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Beyond Production: Innovation and Opportunity for Women's Economic Empowerment in Agricultural Market Systems

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Agenda

- 1. Welcome: Agenda and Introductions**
- 2. Women in Non-Production Roles in Agriculture**
- 3. Time and Labour Saving Technologies: Case Study from the Field**
- 4. ENTREPRENEURS – Pakistan**
- 5. Wrap up and Closing Q&A**

Women in Non-Production Roles in Agriculture



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Leveraging Economic Opportunities (LEO) Project Research



- Much of USAID and Feed the Future's agricultural programmatic support to rural women has concentrated at the production stage
- Women are involved in a variety of functions along the value chain
- There is a wealth of information related to WEE through production
- There is limited available data on promising approaches for WEE at other value chain levels

Women in Non-Production Roles in Agriculture: A Literature Review of Promising Practices

Methodology

- Focused on three value chains: maize, groundnut, and horticulture
- Spanned Africa, Asia, and Latin America
- Reviewed assessments and formal reports as well as blog posts, success stories, and other less rigorous documentation
- Intervention must have worked with women on a non-production activity tied to income generation and documented at least one example of a successful or promising approach
- Selected projects worked with women in farmer organizations or in micro, small, or medium enterprises



CATEGORIES

- production inputs and services
- post-harvest handling
- processing
- marketing



Key Findings

- Activities were primarily directed at producer groups or cooperatives
- Target groups were comprised primarily or entirely of women
- Activities commonly addressed insufficient training, knowledge, or skills, which lead to low returns or exclusion from post-production entrepreneurship
- Almost all projects included a training component
- Capacity-building efforts had notable impacts on women's skills, knowledge, and ability to effectively run their businesses
- Positive economic and social results for women



- Access to assets and equipment (i.e., land, storage, technology)
- Collective marketing and linking market actors
- Training packages that cover both technical and business knowledge



Gender-specific Activities

- Gender sensitization trainings did result in positive changes in attitudes of both men and women on gender equity and perceptions of gender
- Projects that did not include gender trainings have still been successful in enhancing WEE but may have had a more profound impact if they had addressed deeper and interrelated social issues

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS



Planning for Gender



- Planning at the outset for gender implementation and impact remains a need and a concern
 - Coherent strategy and design
 - Staff capacity
 - Identification and mitigation of gender-specific implementation challenges



Data Collection and Evidence

- Need more rigorous impact data related to women's empowerment and economic opportunities
 - Gender assessments and impact assessments
 - Specific and relevant indicators
 - Interventions and approaches to empower women who are not farmers and at higher VC levels
 - Increasing women's successful participation in male-dominated organizations or sectors
 - Women's control over their post-production earnings



More Food for Thought

- Investment in off-farm and non-farm sectors and economic activity
- Attention to laborers within value chain development programming
- Connections to interventions in education, finance and investment, health, and transport support a stronger enabling environment for women to engage (and benefit from) non-production and off-farm activity
- Attention to youth as well as migration



More Food for Thought

For More Information

Microlinks

www.microlinks.org/leo

ACDI/VOCA's Gender Approach

<http://www.acdivoca.org/practices/empowerment-resilience/#gender>

US Government Global Food Security Strategy 2017-2021

<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1867/USG-Global-Food-Security-Strategy-2016.pdf>

Time and Labour Saving Technologies: Case Study from the Field



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Why time and labour saving technologies matter?



Small children, mostly girls, collect water from the local well in Bakoko, Bunia, Eastern DRC, where one jerry can costs 100CF. Mercy Corps © IMAGINE DRC Gender Assessment/ Kamila Wasilkowska/ February 02, 2014.

Assumptions and Risks

Risk 1: Women are not always free to decide how to use their “time saved”

- These technologies do not necessarily reduce women’s workload if she does not choose how to spend her “free time?”

Risk 2: Women’s low-paid jobs can be displaced

- Time and labour saving technologies can displace women from their current roles

Case study: BUILD's Background

- **Building Women's Income through Agricultural Training (BUILD)** was a market systems program that ran from November, 2013 – June, 2016 in Northern Uganda funded by Walmart Foundation and implemented by Mercy Corps
- **The aim of the program was to enable farmers to access quality farming information (including on processing)** and resources to improve their incomes
- **A key objective was to improve sesame processing by training women;** 95% of the people responsible for the processing of sesame are women

Case study: BUILD's Approach

Pairing access and agency focused interventions:

- **Training model.** The training model was based on increasing the number of female Lead Farmers who would then train farmers
- **Focus on decision making.** Previous market research showed that increased income could lead to increased domestic violence, thus basic processing training was teamed up with messaging on the importance of shared decision making in the household

Conclusions for *Beyond Production*

- **Timing.** Need to train women at the correct time of day and year, sounds obvious but many programs still struggle with this
- **Combined effect.** Need to couple economic empowerment interventions with work on women's agency such as increased decision making
- **Functional upgrading and leadership.** Need to create pipelines for women to move into better paid positions, even for women in *beyond production* roles
- **Social norms and male displacement.** Need to consider potential backlash to upgrading women, especially true for post-production where jobs are higher status

Conclusions for *Beyond Production*

- **Ripple effects.** Changing *beyond production* roles for women, can also change roles and opportunities for women in production roles (e.g. role models, pathways, etc). Program for this!
- **Outside the usual suspects.** Multi-actor focus. Be creative. Look outside initially assumed local actors with whom to create partnerships. These partners will likely be different than when focused on production roles.
- **Complexities.** Women do not take on one role. They have multiple roles and many times in production and *beyond production*. Program for this!

ENTREPRENEURS – Pakistan



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ENTREPRENEURS was a USAID-funded project that ran from June 2009 – Sept 2014 in Pakistan.

- The project was aimed at stimulating inclusive and sustainable economic growth among micro- and small enterprise owners, primarily women.
- The project worked in four sectors: Dairy, Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (MAPs), Honey and Hand Embellished Fabrics (HEF).
- Worked throughout Pakistan.
95% of beneficiaries were from rural areas, predominantly agricultural and culturally conservative.



Results

- At the end of the project, **85,693** micro-entrepreneurs were supported, of which **90%** were women.
- 93% average increase in sales directly attributable to project participation.
- 19% average increase in HH income directly attributable to project participation.
- FGDs found an increase in support for women's employment
- Many women reported being able to send children to school (including girls), and an increase in HH decision-making ability.
- Some women who were previously home-bound gained the ability to leave the home and become FSAs themselves.

How did MEDA get rural women in Pakistan into the value chains?

- Culturally appropriate:
 - Women providing other services to women.
 - The project work with men and women on understanding the project and gender sensitization.
 - Highlighted women role models.
- Well-supported by other cross cutting services, such as linkages to markets, market-related information, marketing support, access to finance.
- Economically empowering.
- Scalable and replicable.



How is the FSA Model empowering women beyond production?

- Income generation was the key factor empowering women. Bringing more money into the family changed the household dynamic significantly and increased women's decision making power.
- Work as a business. Whether formal or not, MEDA encourages women to consider their work like a business.
- Grounded in a market system approach.
- Women empower other women. We have found women tend to support, hire, source from other women.



Q & A



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Thank you!



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