareness among the population and targeting specific stakeholders, such as village chiefs. The information channels employed usually go beyond the written media, and include visual presentations and the use of radio. For example, GIZ supports translations of relevant laws and policies into local languages, as well as public announcements.

## Improve available data disaggregated by gender

Only a few countries systematically integrate gender-sensitive information on agriculture and rural development into their national or regional statistics. Therefore, GIZ offers support to carry out gender-sensitive studies and analysis, and to enhance the partner capacity to monitor and evaluate gender-differentiated effects of rural development policies, programs or projects.

## Ensure an equitable access to natural resources and means of production

Women need to be able to use and/or own land and other productive resources in order to secure livelihoods and food security of their families. GIZ therefore undertakes important efforts to improve women's access to financial, technological and extension services, as well as to markets. An example is increasing land registration in the name of women (cf. fact sheet "Gender and Access to Land").

## Introduce time saving technologies

The greater economic engagement and responsibility resulting from new technologies can contribute to strengthening women's independence and control over output. GIZ therefore supports women in using appropriate technologies, thus reducing the time they spend for routine burdens that are common in rural areas (such as gathering firewood or water), and allowing them to engage in more productive tasks. In Benin, for example, more than 30,000 women have already been trained to use gathering, stocking and processing techniques that improve both the quality and quantity of their shea butter harvest, thus improving their income levels by 26%. In a number of countries, the introduction of firewood-saving stoves has not only contributed to protect the remaining forest reserves, but also to spare numerous women hard work and time. In Benin alone, 200,000 households have already profited from this.

## Stumbling Steps and Lessons Learnt

- Capacity development is key
- Improving women's education, i.e. their knowledge of legal matters and their general education can substantially contribute to raising women's access to natural resources and other means of production.



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*Photo left: Indigenous women in Bolivia learn from a rural extensionist about improved agricultural production techniques. Photo right: Female trader in Burkina Faso sitting in front of her cereal stock.*

- An adequate policy and legal framework is necessary  
It is important to include the resource rights of women into the legislative framework. Effective mechanisms of control of power include regulatory guaranties for equal treatment of men and women, a non-discriminatory procedural law, as well as appropriate judicial and non-judicial authorities for appeal. These mechanisms can give the necessary legal security to both men and women, as well as strengthen peaceful processes of conflict arbitration. When integrating traditional and modern law, the gender-discriminating tendencies of autochthonous law must be addressed and balanced taking into consideration the respective social security which traditional laws also offer to women and other disadvantaged groups.

- Technology alone does not make a change  
Not all new technologies save time or empower rural women. In fact, some technologies add to women's burdens by making tasks more demanding (e.g. extra weeding required when fertilizer is used, or the need to process more output). The mere introduction of a new technology alone is not able to simultaneously boost agricultural yields and reduce ingrained gender biases, since relationships between women and men are dynamic and complex. Men often move in and take over when a new technology results in a more profitable crop or when a new processing machine increases income. Policies thus need a gender perspective to ensure that technologies are developed and applied in ways that prevent an automatic takeover of the technology by men.

## Questions to be answered in gender studies

1. To what extent do women own or have access to land, capital, equipment, and other factors of agricultural production?
2. How do policies, programs, and sociocultural norms affect the degree of women's participation in agriculture and rural development?
3. What is the number of female-headed households in rural areas in a specific region or country?
4. What are good examples of women's empowerment in the study area? What attempts to achieve gender equality were failures (e.g. because they were taken over by men or had adverse effects on women)?

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Published by Deutsche Gesellschaft für  
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

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Layout Gitta Bender, bender graphicdesign, Stuttgart

As at February 2013

GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication.

On behalf of Federal Ministry for Economic  
Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

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# Gender and Agricultural Extension

## Background

Women are a key asset in agricultural development worldwide. On average, their labour comprises 43% of the agricultural labour force in developing countries, ranging from about 20% in Latin America to almost 50% in East and South-east Asia and in Sub-Saharan Africa. Some sources even claim that in many African countries up to 80% of the farm labour is done by women (GFRAS 2012). In addition, many farming households in developing countries are female headed, due to male labour migration or loss of husbands to conflicts, HIV/ AIDS, etc. According to the FAO State of Food and Agriculture Report 2011-2012, women could increase yields on their farms by 20–30% if they had the same access to productive resources and training as men. This would raise the total agricultural output in developing countries by 2.5–4%, and consequently reduce the number of malnourished people worldwide by 12–17%. These statistics highlight the obvious: women, in their numerous roles, fundamentally contribute to food security.

Agricultural extension – the provision of information, training and advice in agricultural production – is one way to tackle the hurdles that women face in agricultural production, as these services provide a means for women to learn new or improved production techniques, to receive training and advice, to organise themselves and to improve their access to inputs and markets. This empowerment in turn translates into both higher income

and improved income stability for women, which promotes their standing in the sector and increases overall food security. Agricultural extension always occurs within a specific socio-cultural setting, and as such is subject to the same power dynamics that shape gender relations and often limit women's access to resources and support. Similarly, technologies themselves, which are seldom gender-neutral, may influence power relations. Therefore, consideration of multiple aspects is required to achieve a gender-equitable agricultural extension that empowers women to contribute to agricultural production to their fullest potential. While the problem of gender inequality in agricultural extension was recognised as early as the 1970s, there has as yet not been any concerted and sustained effort to address the issue.

Its potential notwithstanding, there are a number of obstacles that face any attempt to introduce gender-equitable extension in developing contexts. To begin with, it is often difficult for women to attend trainings due to their role and position in society. A heavy workload and childcare responsibilities make it problematic for many women to take time off to join extension-related activities. In addition, in a number of African, Asian and Latin American cultures, women are not allowed to talk to male agricultural extensionists, are prohibited from leaving home alone, or are not permitted to use public transport or drive a motorbike: all prohibitions effectively prevent women from attending trainings in neighbouring villages or work as a female extensionist.



*Photo left: A women owned self-organized shop in Niger provides inputs for agricultural production to its members.*

*Photo right: Female extension worker teaching good agricultural practices to female farmers, Simbabwe.*

## Best Practice

### Siavonga Agricultural Development Project (SADP) and Agricultural Sector Investment Programme (ASSP), Zambia

Gender inequality in the division of labour, in ownership and in decision-making power at the household and village level was evident throughout the project area. Some of the reasons for this inequality were the labour migration of men, poverty, and women's lack of access to resources and agricultural extension. As the public agricultural advisory service was unsuccessful in meeting these challenges, agricultural extensionists were trained within the framework of the project supported by German development cooperation on various measures to empower women. Family seminars on the distribution of seeds and its effects on the protein supply and malnutrition were provided to both men and women. Within these seminars, discussions of changes in gender relations were initiated. Women were taught to articulate their knowledge, experiences and concerns, while men learned to listen. The seminars helped men and women to exchange troubleshooting experiences, and now a greater number of women participate at village meetings. The district administration supported the participatory extension approach, and has now institutionalized it successfully in four districts whose training programs for agricultural workers have been extended.

Compounding this situation is that men, traditionally regarded as the head of the household, are often automatically the recipient of new information. The key question 'Who is the farmer?' is seldom asked, and it is tacitly assumed at trainings that any knowledge men acquire will be passed on to those within the family who actually carry out the task. Unfortunately, the possibility that this information transfer may not necessarily happen, or that crucial information may be lost along the way, is rarely considered. The structure of the extension system itself adds further obstacles. First, the ability of the system to relate to women's issues is limited as the majority of extension workers are male. FAO estimates 85% of all extension workers worldwide are male (FAO, 1993 in FAO SOFA 2011-2012), while some areas exclusively employ male workers. The female extensionists that do exist often face difficulties in their workplace in terms of pay or even acceptance, making the job unattractive for prospective female applicants. Second, the topics covered do not necessarily meet women's needs. According to a FAO survey of extension organizations in 1988/1989 which covered 97 countries, only 5% of all extension resources were directed at women. (The fact

that more recent data on this topic is not available may be seen as an indication that not much effort has yet been directed towards changing the situation). Extension programmes often aim for market integration and the improvement of cash-generating activities, fields that in many contexts are the traditional responsibility of men. Women, as mentioned above, mainly focus on products for home consumption. Third, even the use of Information and Communication Technologies, often hailed for their great potential in both agricultural extension and marketing, can on occasion further cement inherent gender inequality: e.g. when household heads retain control of the mobile phone or when illiterate women are unable to use SMS-services. Last but not least, extensionists themselves – whether public or private – are often not sufficiently aware of or trained in gender-related issues. Their training, usually of a technical nature, has not equipped extensionists with the tools, training methods and approaches necessary to address gender inequity and overcome its negative impact on agricultural productivity.

The Global Forum for Rural Advisories Services (GFRAS) has recognized the importance of gender equality to increase agricultural production, and has set up an international working group – including experts from the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH – to work on a policy concept addressing this issue (GFRAS 2012).

## Best Practice

### Gender and adaptation to climate change in the watersheds of Bolivia

Climate change has different effects on women and men. In the Bolivia watersheds project region, women are usually more dependent on the use of natural resources that are particularly affected by climate change. Around 66% of women in rural areas of Bolivia are classified as "extremely poor", and are thus particularly vulnerable to any damage to their resource base. In order to minimize the negative impacts of climate change on the most vulnerable groups in the project region, an analysis was made of the gender-specific impacts of climate change on production systems and livelihoods supported by GIZ on behalf of BMZ. Then, with women in the lead role, adaptation measures were identified and supported. Women were specifically targeted in the framework of the project, e.g. through implementation of more efficient water use patterns or cultivation of new crops, supported by the installation of simple meteorological stations for precipitation and temperature measurements headed by women.

## Agricultural Input Supply Project (AISP), Zimbabwe

Due to the difficult economic situation in Zimbabwe, AISP was started as an emergency aid program supported by GIZ on behalf of BMZ. AISP is providing agricultural inputs, such as seeds and fertilizers, to vulnerable farmers. Most of these farmers could not afford to buy inputs for their production and - lacking other income possibilities - were food insecure. Sustainable production methods, e.g. conservation agriculture, were promoted and the public agricultural extension service was strengthened. Within the project region, up to 68% of all households are led by women. After the collapse of the economy, many men migrated to find jobs in other sectors.

Also, many women are HIV/AIDS widows. Consequently, project activities and extension services focused on female farmers as a main target group. The majority of the extension workers are women: via a group approach using a training and visit concept, extension services were implemented. Productivity, harvesting methods, and the harvest of grain and vegetables were enhanced. By the end of the project around 56% of the female-headed households who took part produced more than needed for self-sufficiency, and thus gained additional income. Due to sustainable production methods, food security was enhanced and production risks were reduced. All farmers, but particularly female farmers, further strengthened their income and overall situation with participation in community activities, e.g. saving clubs.

## Steps to Action and Best Practices

Promoting gender equality has been a fundamental principle of German development policy for many years. The following steps to action and best practices from concerned projects - implemented by GIZ on behalf of German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) - have proven to be successful approaches and helpful starting points to increase women's access to agricultural extension services.

### Include gender aspects on different levels

Support to the development of gender-sensitive approaches and the inclusion of gender aspects on different levels include:

- Strengthening the participation of women in political bodies by providing training or education; and by promoting the employment of women candidates for government positions at regional, national and ministry level, particularly in the public agricultural extension services and in the Ministry of Agriculture.
- Providing financial and advisory support to female representatives from farmer groups or associations to participate in policy formulation and in administrative decision-making bodies, to enable women to raise their concerns as well as sensitize and influence policy-makers to their needs.
- Working on gender-related issues with entire rural communities, rather than addressing only the women. A particular focus is awareness-raising for men on the potential benefits of gender equality for agricultural productivity.

### Develop gender-sensitive approaches in extension

On behalf of BMZ, GIZ assists the development of gender-balanced extension services through the following activities:

- Assisting and supporting public and private extension services to improve the quality of their services and adapt them to women's needs: e.g. introducing gender-sensitive extension approaches; considering women's time-constraints in the planning of trainings; providing training content that is relevant to women; introducing gender-disaggregated indicators to monitor extension-impact; sensitising extension agents to gender-related issues; and promoting the employment of women in agricultural extension services.
- Implementing activities that raise men's awareness of their own position of power and the negative impact of gender inequality on agricultural production.
- Providing advice on family and inheritance law as a prerequisite for the protection of land use rights of women.

## Stumbling Steps and Lessons Learned

- Anchoring gender issues in policies and programmes of governments, agricultural ministries, agricultural extension services and NGOs is a necessary prerequisite to overcome gender inequality in agricultural production.
- Strategic partnerships between women's organizations and government institutions help to improve women's land and resource access rights.
- Working with entire rural communities (i.e. not only women) and raising men's awareness of the benefits of gender-equality for agricultural production helps to overcome resistance to the social change that a gender-equitable extension might entail.
- Via provision of professional training on gender issues, extensionists can become models for gender-sensitive and participatory communication within farming communities.
- Female extension workers are often in a better position to help female smallholder farmers adapt/adopt innovations.





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*Photo left: Agricultural extension in Ivory Coast.  
 Photo right: Afghan women discussing good stable conditions for livestock.*

Incentives can help motivate women to work as agricultural extensionists. Current extension workers can be models for career plans of young girls.

- Supporting internships for female students from agricultural colleges in extension offices and agricultural departments have proven a successful way to increase the number of women extensionists.
- There is a need to implement extension approaches and tools that consider the specific interests and opportunities of female household heads and spouses.
- There is also a need to enhance the access of women to information on land rights, agricultural inputs and resources such as credits and financial services. Gender-equitable extension services provide the means to do so.
- Care should be taken to not reinforce gender stereotypes and household roles. Men are not necessarily the predominant gender involved in cash crops, for instance, as a great variability in control and co-operation is often found. Any effort to make extension services more gender-equitable should therefore be tailored to its specific socio-cultural setting.

3. How can agricultural extension be used to promote the political participation of women in rural decision-making bodies and female-farmer organizations?
4. How can gender, an important cross-cutting issue, become a conceptual and programmatic element of agricultural advisory authorities?
5. To what extent does the content of the extension activities address the specific situation and needs of women?
6. What are possible options to deploy more female extension workers and to qualify them for managerial functions?
7. Women are confronted with barriers in the application of new knowledge, e.g. when the unavailability of land rights for women makes it risky for them to invest manpower and resources in land-improvement measures. How can these obstacles be overcome through agricultural extension?
8. How can men's awareness of the benefits of gender equality for agricultural production be raised?

## Questions to be answered in gender studies

1. To what extent do household structures and (gender) hierarchies in marriages, families and villages influence women's access to agricultural extension, as well as opportunities to implement any new knowledge and innovations?
2. How can the gender expertise and gender sensitivity of agricultural extension workers be strengthened?

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Published by Deutsche Gesellschaft für  
 Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

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Layout Gitta Bender, bender graphicdesign, Stuttgart

As at September 2013

GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication.

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# Gender and Access to Land

## Background

Women worldwide need to use and/or own land and other productive resources in order to secure livelihoods and food security for their families. However, women have access to only about 20% of all land worldwide, with their allotments generally of smaller size and lower quality. This inequality is particularly severe in Western, Central and North Africa and throughout the Middle East where on average less than 10% of landholders are women. In Eastern and Southern Africa, up to 30% of individual land titles are held by women. Only in a few countries is land somewhat equally divided between gender, such as in Latvia and Lithuania where women hold more than 45% of all land titles (FAO 2010).

Even if a legal system foresees equal access to land, women can face severe difficulties in realizing their de jure land rights, in part due to their lack of awareness. In some countries the legal system, in particular inheritance and divorce laws, give women fewer rights to land as compared to men. Land titles are often only registered in the name of a male head of household, even if the wife has brought the land into the family or has purchased it from her income. In many places, women experience difficulties in jointly registering land with their husbands.

Customary systems govern the access to and the use of large sections of unregistered land in developing countries. Under such systems, rights to access and use are assigned by the user group's traditional authorities without any written documentation. Customary systems tend not to grant gender equality in access to land. Women are often restricted to so-called secondary land rights, i.e. they hold these rights through male family members, and thus risk losing the land in case of divorce, widowhood or their husband's migration. According to customary practices of several ethnic groups in West Africa (e.g. Burkina Faso, Benin), widows are obliged to marry their deceased husband's brother

in order to stay in the family compound and maintain their land use rights. This practice, which at first glance seems discriminatory, represents a safety net that protects widows from extreme poverty. To provide their families with food and shelter, women living in customary land tenure systems rely heavily on alternative resource use rights, such as the right to fetch water and to gather firewood, fruits and medicinal plants. These are often the only rights granted to unmarried mothers or divorced women. Secondary land rights and alternative resource use rights are usually lost when states introduce modern land registers. Women also risk being disadvantaged in land conflicts. For cultural or religious reasons, wives cannot challenge the authority of their husbands. Also, according to customary law, many females are not allowed to lay claims or defend themselves in court, but must instead be represented by a male.

The commercialization of agriculture risks excluding women further. Customary land is often classified, according to statutory law, as state land, which is then frequently subject to contract negotiations between investors and governments. Traditional land use rights tend to be ignored in these negotiations. This legal pluralism affects women most, as both secondary land rights and alternative resource use rights are the first to be discontinued if a concession is granted to an investor.

## Steps to Action and Best Practices

Promoting gender equality has been a fundamental principle of German development policy for many years. The following steps to action and best practices from concerned projects - implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) - have proven to be successful approaches and helpful starting points to increase women's access to land.



*Photo left: Female farmers in India organizing themselves to claim their land rights. Photo right: Farmers on the Philippine island of Negros are prevented to access their acquired land.*

## Develop gender-sensitive land related policies and laws

While fully recognized at international level, women's rights to land, property and housing are often not included in national policy and legislative frameworks. This relates to inheritance and marriage laws, as well as land policy and laws. In order to ensure equal access, any land policy needs to be based on the principle of gender equality and have clear objectives towards equal access to land.

On behalf of BMZ, GIZ assists the development of gender-balanced land policies and laws through the following activities:

- Provides financial and advisory support to women's representatives to participate in policy formulation, and in administrative and decision-making bodies involved in land matters. In countries where culture does not allow to women to speak openly in front of men, women are enabled to express themselves separately from men in consultation processes.

### Best Practice

#### Support to land reform, Namibia

The Namibian Government, supported by GIZ on behalf of BMZ, has actively promoted the reform of the statutory and customary laws which have impeded women's ability to exercise their land rights. GIZ has actively addressed gender equality through influential persons with access to high-level government representatives and politicians, such as a female Undersecretary. As a result, equal rights to land have been granted to both men and women in communal areas. The Communal Land Reform Act No. 5 (2002) protects wives, and gives them the right to apply for land registration in their names. To effectively manage land in the communal areas, the Namibian Government established Communal Land Boards which approve the registration of customary land rights granted by traditional authorities. At least two women are on each Communal Land Board, in addition to representatives from ministries and other important stakeholders: this has led to effective protection from forced evictions and arbitrary decisions from traditional authorities, as well as to improved access to land for women. Consequently, more than 40% of all land use certificates in Namibia have been issued to women, an outstanding rate compared to other African countries.

### Best Practice

#### Systematic land registration, Cambodia

In Cambodia, through a project supported by German development cooperation, more than 2.4 million land titles have been surveyed and registered. The respective certificates have been distributed to more than 600,000 households. Gender equality has been actively addressed while advising the Cambodian Government. As a result, more than 60% of the land titles are jointly issued to husband and wife, 19% exclusively to women, 8% exclusively to men, and the remaining 10% to companies, associations and public land. The systematic land registration process includes a public display of the results, as well as a complaint handling system supported by mediators, the so-called Mobile Teams. The pace of land registration is considerable, with an average of 1000 new titles issued daily. In areas where systematic land registration has taken place, there have been excellent effects on land tenure security. However, in-depth analyses have shown that 25% of women headed households are registered together with their missing husband, thus excluding them, for example, from transactions since both registered parties have to sign.

- Offers financial and advisory support to governments to implement international commitments which embrace gender equality as one of the main guiding principles of implementation, such as the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security, endorsed by the Committee on World Food Security in May 2012.
- Conducts research on potential consequences of proposed privatization or investment policies regarding women's access to land, and distributes the findings widely via varied communication channels.
- Provides financial support and expertise to governments and research institutions to gather gender-disaggregated data and to produce and disseminate statistics on land tenure.
- Analyzes the effects of current legislations regarding land, marriage and inheritance on women's access to land and forwards the results as input for advisory services to governments.
- Develops the capacities of institutions responsible for land administration and management, and raises awareness regarding existing laws and policies, as well as gender equality in access to land. This is extended to all relevant stake holders though adequate human capacity development measures: e.g. training, study tours, conferences, leadership development, etc.

- Creates support mechanisms that assist women who claim their legal rights to land: e.g. by supporting adequate NGOs or by training trainers to support women's organizations within communities.

## Respect women's land rights during land registration processes

Land rights of women in developing countries, in particular divorcees, widows and female heads of household, need special protection when land rights are registered and formalized.

On behalf of BMZ, GIZ contributes in the following ways to safeguarding women's resource rights during land registration processes:

- Examines if legislation allows the registration of land rights in the name of women, and advises on a revision of law in case of a negative ruling.
- Ensures that the names of the wives or partners of the male heads of household are added to all legal documents stipulating land rights, and makes this a precondition for further support.
- During land right documentation processes, advocates for women's entire land rights (incl. informal ones, secondary ones) to be identified a priori and only expropriated when absolutely necessary. If land seizure is unavoidable, supports the development of compensation processes, so that affected women have access to alternative land parcels, or receive appropriate material compensation.
- Supports governments to create incentives to realize existing legal possibilities to transfer land rights to women. For example, in 2006 the Nepalese Government introduced a 10% tax exemption for any land registered in a woman's name. This tax break has been subsequently increased to 25% in cities and 30% in rural areas. As a result, land transfers to women have tripled.

## Change attitudes by creating transparency and awareness

Often, gender disparities are linked to the idea that land given to women is "lost to another family" in case of marriage or divorce, or that women are unable to manage land effectively. (This lack of trust in women's capacities is, in fact, a problem that exists in all cultures, western industrialized countries included). Thus, to challenge these attitudes, openness and courageous approaches are needed to enhance the effectiveness of women's participation in land matters.

GIZ supports openness and transparency on land matters through the following:

- Contributes actively to breaking with existing discriminatory practices by constant awareness raising activities.
- Translates laws concerning land issues into local languages and disseminates them widely.
- Supports public announcements, e.g. when public land is foreseen to be transferred into private hands. Appropriate information channels should go beyond the written media and include visual presentation and the use of radio.

### Best Practice

#### Improved land access for women, Northern Mali

In Northern Mali, rice production per hectare has almost quadrupled thanks to the realization of more than 300 irrigation parameters, half of which were achieved via the involvement of women. Now women exclusively own five irrigation fields, and 2800 women have access to a rice field.

A pilot programme supported by German development cooperation has led to a clear attitudinal change regarding gender equality, by their supporting women in gaining access to land, even when contrary to customary practices. Constant awareness raising was crucial to the process. The impacts observed include:

1. Ownership patterns have changed: Women headed households have gained ownership rights to land, animals or means of production (seeds, fertilizer).
2. Division of labor has changed: Instead of pursuing only traditional tasks (e.g. gather field products), women are now allowed to work in rice fields, similar to men.
3. Solidarity amongst women has grown: Women have initiated joint field work, and have started to organize saving groups.
4. Women's social standing has grown: Women have gained influence within the community. They participate actively in decisions regarding the irrigation parameters and have advanced to selling rice in the market. Widows, who did not previously have income generating possibilities, are now better off and have improved their chances to remarry.



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*Photo left: As part of the process to verify land parcels, female staff of the Namibian Ministry of Lands and Resettlement discusses an aerial image with two farmers. Photo right: Namibian farmer presents her communal land right certificate.*

## Stumbling Steps and Lessons Learnt

- At the international level, the full recognition of women's rights to land, property and housing must be stressed whenever possible. Policy dialogues with partner government representatives should therefore systematically mention international commitments made, such as the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security.
- Women's participation in all relevant decision-making bodies is crucial in developing approaches that "make a difference" and that are adapted to local circumstances. There is no "one-solution-fits-all" to assist women in realizing their land rights.
- Even if a legislative framework theoretically allows women to manage and own land, cultural norms can hinder them to realize those rights. Creative incentives for men to change behavior are needed. Development cooperation should dare to pilot unusual approaches to allow women to prove their capacities in land management. Discriminatory cultural norms can initially be addressed by working with women separately from men, especially if culture prohibits women to speak in the presence of men. But women then need to be empowered to themselves express their needs and concerns. Development cooperation can, as a guest institution distanced from cultural norms, carefully enable such.
- When integrating customary and statutory law, the social security which customary law offers to women and other disadvantaged groups must be retained while dealing with the gender-discriminating tendencies.

## Questions to be answered in gender studies

- Policy and legal framework and its implementation
  1. How does the policy and legal framework ensure equal access to land for women and men? Include inheritance and marriage laws and others, if relevant.
  2. How have women realized their de jure rights to land? Include figures / statistics, if possible.
- Attitudes and cultural norms
  3. What factors (cultural / behavioral norms, legal gaps, etc.) hinder women's access to land?
- Women's participation in land matters
  4. How many female representatives do the relevant bodies that regulate land management have? List them. Which educational levels have they obtained? In what way do they actively participate / influence decisions?

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Published by Deutsche Gesellschaft für  
 Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

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Layout Gitta Bender, bender graphicdesign, Stuttgart

As at February 2013

GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication.

On behalf of Federal Ministry for Economic  
 Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

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# Gender and Food & Nutrition Security

## Background

Almost 870 million people are suffering from hunger worldwide. In many parts of the world, more women are affected by hunger than men, particularly following natural disasters. Women are often economically and socially disadvantaged: many household and community decisions are still made by men, frequently to the detriment of women.

Female workers play an important role in agriculture and thus in food production. They average 43% of the agricultural labour force in developing countries, ranging from about 20% in Latin America to almost 50% in Eastern and South-eastern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa (FAO 2012). Male out-migration in search of work is increasing numbers of female farm managers. But while the number of women in agriculture is on the rise, they still face many disadvantages. Women often have limited or no access to land. Males are favoured, both in quantity and quality, in land allocation, with women only gaining access to land through a male relative or after the husband's death. Moreover, women's access to financial services is limited, and they face inequities regarding access to livestock, inputs such as seeds and fertilizers, technology, market information, knowledge, skills and advisory services. Female illiteracy further aggravates the situation (FAO 2011). It is estimated that yields on their farms could increase by 20–30%, and thus reduce the number of people facing hunger worldwide up to 17%, if women had the equitable access to productive resources (FAO 2011). Improving women's agricultural production is therefore smart economics.

Alongside food production and processing, women are also responsible to feed their families. If self-produced food is low

in volume or diversity, women must find the financial means to buy market food. Yet many women in developing countries lack control over the household income, as well as income generation possibilities. Some women do not even receive their own generated income, as per cultural norms it is paid to their husbands. In turn, men are less likely to spend money for the benefit of the entire household, and prefer non-food items. There is a clear need to create awareness among men regarding the benefits of an adequate diet for the whole family. An increase in women's control over household income usually has a positive impact on dietary diversity, thus benefiting children's health, nutrition and education, and consequently food and nutrition security. Women also tend to save more of generated income, and thus improve the household's food security in times of natural disasters, such as drought. Intra-household food allocation can be another limiting factor: even though a household may have enough food, girls and women may still suffer from malnutrition.

The multiple roles of women are challenging in terms of time allocation. Agricultural activities increase women's workload and thus decrease the time left to care for their children. As a consequence, many children drop out of school in order to look after their younger siblings. Climate change and the progressive degradation of natural resources also increase the burden of women while further threatening food security. When extra household tasks are too great, e.g. caring for sick relatives, women do not have enough time for food production or income generation. This is particularly evident in societies affected by HIV/AIDS.

Women are key to breaking the vicious circle of generational malnutrition. Children born to malnourished mothers often are underweight and face a 20% increased risk of dying before the



Photo left: Ethiopian woman processing grain.  
Photo right: Women in Burkina Faso buying cereals.

age of five (UNICEF 2007). The health and nutrition of mothers directly influence the well-being of their children. The “window of opportunity”, i.e. the period from the start of a woman’s pregnancy until the second birthday of the child, is crucial. An insufficient supply of nutrients during a child’s first 1000 days can bring about lifelong repercussions, such as chronic health problems, cognitive and physical deficits, or impaired immune functions. However, women’s ability to give birth to well-nourished babies and to adequately feed and care for their children is often undermined by their own poor nutritional status, low education, and low social status. Also, many women lack access to sexual and reproductive health services.

## Steps to Action and Best Practices

Promoting gender equality has been a fundamental principle of German development policy for many years. The following steps to action and best practices from concerned projects - implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) - have been proven as successful approaches and helpful starting points to increase the food and nutrition security of households.

## Policy advice

- Carry out, at all levels, policy dialogue and advice regarding gender-specific issues contributing to increased food security. Relevant topics include reform processes, land rights, finance, and equal voice opportunity for women in professional and rural organizations. The participation of female household heads and married women in local councils is of particular importance.
- Support gender-mainstreaming approaches, as well as better coordination between sectors such as agriculture, health and education, at national and regional level.

## Access to and control over resources

- Support equal access to land, in both quality and quantity. The distribution of land titles and certificates should be gender equitable. This also applies to other natural resources required for food production, such as equal access to irrigation water and pasture land. Women’s participation in community institutions also needs to be increased.
- Support equal access to capital. Women and other underprivileged groups should have access to income, credits and financial advisory services. Their rights regarding (re-)investments and control over income need to be strengthened.

### Best Practice

#### Sustainable land management, Ethiopia

In the Ethiopian highlands of Amhara, Oromia and Tigray more than 50 % of the population – approximately 20 million people – live under the constantly rising threat of food insecurity. On behalf of BMZ, GIZ works to strengthen the competences, resources and capacity development of the Ministry of Agriculture, its decentralized structures and of small-scale farmers, both male and female. Approaches further develop and apply national gender-mainstreaming strategies relating directly to rural development, in cooperation with local agricultural authorities. Small-scale farm households - one fifth of them female headed - receive advice and support regarding sustainable land management.

To date, 77,000 hectares of land have been rehabilitated and a further 79,000 hectares of forest are being maintained by participatory forest management principles. Innovative and locally adapted cultivation techniques and erosion control contribute to increased crop and livestock

productivity for both male and female farmers, and increase the resilience of rural households to the effects of climate change. Women in particular benefit from the project, gaining better access to advisory services, information and skills.

Female and gender-sensitive male advisors are key. The Ministry of Agriculture supports the access of women to innovative techniques and promotes their participation in watershed user groups. Due to cultural norms and traditions, women are often marginalised from community organisations and cannot advocate for their interests. The National Women’s Office supports the establishment of women’s groups and the representation of women at community level. Women’s groups serve as dialogue platforms for their development priorities, which include the promotion of animal husbandry or fruit/vegetable production, with surplus creating additional income.

Particularly innovative is the linkage of sustainable land management methods with HIV/AIDS-education and family planning, which further reduces the pressure on natural resources and increases food security.

- Support equal access to agricultural inputs and advisory services for livestock and crop production. Advisory guidance should accompany agricultural inputs such as seeds, fertilizer, pesticides and veterinary medicine in order to achieve good results and increase food production. Advisory services need to take into account financial and intellectual capacity, as well as time availability of clients, and focus on both men and women and their specific demands and tasks. It has proven successful to initially start with gender-separated trainings, facilitating more open discussions.

## Capacity Development

- Apply participatory methods in all phases of project planning and implementation.
- Sensitise partner institutions and project personnel regarding gender-specific operating principles, together with recruitment, training and promotion of local female specialists in long-term and short-term positions in GIZ projects.
- Support women's presence in advisory services, as well as gender-sensitive training, thus strengthening and cross-linking different institutions and stakeholders regarding gender issues.

## Monitoring and Evaluation Systems

- Promote the systematic integration of gender-disaggregated data in monitoring and evaluation systems. Project activities should aim to benefit men and women equally.

## Stumbling Steps and Lessons Learnt

- Measures of sustainable land management must systematically address gender inequalities in access to and control over resources, and specifically promote women. Gender must be considered during all project phases and in policy dialogues with partner governments. Gender mainstreaming is a quality criterion which positively impacts all aspects of a project. Points of reference are the Millennium Development Goals, international gender policy guidelines, and international agreements on women's rights and gender justice.
- Development projects can support the development of national gender strategies and action plans, but agricultural and government authorities are responsible for implementation. Gender competence is strengthened through targeted advice and tailor-made gender training on national, provincial and district levels.
- Men in leadership positions, as all employees, should take part in gender trainings. As women's offices often have limited resources, support from government service providers is essential. A concrete definition of gender across sectors facilitates institutional awareness.

## Best Practice

### Restoration of local economic cycles and conflict transformation, Fizi region, DR Congo

Armed conflicts between economic competitors, ethnic groups and rival militias have profoundly destabilised the Fizi region in DR Congo. Hundreds of thousands of people have been internally displaced.

A project supported by German development cooperation aims to restore local economic cycles and basic services while creating sustainable conditions for securing livelihoods and food. A special focus lies on women, as they bear the main burden of work in the home and in the fields. They are also frequently the victims of sexual violence, particularly at risk when working in the remote fields. The project promotes women's organisational and management skills in civil society groups to strengthen their role and self-confidence within their families and local decision-making structures. The male village population and local authorities are also being sensitised to improving the division of labour within the family, thus giving women better protection and opportunity to earn their own income. Local services have been reactivated and advise farming families on modern cultivation. Excess field produce can be sold at local markets, providing the women and families with additional income. Simple hand-built earth roads now link previously isolated mountain areas with the markets on the shores of Lake Tanganyika. Village committees, supported or newly founded by the project, arbitrate in cases of conflict (usually over land rights) or pass on more difficult cases to the judiciary. Together with traditional authorities and in cooperation with judges and lawyers, traditional law is being revised and aligned with national law.

- Gender approaches for food and nutrition security can be usefully linked with health programs, reproductive and family planning services, and HIV/AIDS prevention. Coordination and capacity development of the multi-sectoral stakeholders should be applied at all levels.
- The participation of women in decision-making bodies contributes to sustainable development. Local committees are ideally composed of men and women of different status and position within households, when culturally feasible. Household and family tasks of women should be considered when scheduling meetings.





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*Photo left: Female farmers cultivating rice in South Asia.  
Photo right: Nepalese fruit seller behind her market stall.*

- Female small scale farmers are not a homogeneous group. Differences in marital status, age, ethnicity, social status, etc. need to be continually considered.
- Providing women with better cultivation techniques and agricultural inputs is not enough. Additional focus on marketing support, training in nutrition, and the organisation and mobilisation of women in producer groups for better input supply, marketing, saving and investment have all proven to sustainably increase food and nutrition security of households, even in times of conflict or following a natural disaster.
- An increase of production and income for women promotes their social status in household and society, reduces domestic gender-based violence, and improves the food security, nutrition and hygiene of the family. Increased food production also leads to more bartering and sharing of food between affected households.
- Male gender awareness is required to slowly change gender roles and decrease women's workloads by a sharing of domestic duties.
- Access to safe drinking water is essential. It reduces women's workload, improves the health of the family, and overall increases food security.

3. How do policies and programs work together and coordinate across sectors, e.g. include women's access to reproductive health services, family planning and nutrition education? How do projects create awareness among male household heads?
4. To what extent are women organised and mobilised, e.g. in producer groups or saving groups? To what extent do they have access to and participate in local decision-making bodies?

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## Questions to be answered in gender studies

1. To what extent do women have access to land, capital, equipment, inputs, advisory services and formal education?
2. How do sociocultural and behavioral norms affect women's decisive power and role within the household and thereby compromise their ability to secure adequate nutrition for the whole family?

Published by Deutsche Gesellschaft für  
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

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Layout Gitta Bender, bender graphicdesign, Stuttgart

As at February 2013

GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication.

On behalf of Federal Ministry for Economic  
Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

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# Gender and Fisheries & Aquaculture

## Background

Women are crucial to the fisheries and aquaculture sector. Worldwide, fishery and aquaculture production activities provide revenues to an estimated 155 million people, of whom a substantial proportion is female. In developing countries most fishing activities fall into the small scale fisheries sector employing roughly 37 million people, and directly affecting the livelihood, poverty prevention and alleviation, and food security of approximately 357 million others. Gender analysis in fishing communities is still in its infancy, and is mostly limited to the different occupational roles according to gender. The belief that men do the actual fishing, with women more involved in post-harvest and marketing activities, remains prevalent across most cultural, social, political and economic strata. Global average figures, which support this perception, mask the real importance of women at country level. In the world's two major fish producing countries, China and India, women represent respectively 21% and 24% of all fishers and fish farmers (FAO 2012).

Women make up at least half of the inland fisheries' workforce, with 60% and 80% of seafood marketed by women in Asia and West Africa (FAO 2012). Women in West Africa, Cambodia and Thailand often own and manage fishing boats and may even have their own fishing gear. In Ghana, income from fisher's wives is vital for supporting the entire fishing industry, as they invest in canoes and other gear and give out loans to husbands and other fishers. Fisherwomen in the Congo, Cambodia, Thailand, the Philippines, and most of the South Pacific islands, contradict the perceived role of females as gleaners only.

Women have also assumed a leading role in the rapid growth of aquaculture (fish, shrimps, mussel, seaweed, crab fattening), with their participation along the aquaculture value chains (production, transforming, marketing) higher than in capture fisheries.

Aquaculture is promoted as a development strategy, as it enables poor women to operate low technology and low input systems that are an extension of their domestic tasks, allowing them to integrate aquaculture activities with household and childcare chores. Entry into aquaculture appears to have fewer gender barriers, as this sector developed outside cultural traditions. Bangladeshi women make up about 60% of fish farmers, and many are successful entrepreneurs (FAO). In Sri Lanka, 30% of those engaged in the production and breeding of ornamental fish are women (FAO 2012).

Compared to other sectors, women and gender issues have been missing from key global normative fisheries and aquaculture policies. There have been, however, some promising turning points that highlight the way gender policy aids resilience in fishing communities. These include the 2003 European Commission funded IDDRA UK Cotonou workshop on 'Room to maneuver: Gender and coping strategies in the fisheries sector'; the FAO 2007 Gender Policies for Responsible Fisheries; and the May 2012 Zero Draft on International Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries, which particularly addresses gender equity and equality.

## Steps to Action and Best Practices

Promoting gender equality has been a fundamental principle of German development policy for many years. The following steps to action and best practices from concerned projects - implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) - have been proven essential to acknowledge and enhance women's participation in the fisheries and aquaculture sector.



Photo left: Indonesian woman processing fish.  
Photo right: Women drying fish on racks for local consumption in Indonesia.

## Best Practice

### Gender mainstreaming in small-scale fisheries, the Philippines

The livelihood of 700,000 people in the Philippines is associated with the small-scale fisheries sector that supplies about 1.35 million metric tons of fish annually. Women compose 60% of the sector which has high poverty levels due to depleted fishing waters. On behalf of BMZ, the GIZ Coastal Fisheries Resource Management (CFRM) project, in cooperation with local government units, assists coastal communities to reverse trends of coastal habitat degradation, breeding ground destruction, and overexploitation of fishing grounds. Gender equality is a cross-cutting, integral and complementary feature of the project, adding to the overall wealth in national gender-responsive policies and legislation. Training activities with over 50% female attendance, as well as discussions with fishery associations on gender equality, have contributed to the placement of proactive female executive secretaries on half of the inter-local alliances for unified and sustainable resource management. Gender-equality initiatives are reflected in the CFRM products and images with gender-sensitive advocacy materials (comics in local language), enforcing the message that women of different backgrounds and ages can be strategic partners in coastal resource management. These activities contribute towards the program aim to further strengthen the traditionally existing strong role of women in decision-making, particularly in coastal management. These activities include coastal resource assessments, establishment of regulatory and financial framework, marine protected areas, and capacity development of Fisheries and Aquatic Resource Management Councils, fish wardens and counterpart staff.

## Mainstream gender in fisheries and aquaculture

Mainstreaming gender provides women a chance to resume their position in society, and to recognize and avail opportunities to generate wealth: thus, it is also a crucial component in alleviating poverty, achieving greater food and nutrition security, and enabling good governance and sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture resources. Political will and the development of capacity to put mainstreaming into practice at all steps of the process is essential to achieve responsible fisheries and aquaculture practices, and thus to ensure sustainable resource governance and livelihood of people. The following activities are considered key:

- Conduct gender-specific analysis and apply mainstream results in plans, budgets, and M&E. Mechanisms to distribute comprehensive and accurate sex-disaggregated and gender-sensitive data for fisheries and aquaculture enables targeted gender-responsive objectives and indicators at policy level.
- Generate and analyze project data for all gender aspects (livelihood factors, relationships, actions and results) to ensure that gender-specific disadvantages, gender equality and the promotion of women's participation are addressed in project impacts.
- Build gender considerations into new institutional responses and policies regarding climate change, resource depletion, aquaculture development and global trade. Issues to be considered include responsible governance of tenure, equitable resource access and rights, access to markets, benefits from aquaculture and codes of conduct for the industry.

## Best Practice

### Women as decision-makers in biodiversity, Bangladesh

Extensive wetlands in Bangladesh that form during the monsoon season are of major economic significance for agriculture and fisheries. Integrated resource management is needed to safeguard and restore biodiversity and to ensure the livelihoods of the people.

In cooperation with the Department of Fisheries, the Bangladesh Water Development Board and local NGOs, German development cooperation promotes and implements an integrated, cross-sector (rural development including primary sectors, water and resource management, biodiversity restoration and conservation) mainstreaming of safeguarding biodiversity through participatory planning processes in the context of community-based co-management. This approach has empowered women to take part in training, and the recruitment of women to participate in the local Biodiversity Management Organisation (30% women, female vice-president). Women, as part of the community's decision-making process, ensure that their husbands respect closed fishing seasons. Thus wetland biodiversity increases and fish stocks can recover, helping to improve the livelihood of poor, wetland people. The rapid gain in influence and power for women has had positive effects beyond the resource management, extending to the social and family levels. It has also cleared the way to improved income for women, who can now better support their families.

## Include women in the decision-making process

Sustainable fisheries and aquaculture and their economic development can only be attained when all user groups and stakeholders are included in decision-making. To this end, on behalf of BMZ, GIZ implements the following:

- Promote and adopt participatory, community-oriented fisheries resource management, rehabilitation and conservation planning, while ensuring active engagement of all stakeholders in the analysis, implementation and monitoring of all fisheries related activities
- Recruit women into project activities, thus showcasing the benefits when women have active and equal roles in community-based fisheries management.
- Include holistic fisheries and resource utilization analysis of fisheries activities and requirements for women and other marginal community groups in management planning.
- Tailor fisheries and aquaculture training to women's needs and availability in order to support their professional engagement in entrepreneurial, administrative, organizational and legislative responsibilities.

## Ensure women's rights to equal control over and access to the fish value chain

Due to central gender differences in power positions, women generally have less control over the fish value chain, their activities are less profitable, they have less access to resources and their fish are of poorer quality. Women tend to be excluded from the most profitable markets and enterprises, as well as highly paid posts in fish-processing factories, even though they make up the majority of workers in the post-harvest sector. Dwindling resources and markets often prompt migration and mobility, and the sex-for-fish phenomena, particularly known in parts of Sub-Saharan Africa, are associated with high HIV/AIDS rates. In Patagonia, the majority of women in fish processing plants have unofficial jobs, and therefore no medical or social coverage. Indian women employed by the seafood export industry are paid less than men, are longer absent from home and have more difficulties fulfilling their domestic and family responsibilities.

Women lose the most from an increasingly globalized market, and are vulnerable to poor services and catch declines. In many societies the fishing income of men is theirs to spend as they wish, while the income of women from fishing supports the household. Thus, women have real economic incentives to innovate, and have great potential as 'active agents of change'.

### Best Practice

## Women empowered in value chain decision-making, Burkina Faso

The 2100 artificial lakes of Burkina Faso produce 8500 tonnes of fish annually and secure the livelihood of 50,000 to 60,000 people. Women do not fish, but have an integral role in the value chain as they buy (if not provided by their fishing husbands), smoke and market fish. The GIZ project 'Management of Fisheries in the Southwest of Burkina Faso' developed and introduced participatory management approaches, and included all stakeholders and members of fishing communities concerned to develop and establish culture-based fisheries for small water bodies. The overall objective was to ensure responsible and sustainable fishery.

Due to the participatory process, women became empowered to take part in the decision-making process, and also became more socially and economically integrated. Project activities furthered fish production, increasing the amount of fish available to women to produce and market value-added products (smoked, fried, dried). With improved access to informal credit schemes and more efficient fish smoking ovens, the increased entrepreneurial success for women improved their family income. Project results have been transferrable to other dam lake areas, thus promoting more women as successful entrepreneurs.

The project contributions were multiple: increasing annual income of fishers by increasing stocks and fish productivity, protection of biodiversity, food security and poverty alleviation.

Thus, GIZ supports project activities that:

- Support women in conflict situations to ensure that their rights and access are respected in their couple relationships, in the community, as well as by all authorities concerned.
- Develop and render more resilient the existing positions of women in the fish value chain by providing small informal credit schemes and training in new technology, processing and marketing.
- Create awareness and promote non-discriminatory employment positions, allocating equal social and financial benefits to women in the fisheries sector.



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*Photo left: Man and woman collecting shrimp fry in the Sundarbans in Bangladesh.  
 Photo right: Bangladeshi women and few men repairing a freshwater pond.*

## Stumbling Steps and Lessons Learnt

- A focus on gender in all steps of the project cycle needs to be institutionalized to ensure the adoption and sustainability of planned impacts, and to line up project activities with country policies and legislation.
- The need for gender-disaggregated data in the fisheries and aquaculture sector cannot be sufficiently stressed. Quantitative and qualitative data is vital for informed, effective and targeted planning of project activities that foster gender equality and improve economic development of the fisheries and aquaculture sector.
- Gender analysis in fisheries and aquaculture must be flexible in order to respond to the complexity of cultural and socio-economic characteristics and dynamics, including regional differences of target groups.
- The role of gender discrimination in current employment practices by fisheries and aquaculture industries needs to be scrutinized. Development cooperation needs to highlight that such practices threaten not only the credibility of policy-makers, but also jeopardize the sustainable livelihood of fisher's families and the economic success of the sector.
- Gender equity and equality is essential for decision-making in fisheries resource management, as well as at all levels of the so-called 'deck-to-fish' value chain, in which both women and men have important roles to play.

## Questions to be answered in gender studies

- Sustainable livelihood, improved food security and sustainable resource management
1. What are the key factors to be addressed in the project region for ensuring that women have equal access to and control over the fisheries/aquaculture value chain?
  2. How can the sustainable livelihood framework be best integrated into a community-based fisheries/aquaculture management approach for achieving gender equality and equity?
  3. Which are the most appropriate quantitative and qualitative indicators to evaluate and monitor impact and effectiveness of gender-sensitive fisheries and aquaculture policies and projects, in particular their contribution to reducing gender gaps?
- Mainstreaming gender in fisheries and aquaculture
4. Based on project experiences, develop and disseminate a model for the successful promotion and adoption of gender mainstreaming at the policy level and for large fisheries development projects.
  5. What are the minimum/main disaggregated data sets on social and gender related aspects at the macro level in fisheries and aquaculture?

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Published by Deutsche Gesellschaft für  
 Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Registered offices  
 Bonn and Eschborn, Germany  
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Layout Gitta Bender, bender graphicdesign, Stuttgart

As at February 2013

GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication.

On behalf of Federal Ministry for Economic  
 Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

Division Rural development; agriculture; food security

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# Gender and Livestock Production

## Background

Women worldwide play important roles in livestock keeping and provision of livestock services. However, a number of challenges face the livestock sector, including ensuring food and feed resources, and livelihood security for poor smallholder producers and processors. It is estimated that women compose around two-thirds of the 400 million poor livestock keepers who mainly rely on livestock for their income (FAO 2011 and 2012).

Many countries still face challenges in translating legislation related to women's access to and control of resources into action at the community and household level, impacting women's capacity to control and benefit from livestock. Women and men have different needs and constraints related to livestock production systems. Thus, a "gender lens" is needed to identify and address optimal outcomes, as well as the most effective use of resources.

Addressing gender in livestock projects means identifying, understanding the relevance of, and addressing the different livelihood needs, priorities, interests, and constraints of men and women along lines of age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status and ability. It means maximizing the available social capital through engaging all household members as agents of poverty reduction. Women often have a predominant role in managing poultry, dairy and other animals that are housed and fed within the homestead. Men are more likely to be involved in constructing housing and herding of grazing animals, and in the marketing of products if women's mobility is constrained. Women strongly influence the use of eggs, milk and poultry meat for home consumption, and often have control over marketing and the income from these products, both in pastoral and sedentary societies. Ownership of livestock is particularly attractive and important to women in societies where, due to cultural norms, women's access to land and mobility are restricted.

Production system	Characteristics
Landless industrialized systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Industrial, market-driven production systems</li> <li>Detached from their original land base, commercially oriented, and specialized in specific products</li> <li>Generally associated with large-scale enterprises</li> <li>Small-scale urban-based production units also important in developing countries</li> </ul> <p><i>Potential areas for gender concern:</i> labour conditions, mobility, control over production, decision-making power</p>
Small-scale landless systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small-scale landless livestock keepers typically not owning croplands or with access to large communal grazing areas</li> <li>Typically found in urban and peri-urban areas and in rural areas with high population density</li> </ul> <p><i>Potential areas for gender concern:</i> access to water, fodder, decision-making control, control over benefits, access to information on disease prevention and control</p>
Grassland-based or grazing systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Typical of areas unsuitable or marginal for growing crops</li> <li>Most often found in arid and semi-arid areas</li> <li>Adaptive management practices needed for challenging environmental conditions</li> </ul> <p><i>Potential areas for gender concern (depends on scale): large-scale ranches:</i> labour conditions, living conditions such as accommodation, control over decision-making; <i>small-scale:</i> intra-household decision-making, control over benefits, local knowledge, and gendered roles in animal husbandry, disease prevention and control</p>
Mixed farming systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most of the world's ruminants kept within crop-livestock systems</li> <li>Characterized by relatively low levels of external inputs</li> <li>Products of one part of the system used as inputs for the other</li> </ul> <p><i>Potential areas for gender concern:</i> access to and control of inputs (land, water, credit); intra-household decision-making; access to extension services, veterinary services; capacities for scaling up</p>

Table 1. General Characteristics of Different Livestock Production Systems (FAO, WB, IFAD 2008)

## Non-traditional fodder project, Egypt

The buffalo is of high economic and social importance for the farming families in Egypt, with women responsible for their feeding, milking and calf rearing. However, a high calf mortality rate was a major problem in the project region, creating severe financial losses for the families. Even with considerable time and financial investment, neither extensionists nor veterinarians could discern the root causes. On behalf of BMZ, GIZ supported the extension service in a totally new approach: to focus on the female farmers and contact them directly through newly employed female extensionists. It did not take long for the female extensionists to identify the real reasons behind the mortality rate. Per tradition, women were throwing away the first milk of a cow (colostrum) due to its consistency and colour, thus depriving the new born

calf of its natural immunity. Also, the female farmers were allowing the young calves to suckle only two or three times a day, in effect starving the newborn of needed nutrition. After a tailor-made extension program targeted the farming women, the calf mortality rate decreased to a normal level. The GIZ supported project noted three main impacts on women: the family's monetary income increased, the overall situation of the household improved, and the social status of women increased as they gained visibility. Furthermore, the extension service now recognized women as an important target group and started to invest in extension services for female farmers and women groups. The higher income generated by decreased calf mortality and increased milk production was spent for the benefit of the whole household. The improved economic position of women also increased their social status and decision-making power both inside and outside the household.

In the gendered division of labour, women perform a variety of tasks, including general agricultural work and raising cattle, alongside maintaining the household and family. Women feed the animals, clean their stalls, compost manure, and are responsible for the breeding and tending to the health of smaller animals. Given the importance and variety of these tasks, women are important bearers of knowledge related to the sustainable use of natural resources, e.g. strategies for adapting to climate change and conserving agrobiodiversity.

Ensuring women's access to and control of resources such as land, livestock, markets, information and credit strengthens their influence and social empowerment. Designing livestock development programs with a targeted gender approach will therefore improve the overall program impact in terms of poverty reduction and food security.

## Steps to Action and Best Practices

Promoting gender equality has been a fundamental principle of German development policy for many years. The following steps to action and best practices from concerned projects - implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) - have been proven as successful approaches and helpful starting points in strengthening the roles of women in livestock production.

## Build capacity and networks

Women are often left out of male-dominated networks and trainings. Women's networks and groups have been proven to be useful pathways for passing information on to women. Through these channels women have easier access to sharing knowledge, creating funds for saving and input supply (e.g. fodder and vaccination), and establishing small businesses.

On behalf of BMZ, GIZ assists the development of female networks and groups in livestock production through the following activities:

- Provide targeted training of women to support their economic and cultural role in livestock production.
- Focus on poor women to increase their economic and social status in the community and avoid marginalisation.

## Develop gender-sensitive livestock activities

Because of a lack of human and financial capital, many countries still face challenges in implementing legislation related to women's access to and control of resources at the community and household levels, which further impacts women's capacity to control and benefit from livestock. Poultry, however, is the almost universal exception: women around the world tend to have control over the poultry they produce and market.

GIZ assists the development of women's control and benefits of livestock production through the following activities:

- Analyse the best entry points for inclusion of women in capacity building activities.
- Ensure activities are implemented in a locally acceptable manner, recognizing the traditional roles and responsibilities of men and women in a given community.
- Identify pathways for enhancing women's skills and knowledge to ensure economic growth and improved livelihoods for the whole family.

#### Best Practice

### Poultry production support, Afghanistan

More than 25,000 female poultry farmers in Afghanistan have received support from the GIZ implemented and World Bank funded Horticulture and Livestock Project (HLP). Since livestock, and especially poultry, is a female domain in Afghanistan, the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) emphasized support for female farmers and their needs through the poultry program of HLP. Women received layer and broiler chicks, as well as the required input (feeders, drinkers, feed, medicine and vaccines), as a starting kit. Each beneficiary also received three months of adapted training by female trainers in poultry husbandry and marketing. Female farmers then used their own resources to build chicken coops. As a result of the project's activities and the active support of MAIL, women in rural Afghanistan are now able to generate income for themselves and their families. Alongside the additional financial resources, the social standing of the female farmers has also increased. In 2012 alone, the 100 female poultry farmers presently registered with the pilot project produced 987,000 eggs (total value 152,000 Euro) and 22,000 kg of poultry meat (total value 40,000 Euro). HLP is now transitioning into the National Horticulture and Livestock Project. Building on their proven success, support to female poultry farmers will remain high on the agenda in the coming years.

### Recognize gender aspects in safeguards to animal wealth and health, and ensure women's access to livestock health services

Men and women contribute to the enhancement of gene flow and domestic animal diversity through local knowledge systems, as well as disease prevention and treatment. However, different groups (men, women, boys and girls) often have different

knowledge and livestock skills according to their roles and responsibilities. Women livestock owners often have cultural, traditional, financial or other restrictive issues limiting access to proper medical treatment for their animals, which may lead to serious production and herd losses. Women also have limited access to improved breeding material and knowledge. Gendered asymmetries in access to livestock and veterinary services do a great disservice to all livestock producers and processors, lowering the potential for sustainable and effective action along a given livestock value chain. German development cooperation actively supports the conservation of gene pools and local knowledge through support to international research and development projects. In dry-land areas, GIZ's Advisory Service on Agricultural Research for Development coordinates with other international agricultural research centres. Activities that support agrobiodiversity conservation include:

- Assessment of dry-land resources and community services
- Cultivation and processing of dry-land plants and animals
- Optimization of traditional resource use and management
- Promotion of the different agrobiodiversity components interacting with each other, their environment and the climate.

### Include gender aspects in new livestock technology development

Men and women have different needs, interests and constraints with regards to development and delivery of new livestock technology. As services and access to information are increasingly privatized, women face severe challenges as their access to markets, services, technologies, information and credit schemes is lowered even further, thereby decreasing their ability to improve productivity and benefit from a growing livestock sector. Livestock production scale-up to meet the increasing demand from growing urban populations is not an easy task for women: decisions, income and sometimes the entire enterprise shifts to men, and women tend to go from an employer to employee role. Consideration of the needs of poor women and men when developing livestock technologies will reduce their workload, increase productivity and improve food security: thus, overall income generation will be improved.

GIZ assists the economic empowerment of women by focusing on the following:

- Increase the economic participation of women through targeted livestock activities
- Improve the conditions for women in the private sector and their access to vocational training, as well as development of specific financial products for women
- Dismantle local barriers and promote women's access to credit, e.g. women saving groups.





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*Photo left: Indian woman looking after her own herd of cows.  
 Photo right: Mixed livestock marketing association in Niger.*

## Stumbling Steps and Lessons Learnt

- Sustainable agriculture/livestock activities depend on a mid to long-term approach. Sustainable agriculture-based value chains linked to national or international markets especially require long-term efforts, i.e. 10 years and more.
- Livestock projects provide good opportunities for a gender-balanced approach to support a comprehensive, sustainable, social and economic development.
- Projects and initiatives in livestock, agriculture and horticulture sectors are more successful when an existing and successful traditional approach/business activity is scaled-up; e.g. food security is combined with improved self-consumption, or income generation is connected to demand-driven market supply.
- Projects are more successful when based on existing know-how, capacity and experiences of women, according to their traditional roles and activities – and according to well-analyzed demands; aim to both improve food security and support local and existing market demands; organize women in groups and strengthen their social cohesion and mutual support; and emphasize women's participation in project planning and needs assessment of all projects.
- For successful income support, markets with customer demand are needed, including local/urban, national or international levels. Linkages to these markets require professional and highly motivated management skills and engagement.
- The higher the traditional know-how at producer/farmer level, the higher the ownership and probability for sustainability.
- An initial step in a gender-balanced approach is respecting and promoting the productive traditional roles and potentials of men and women.

- The best pathway out of poverty for the majority of the poor, especially women and smallholders, is the use of simple interventions in livestock production. For example, it is better to begin with improving livestock management and fodder supply, rather than with artificial insemination and breeding.

## Questions to be answered in gender studies

1. Which strategies best ensure women's access to the new technologies and knowledge transitioning into more intensive livestock systems and markets?
2. What actions are needed to ensure that legislation related to women's access to and control of resources such as livestock is translated into action at the community and household level?
3. What are ways to mainstream gender aspects into project design, ensuring specific awareness of women's role and access to developing their livestock activities with a clear vision of women's demands and benefits?

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Published by Deutsche Gesellschaft für  
 Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

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Layout Gitta Bender, bender graphicdesign, Stuttgart

As at March 2013

GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication.

On behalf of Federal Ministry for Economic  
 Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

Division Rural development; agriculture; food security

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# Gender and Value Chains

## Background

The value chain for a given marketable product is the sequence of all production and marketing steps, ranging from primary production through processing and distribution up to the retail sale of the product and finally to its end users. A gender approach to value chain development focuses on gender inequalities within one particular value chain, which in turn is critical to strengthen the weakest links in the chain and assure inclusive upgrading of quality and growths. It is thereby important to consider both the different levels at which men and women participate in value chains and how gains of participation are distributed. These levels include the household scale with gendered division of labour; time budgets and decision-making processes; the value chain level (or institutional level) with differing access to chain functions; services and resources; and the overall chain management with gender-related power disparities.

Overall, women tend to be less integrated in value chains than men. Their lack of mobility and thus lack of access to markets, as well as social norms, impede their interaction with value chain actors. Women are often excluded in horizontal linkages (relationships within one stage of the chain, e.g. within one organization, group of producers or self-helping groups) as well as in vertical linkages (relationships with actors of the value chain stages below and above, e.g. with buyers and suppliers).

Women who participate in value chains are more likely to manage work and income from productions with low-cost equipment, e.g. knives and bowls in fisheries, due to unequal access to capital and property. Men, in contrast, dominate value addition through high-cost equipment such as processing facilities. Males take on management roles in value chain activities, whereby women tend to participate as employees. Exclusion of land rights and other gender-specific patterns of property and business arrangements

make it difficult for women to acquire physical assets for chain activities. Similarly, also due to societal norms, women have limited access to chain services, such as public finance, credits or trainings. Further, gender differences in literacy and education result in lower skilled roles in value chains for women. The disempowerment of women at management level, due to low education and societal norms, in return reduces their ability to communicate with buyers and suppliers and thus limits their bargaining power.

In agriculture value chains, women are predominantly active in subsistence economy and food for personal requirements (food crops), whereas commercial cultivation of food (cash crops) is traditionally dominated by men. Agriculture is the most important source of employment for women and men in rural areas, but women are more likely to hold low-wage, part-time, seasonal employment and tend to be paid less, even when having higher qualifications. The recent trend of feminization of agriculture brings further disadvantages to women as they are being increasingly marginalized in lower status, unskilled agricultural work, especially in Asia and Africa. While increasing migrations and the growth of non-agricultural job opportunities mainly benefit men, women are left behind in rural areas. With regards to non-agriculture activities, women are more involved in small-scale, low-returns marketing and trade only particular commodities, whereas men are more likely involved in trading for international markets, as especially seen in Sub-Saharan Africa. In Southeast Asia, women are more involved in small trade, particularly in agricultural goods.

Voluntary standards seek improvement in the field of management systems, product quality and quantity, marketing and trading practices (transparency), environment (soil conservation, agrichemical use) and social issues (working conditions, child labour, non-discrimination). Implementation of these standards



*Photo left: Joint transportation of agriculture products in Cambodia.  
Photo right: Female traders selling tomatoes for income generation in Ghana.*

complement value chain development and is becoming increasingly important due to the growing demand for sustainably produced products, especially in export-driven chains.

(Some examples: Mars has targeted 100% use of sustainable cacao use by 2020, while Ikea, Adidas, C&A, H&M aim for 100% sustainable cotton use by 2015-2020.) Yet, most voluntary standards are not typically gender-sensitive, or only integrate some gender-issues under their non-discrimination criteria. They all, however, do provide the infrastructure to introduce gender-sensitive strategies, as standards require traceability systems. Mechanisms to certify products, documentation, data management system or regular farmer meetings all can serve as entry points for addressing gender inequalities.

## Steps to Action and Best Practices

Promoting gender equality has been a fundamental principle of German development policy for many years. The following steps to action and best practices from concerned projects - implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) - have been proven as successful approaches and helpful starting points to increase women's participation and benefit in value chains.

## Develop context-specific interventions through gender analysis

There is no one-fits-all solution to address gender inequalities in value chains. Solutions differ from value chain to value chain and from country to country. Positive impacts of gender interventions on value chain development only unfold their whole potential when context-specific and socio-cultural norms on gender-power relations find consideration in strategies. A gender-sensitive analysis prior to program activities is therefore a decisive tool for inclusive value chain development.

## Integrate gender aspects in each step of value chain development

Value chain development is multilayered and includes interventions on different stages and levels of the value chain. The ValueLinks methodology, applied in programs implemented by GIZ, is one of the proven approaches to improve chain performance. Modules of the ValueLinks methodology include: decision process whether to engage in chain promotion; value chain selection; value chain analysis; definition of the upgrading strategy and vision; facilitation of the chain development process;

### Best Practice

#### HIV/AIDS reduction through gender-sensitive value chain development, Kenya

Among Kenyans involved in the Omena fish supply chain around Lake Victoria, the frequency of HIV/AIDS was double the national average. An in-depth gender-sensitive study, supported by GIZ, discerned the link between the high HIV/AIDS prevalence and the phenomenon of "sex for fish", a practice used by women to improve their access to fish for processing.

Interventions introduced by GIZ not only developed and strengthened the value chain, but also addressed the high incidence HIV/AIDS in the area. The securing of a long-term and steady supply of Omena fish reduced the competition between processing women and thus the need of "sex for fish", positively impacting the occurrence of HIV/AIDS.

Program interventions included:

1. Improve processing and marketing of fish to reduce losses, improve quality and increase profits, thus providing further business opportunities for women
2. Strengthen existing associations or self-help groups to act as peer educators for the topics of HIV/AIDS, value chain improvement and sustainability of the Omena fishery
3. Empower vulnerable women by exploring alternative business opportunities, e.g. a catering business for the fishermen
4. Establish a stronger saving culture by creating access to an official bank, as well as education on savings, accounting and handling money
5. Educate on better free-time use, e.g. repairing fishing or household equipment
6. Support the Ministry of Fisheries to enforce existing laws and introduce new regulations on sustainable fish supply.

strengthening business linkages; engaging in public private partnerships; strengthening chain services; financing value chains; introduction of social and quality standards; improving the business environment of the value chain; and monitoring and managing impact. The ValueLinks methodology can easily be amended by gender-based instruments and taught separately to men and women. Later, the different gender perspectives of the different groups can be merged.

## Further GIZ gender-based activities in value chain development

- Development of gender strategies for specific value chains and countries based on gender studies and/or as part of value chain development approaches
- Cooperation with local NGOs, as well as with Ministries of Gender and Women Affairs, to support and sensitize for gender specific interventions
- Promotion of gender desk consultants within programs to provide knowledge base and backstop on gender-sensitive activities
- Empowerment of women to improve their value chain participation: e.g. participate in (agricultural) trainings; take on lead positions in trainings, extension structures and self-help groups; sign production contracts with other chain actors; or access to credit
- Creation of awareness among men to improve integration of women in value chain activities.

## Stumbling Steps and Lessons Learnt

- Women, especially in rural areas, do most of the work in caring for their children and families. As economic development tends to focus on paid employment scenarios, it is important to take these reproductive responsibilities of women into account when formulating policies on gender equality. In order to lower the stress and burden of women, all dimensions of women's work load, both productive and reproductive, must be addressed.

## Best Practice

### Women dairy farmers become visible, Nicaragua

Hundreds of thousands of poor rural residents depend on the Nicaraguan dairy industry for their livelihoods. A value chain development project, supported by GIZ and Oxfam, employed the ValueLinks methodology with gender-based instruments. In a series of meetings, gender specialists created awareness of the dairy value chain and the different roles which women and men play in each chain activity. The sessions addressed quality requirements and related task distribution, discussed services provided to women and men by the cooperative, and provided training on communication skills between husband and wife to promote joint decision-making as a business unit, as well as communication with other chain actors and organizations.

As a result, women started to understand the dairy value chain and their important role in it, while men were more inclined to recognize women's contribution to dairy production. Thus, women went from being invisible to important actors. Also, cooperatives changed their bylaws to make it easier for women to join as full members: women's membership increased from 8% to 43%, with some gaining leadership positions. Women also started to present their needs and asked for services such as access to loans. As their key role became recognized, donors began reorienting their strategies and assigning more resources to women.

- Certified/verified value chains can serve as an entry point for gender. Piggybacking on the infrastructure of the standard and certification/verification process (the premium, audit trail, learning groups, internal control systems and indicators) is an efficient way to gather gender-specific information and to progress on gender issues.



Photo left: Rose picking for organic oil production in Afghanistan.  
Photo right: Organic rose oil production in Afghanistan.



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Photo left: Cashew Production  
 in Benin.  
 Photo right: Quality Control  
 of Dates in Tunisia.

- Agriculture remains the most important source of employment for women in rural areas. Addressing gender inequalities in traditional agricultural sectors and value chains is important to stimulate pro-poor growth. It is also important to look into new job possibilities which can offer better opportunities for women, e.g. in high-value, export-oriented agroindustries.
- Tasks and knowledge on the different levels of the value chain are often separated by gender. Neither men nor women by themselves have a complete understanding of the workings of the whole value chain. Transparency of the roles and responsibilities on one level of the chain, and/or information on how the different actors intersect along the chain, creates awareness of the identity and roles of all involved actors. As mutual understanding and recognition of responsibilities and needs arise, improved chain participation of women is stimulated. Furthermore, transparency also helps to identify for whom and where on the chain improvements should be targeted.
- It is important to foster mutual understanding of and maintain gender-differentiated knowledge of chain functions. For example, women responsible for specific work steps in a crop's life cycle also possess the required specialized knowledge to fulfill the tasks. Particular knowledge, related to chain functions, associated ecosystems and markets, ensures that product quality is maintained and determines value chain gains. Interventions which do not consider gender-specific knowledge may erode the responsibility of one gender unwittingly, and in the process may also erode important ecological and social knowledge.

## Questions to be answered in gender studies

1. How do women and men participate in the value chain? What are their roles and responsibilities? What is their gender-specific knowledge?
2. What are the benefits of value chain participation for women and men and how are these benefits used? Who controls and decides how benefits are used and invested? What decision-making process is used?
3. What are the chances for women to be integrated or better integrated in value chain activities with regards to horizontal linkages (relationships within one stage of the chain e.g. within an organization, group of producers or self-helping groups) and with regards to vertical linkages (relationships along the chain with actors of value chain stages below or above)?
4. Do women have access to value chain services such as credits or trainings, as well as to inputs, information and new technologies?
5. What are the risks for women to be replaced in the value chain and/or lose their traditional role and function?

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 Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

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Layout Gitta Bender, bender graphicdesign, Stuttgart

As at February 2013

GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication.

On behalf of Federal Ministry for Economic  
 Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

Division Rural development; agriculture; food security

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