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Coffee development projects

Gender analysis

Background

The Executive Director presents his compliments and attaches a preliminary report on matters related to gender in coffee projects, such as the inclusion of gender analysis in the appraisal of new project proposals and lessons learned from concluded projects.

Action

The Projects Committee and the International Coffee Council are requested to consider this document.

COFFEE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS – GENDER ANALYSIS

Introduction

1. In March 2012, the Projects Committee agreed to consider at a future meeting the inclusion of gender analysis in the appraisal of new project proposals, and the sharing of lessons from concluded projects that had addressed gender issues.

2. In order to facilitate discussions on this topic, this document outlines ways in which gender mainstreaming has been incorporated into development interventions, the extent to which gender issues have been addressed in concluded ICO projects, and how gender analysis could be included in the appraisal of new project proposals.

I. Gender mainstreaming in development interventions

3. The role of gender gained prominence on the international development agenda at the First World Conference on Women, held in 1975 in Mexico City, which led to the recognition of the triple role of women (reproductive, productive and community management activities). This breakthrough led to a shift in the focus of gender policies, moving away from the rationale that defined women as a vulnerable group to a focus on economic arguments, showing that women can and must play a role in economic development.

4. The following decades were marked by a debate on ways in which to strengthen the role of women in development interventions, including: antipoverty policies aimed at enhancing productivity through income-generating projects; economic efficiency policies to ensure efficient and effective development through women's economic contributions; empowerment to enable women to achieve greater self-sufficiency to improve access to basic benefits; and, more recently, equality policies to introduce equal opportunities as a human right and to emphasize that power sharing and equitable partnerships between men and women are prerequisites for sustainable, people-centred development.

5. Since the last World Conference on Women (Beijing 1995), the concept of inequality (with synonyms such as disparity, gap, etc.) has become an important instrument to tackle the issue of the role of women with low incomes in developing countries. It encapsulates the problem of 'imbalance in power and relations between women and men' and sets out the fundamental reasons for mainstreaming gender into development practice, requiring decision-makers and development practitioners to start defining tools and techniques for gender-planning.

6. Major gender-related trends in the international development agenda include:

- UN agencies, governments, academics, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have all sought to reach institutional consensus on gender definitions and usage.
- The extent to which gender policies have been developed within different agencies varies significantly. However, most institutions have already clearly identified equality at all levels in society as a policy goal.
- Bilateral and multilateral agencies have adopted, to varying degrees, a policy approach to gender that integrates equality and people-centred sustainable development, reflecting a combination of the outcomes from the Rio, Copenhagen and Beijing summits.
- As a consequence, frameworks for integrating gender issues in development interventions tend to adopt two main approaches: economic efficiency to identify and address differences in gender roles to promote economic growth; and equality to minimize gender-based disparity in access and control over resources in order to achieve greater inclusion and social justice.
- Gender analysis is considered the most critical tool to ensure that gender concerns are mainstreamed into the early stages of operations.

7. With respect to the importance of gender for agricultural commodities, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) offers a possible pattern to follow. It has a dedicated Division for Gender, Equity and Rural Employment (ESW), whose objective is to bring the best available empirical evidence to bear on the contributions women make and the constraints they face in agricultural and rural enterprises in different regions of the world and to assist Member countries with gender policy planning¹.

8. With respect to the importance of supporting women in the coffee industry, a notable contribution has been offered by the International Trade Centre (ITC) in setting up the initiative 'Women in coffee' with a dedicated website for exchanging information, joining forces in the work and trade, and voicing key gender-issues at local, regional and national level². This effort has been reinforced by the International Women's Coffee Alliance (IWCA) in connecting women's associations to promote possibilities for women in coffee communities throughout the world³.

¹ See <http://www.fao.org/economic/esw/about-us/en/>.

² See <http://www.tradeforum.org/Women-in-Coffee/>.

³ See http://womenincoffee.org/?q=International_Chapters.

Gender in ICO policies

9. In its Preamble, the current International Coffee Agreement (ICA 2007) recognizes the exceptional importance of coffee to the economies of countries largely dependent on this commodity for the achievement of their social and economic development goals, in particular with respect to poverty eradication.

10. Article 36 'Sustainable coffee sector' of the Agreement invites Members to consider the principles and objectives on sustainable development contained in Agenda 21 adopted in Rio in 1992 and those adopted in Johannesburg in 2002, both of which incorporate many activities for strengthening the role of women in sustainable development, including women's empowerment, emancipation and gender equality.

11. In view of these considerations, the underlying policy approach for ICO projects tacitly entails gender mainstreaming in development. However, given existing inequities, gender-neutral policies may not be sufficient to overcome the constraints faced by women and more gender-aware policy support for well-designed development projects may be needed to help close the gender gap in coffee.

Gender analysis in ICO projects

12. ICO procedures to identify and prioritize projects are mainly based on two documents: the Development Strategy for Coffee (document ICC-105-16) and the Manual for the Preparation and Management of Projects of the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC). Whereas the selection of coffee projects is significantly influenced by CFC priorities⁴, the Development Strategy for Coffee and the ICO procedures for identifying the appropriate project areas of action consider suggestions from ICO Members to address new priorities in the sector⁵.

13. In an attempt to pinpoint which gender-based criteria could be integrated into the appraisal of new project proposals, a comparative review of the main elements characterizing gender-based interventions and those of commodity-focused projects is contained in the following Table.

⁴ *The Fund is a major funder of coffee development projects. It operates under the approach of commodity focus, thus CFC-assisted coffee projects must address general problems of coffee.*

⁵ *See document CFC/ICO No. 8/06, containing the Report of CFC/ICO workshop on coffee development priorities held on 27 September 2006, with the contributions received from ICO Members to identify priority areas of action for coffee projects and to help the CFC to develop a Five-Year Action Plan (FYAP) for 2008 – 2012 on issues related to coffee matters.*

**Main differences between
gender-based interventions and commodity-focused projects elements**

Project elements	Gender-based interventions	Commodity-focused projects
Focus	Social relations between men and women.	Commodity problems.
Objectives	Identify unequal relations of power that prevent equitable development and participation.	Coffee quality enhancement, improvement of marketing systems, minimizing production constraints, diversification, and promotion.
Goals	Equitable, sustainable development with both women and men as decision-makers.	Poverty alleviation.
Solution sought	Empower disadvantaged women to transform unequal relations.	Improving welfare and livelihoods of commodity-dependent people through increased income.
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Increased productivity of women. – Improved access by women to productive resources (assets, inputs and services – land, livestock, labour, education, extension and financial services, and technology). – Strengthening women’s negotiating power – Establishment of favourable macro level policy. 	Sustained improvements in the welfare and livelihoods of commodity-dependent people through increased income.
Selected indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Technical and managerial training, literacy and numeracy for women. – Access to credit to improve technology, working space, and childcare support. – Increase women’s power in the family and access to financial services for consumption, housing, loans and saving. – Strengthening women’s market information networks to directly access higher level in the value chain. – Mainstreaming in the private sector development policies and programmes of national government and international development organizations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Increase in the farm gate price as a percentage of (fob) price received by the commodity producers. – Increase in (a) the percentage of exports obtaining price premiums. – Number of local commercial banks financing the commodity marketing and trade. – Recommendations for the commodity related market policy, legal and regulatory reforms.

14. The comparison indicates that commodity-focused projects are not equipped with an explicit framework for identifying gender-based inequalities, although an undeniable effort has been made by CFC/ICO projects in coffee producing countries in terms of gender inclusion by maximizing synergies between gender equality and poverty alleviation goals.

15. To better understand the basis on which gender matters have been addressed in ICO projects, a preliminary review of a group of selected concluded projects has been carried out taking into consideration the four gender analysis organizing concepts used by the World Bank to consider steps towards mainstreaming gender in its operations⁶. The four concepts together with the preliminary findings of this review are as follows:

⁶ *Mainstreaming gender and development in the World Bank: progress and recommendations / Caroline O. N. Moser, Annika Tornquist, Bernice van Bronkhorst (Washington, D.C: World Bank, 1999), 3.*

16. **Gender diversity/differentiation** – this concept facilitates understanding if the design of the project/programme explicitly acknowledges gender roles, division of labour, or practical gender needs through the questions ‘Who does What?’. A review of concluded projects shows that the participation of men or women in project activities such as training or access to credit was often tracked. However these disaggregated data were not necessarily used to highlight any gender disparity within the project activities implemented. Consequently, valuable data exists and can still be used for determining which specific activities were successful in promoting equity and, more importantly, for advising on feasible measures to continue gender-relevant work initiated by the projects.

17. **Disparities in access to and control over resources and decision making** – this concept is used for a deeper analysis of the dynamics of social relations between men and women, and why they may or may not change, through the question ‘Who has what?’. Examination and review of three diversification projects implemented in Latin America indicates that overall outcomes have increased equality in access to financial and economic services and assets for productive purposes by: i) supporting substantial improvement of the productivity of small coffee farms, from on-farm and off-farm activities; ii) strengthening social safety nets by increasing transfer benefits to women for the creation of additional income/surplus on farms, i.e. more income for food, education, child nutrition; and iii) unlocking the potential of farmers, by grouping them in cooperatives and by encouraging women’s participation in knowledge transfer through farmer field schools and training.

18. The above results indicate that coffee projects financed by the CFC clearly served as a vehicle for increasing women’s capacity to take up new opportunities and thus decrease women’s social and economic vulnerability, although this fact was not always highlighted as such in the project’s conclusions. Annex I contains a set of lessons from the three diversification projects evaluated in order to expand on the gender issues addressed and the varying degrees of empowerment offered.

19. **Social institutions where there are constraints and opportunities in access, power, or participation** – in the case of this third concept, the questions ‘Who needs what?’ and ‘How are men’s and women’s needs met?’ are taken into account. A review of concluded projects indicates that consistent support was provided to strengthen gender opportunities and/or to remove prevailing gender-specific constraints when grouping farmers in cooperatives and championing women’s participation in all project activities. However, the lessons resulting from concluded projects did not always translate into relevant revisions of social policies by local institutions to sustain continuity of successful results over

time. This was probably due to the prevailing use of gender-neutral language, i.e. target beneficiaries of coffee projects are always referred to as ‘smallholders involved in coffee production, processing and trade’, which made it difficult to highlight any possible counter discrimination results and/or gender asymmetries addressed by the institutions involved.

20. Finally, the concept of **stated policy** is valuable to pinpoint whether the participation of women in projects is recognized as a separate group or as an integral part of the project target and strategy, which in gender analysis is normally done through the question ‘Is reduction of gender inequality a project’s goal?’ With respect to concluded coffee projects, it emerges that they clearly addressed gender needs under the overarching **antipoverty policy** and that possibly this approach to gender equality may have reduced the visibility of the contribution of concluded projects to gender mainstreaming.

II. Inclusion of gender analysis in the appraisal of new ICO project proposals

21. A revision of current coffee project appraisal procedures will help not only to strengthen projects appraisal with the inclusion of gender analysis at an early stage in the formulation of new projects but will also provide a framework for a possible future in-depth evaluation of gender mainstreaming in the projects work of the Organization.

22. The question “Have gender aspects been adequately addressed?” currently used in the evaluation of new projects (see document PJ-17/11) may not be sufficient for:

- i) identifying gender-based differences and disparities in roles, constraints, needs, and opportunities (needs assessment);
- ii) understanding who has access to and control over resources;
- iii) determining social institutions in which constraints to access, power, or participation occur; and
- iv) establishing the extent to which these differences and disparities are significant for the accomplishment of the objectives of projects in terms of gender inclusion.

23. The inclusion of gender analysis in the appraisal of new proposals is, therefore, timely and would provide a basis for the integration of gender mainstreaming in ICO projects work.

24. In an attempt to ‘engender’ the current assessment document used by the Virtual Screening Subcommittee (VSS) to evaluate coffee projects, relevant criteria used in gender analysis have been selected and incorporated, as shown in the revised version of the

assessment document (see PJ-17/12 Rev. 1). This initial step should be matched with the introduction of relevant measurable indicators in the logical framework of new proposals so as to provide the necessary quantitative means for a more comprehensive gender analysis by project. This change may well require the collection of disaggregated data. Nevertheless, disclosing the share of women's contribution to coffee productivity, for example, may allow a better understanding of the gender dimensions at stake in the coffee sector⁷.

⁷ Based on information from 34 countries, the FAO estimates that if women had the same access to productive resources as men, they could increase yields on their farms by 20–30%. This could raise total agricultural output in developing countries by 2.5–4%, which could in turn reduce the number of hungry people in the world by 12-17%. 'The State of Food and Agriculture 2010-2011: Women in Agriculture' (FAO: Rome, p. 42).

LESSONS FROM THREE COFFEE DIVERSIFICATION PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED IN LATIN AMERICA THAT HAVE INCLUDED GENDER ACTIVITIES

1. Project CFC/ICO/39: Enhancing the potential of gourmet coffee production in Central American countries

This project successfully implemented a strategy to develop sustainable gourmet quality coffee accompanied by eco-tourism strategies (see <http://www.cafeycaffe.org/web/>). In addition to the significant results achieved, all summarized in the Guide generated from the project experience, a few spin-out activities have been generated during the implementation of the project to support gender inclusion in the beneficiary communities. These activities include:

- A qualitative gender analysis carried out among cooperatives in El Salvador (see summary in the following Box).

Box 2: Summary conclusions of the qualitative gender analysis carried out among cooperatives involved in the Project CFC/ICO/39 in El Salvador

- The female coffee producers interviewed considered their PARTICIPATION to the project activities subordinated to their practical needs. The **fear** of participating was considered to be related to the level of self-esteem and also to the stereotypes of women as FEARFUL OF EXPRESSING THEMSELVES.
- **Training** offered by traditional organizations fails to take into account actual women's performance and the triple work load that prevents them from responding to notifications of training classes directed at women, which are usually characterized by poor attendance and absenteeism.
- **The role of women in coffee farming** shows that division of labour is gender-based: women are generally **solely** responsible for all activities in the reproductive area (household chores, family health care and, in cases of illness, nursing family members of both sexes, buying and preparing food, keeping the house and smaller children clean, seeing to kitchen utensils and farm tools, and community socialization), while men – with the assistance of the entire family – control the productive sphere that provides access to the goods and income needed by the family group.
- **Discrimination against women producers** is experienced by women in mixed organizations/cooperatives when they are not included in nominations for management jobs/posts – not 'because of their diffidence' but because they are socially subordinated.
- With regard to **leadership in the country**, females interviewed expressed the need for vigilance when establishing women's cooperatives in order to avoid a 'Caudillista model' that could undermine participation by other people in the organization.
- **Challenges** for women producers consist in ensuring economic and decision-making autonomy in making investments for the coffee production cycle that will enable them to improve their own well-being and that of the family nucleus.
- The **capacity of women to decide on their own lives**, was expressed as the need "... to be less afraid to participate in cooperative concerns, both within and outside the community..." and "...to try to change the distrust our male partners have towards us women when we manage to gain some space and power in the organization...". As a result, the workshops sponsored under the Phase II of the Project were designed to deal with the relevant technical matters, ensuring that this dialogue begins.

- A comprehensive media coverage of project's testimonials named 'Women's experience in coffee growing' is available on the following dedicated project website page: http://www.cafeycaffe.org/web/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=103&Itemid=14&lang=it
- Implementation of Phase II of CFC/ICO/39 Project, financed by the Italian Government, with the specific objective of measuring the contribution of women to the increase of productivity in the successful project activities implemented (to ensure that it does not remain 'invisible'). This includes: i) exclusive participation of cooperatives managed by women in the departments of Sololá and Alta Verapaz – Guatemala that were already involved in the project; ii) workshops on women's economic and productive rights and leadership in entrepreneurial management; iii) workshops/visits to promote exchanges of successful experiences among women's cooperatives; and iv) expansion of existing local marketing and consumption activities (roasting and coffee shops) that are managed by female coffee producers.

2. Project CFC/ICO/32: Diversification of production in marginal areas in the State of Veracruz, Mexico

This project provided 1,500 coffee farmers in Veracruz with options to overcome the crisis caused by low coffee prices during the period between 2000 and 2005 (see <http://www.uv.mx/diprocafe/>). It made available a viable diversification model for Mild Arabica coffee by introducing reforestation and agro-productive activities in an area of 3,000 hectares of low quality coffee, allowing farmers to double their agricultural incomes, generating significant additional employment in farming at a time when migrants are returning to their homeland as a result of the international financial crisis. Six different enterprises were created to market the products introduced for diversification (all spice, coffee, pepper, passion fruit, banana and citrus).

At the time the project was implemented, women played a leading role due to the considerable exodus of males to cities in search of jobs as a consequence of the coffee price crisis (see table below). As a result, a number of wives, sisters and female neighbours ended up 'by default' being the head of the farms and, purely by chance, participating in project activities. In particular 332 families led by women from the communities in Zozocolco and Atzalan were actively involved in raising minor livestock (poultry and rabbits), bee keeping, vegetable growing, composts and manufacture of firewood-burning stoves. As a consequence, project training activities were extended by female promoters to communities that did not participate directly in the project, providing additional

training/workshops on nutrition, preparation of products based on medicinal plants, household activities, family health and environmental issues, including the promotion of fuel-saving wood burning stoves, and growing environmental-suitable plants for domestic wastewater and greywater discharges.

Beneficiaries of the project by municipality and different categories of participants

Municipality	Communities involved	Families involved	Women	Men
Atzalan	17	232	172	60
Zozocolco	6	100	90	10

3. Project CFC/ICO/31: Reconversion of small coffee farms into self-sustainable agricultural family units in Ecuador

This project successfully provided guidance to 1,244 families in three provinces in Ecuador in order to turn their low yield coffee plots into new profitable agricultural farms by grouping them in cooperatives, thereby facilitating technical assistance, input distribution, credit, marketing of surplus and training for community leaders (see <http://www.cofenac.org/refinca/>). Main project achievements include higher income levels and greater food security to these families, which accounted for 1,143 men heads of household (91.9%) and 101 women (8.1%) (see table below showing their distribution by province).

Provinces	Families involved in the project	Heads of Household Women	Heads of Household Men
Manabí	400	25	375
El Oro	405	13	392
Loja	439	63	376
Total	1,244	101	1,143

- In social terms, the project also achieved an extraordinary impact. Organization leaders (both men and women) were trained in sustainable coffee growing practices to enable them to contribute to the socio-organizational community development process carried out through the Rural Leadership School established by the project. This led to the creation of a task force of women leaders who are currently involved in communal decision-making activities that reach well beyond the farm. In more specific terms, lessons to learn resulted in the following:

- i) Favourable reception and pro-active participation by women (43 of the 185 participants) who do not generally participate in activities of this nature, which are traditionally carried out by men.
- ii) Women are now exercising managerial and administrative functions in various socio-organizational institutions, contributing ideas for strengthening organizational and administrative management. As a result, men in Ecuador's rural sector, who traditionally resisted being subordinate to women, have begun to accommodate women in various local government departments.
- iii) Active and responsible participation by women in the management of the Revolving Funds established by the project has increased perception of greater confidence in women in administering resources, among men as well. In fact, analysis of data for the *Las Maravillas de Cascol* Association in Manabí province – one of the most dynamic groups involved in managing Revolving Funds – shows that women who access micro funds (42% of the total beneficiaries) produce the best results in terms of payment; currently, 94% are up to date with their payment obligations compared with 72% of men in the same situation.
- iv) On the issue of food security, women were the main protagonists. They participated in selecting the crops to be grown on family farms and prepared guidelines on the care required up to production stage, directly contributing in this way both to improving the composition and quality of the family diet and to generating additional income from the sale of the surplus.