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# Changing the terms of women's engagement in cocoa and coffee supply chains





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# Acronyms and abbreviations

<b>CAC Pangoa</b>	<i>Cooperativa Agraria Cafetalera Pangoa</i>
<b>CODEMU</b>	CAC Pangoa's Committee for Women's Development
<b>CSO</b>	Civil society organization
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
<b>GALS</b>	Gender Action Learning System
<b>GAP</b>	Good agricultural practice
<b>HRNS</b>	Hans R. Neumann Stiftung
<b>IFAD</b>	International Fund for Agricultural Development
<b>KIT</b>	Royal Tropical Institute
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organization
<b>PO</b>	Producer organization
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goal
<b>SMS</b>	Sustainable Management Systems
<b>VSLA</b>	Village savings and loan association
<b>WCF</b>	World Cocoa Foundation



# Preface

## **The Gender in Coffee and Cocoa Initiative**

The Gender in Coffee and Cocoa Initiative is led by three organizations working on gender dynamics in agricultural investments and value chains– the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the non-governmental organization (NGO) Twin and the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) of the Netherlands. The main purpose of the initiative is to identify and disseminate innovative, gender-sensitive approaches across regions and sectors by organizing periodic multi-stakeholder learning events. Producer organizations, multi-national companies, traders, governments and service providers with diverse experience working on gender issues are the main targets of the initiative, which seeks to enable its participants to capture learning from different sectors and regions.

## **The conference and its outcomes**

In June 2016, FAO, Twin and KIT organized a multi-stakeholder workshop on “Promoting Inclusive and Gender-Sensitive Producer Organizations and Agricultural Investments in Cocoa and Coffee Value Chains”, which was held in Rome, Italy. A range of actors from coffee and cocoa value chains came together to share experiences of their work in investing in gender-sensitive policies and activities and incorporating these into their sectors. Representatives of companies, farmer organizations, governments and NGOs shared good practices related to awareness raising and advocacy, women’s access to finance and markets, women’s leadership, entrepreneurship and agency, and the strengthening of partnerships and collaboration at the global and country levels. One of the core outcomes of the workshop was a clear interest in systematizing good practices and continuing to foster gender-sensitive coffee and cocoa value chains and South–South learning and exchange.

In response to a request for further exchange of ideas and experiences, the workshop organizers invited the participants to write about their own experiences and to share them. The organizers analysed all the case studies received and selected eight that provided material on which to focus for a “deep dive”. These in-depth stories were presented, discussed and analyzed during a two and a half day “light shop” in Amsterdam (the Netherlands) in June 2017 and are included in this publication.

## **The light shop process and methodology**

The light shop approach was developed by KIT and is based on the “write shop” method that was co-developed by Paul Mundy working with the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction. During a write shop, participants work together to produce a publication, exchanging comments on, revising and peer reviewing each other’s work in a process of knowledge sharing, training, networking and mutual learning. The light shop that took

place from 13 to 15 June 2017 built on the write shop methodology, but focused on dialogue rather than preparing a publication (which the core team did after the light shop).

Over the course of two and a half days participants from eight organizations presented, compared and reflected on their case studies. A core team facilitated dialogue and learning, and the participants had been asked to gather additional useful information before the light shop. Case participants were put into pairs on the basis of having similar experiences in one of four main thematic areas: women's membership and leadership in producer organizations, women's access to and control over land, household approaches to promoting gender equality, and the value of women trainers and extension agents.

This publication is the product of the dialogues and group conversations held during the light shop.

## **The core team**

The core team behind this initiative is composed of professionals from FAO's Gender Team, KIT and Twin who are committed to bringing about real changes to gender relations in the coffee and cocoa sectors. They are driven by an eagerness to share experiences and ask critical questions, and now know that change is a long-term process and does not occur overnight. This publication is a small step in the journey that core team members embarked on together.

## **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations**

Gender equality and women's empowerment is central to FAO's work in eradicating hunger and poverty. FAO's work on gender focuses on promoting the empowerment of rural women by tackling the most important dimensions of gender inequalities and promoting gender-equitable and -transformative solutions at different institutional levels, from the household to the policy. FAO's core areas of work include promoting gender-sensitive policies and legal frameworks; strengthening women's access to and control over land and natural resources; promoting equal opportunities and benefits for women, from the farm to the market; reducing rural poverty and hunger; strategies and interventions for resilience building; strengthening gender-sensitive producer organizations; and supporting gender-sensitive communication and sensitization at the grassroots level.

Since 2010 FAO has been following a programme of work that aims to promote inclusive and gender-sensitive investments in agriculture and supply chains. The programme has three main activity streams: generating and facilitating exchange of knowledge on the gender dimensions of agricultural investments and supply chains; building the capacity of core stakeholders – producer organizations, governments, private enterprises, civil society organizations (CSOs) and NGOs, and academia – to close the gender gap in agricultural investments and supply chains; and engaging in policy dialogue at the national, regional and global levels to influence investment-related policy processes towards greater inclusiveness and gender-sensitiveness. The gender in coffee and cocoa work stream cuts across all three programme components.

## **Twin and Twin Trading**

Twin is a development NGO that focuses on trade and works with 59 producer organizations representing more than 400 000 coffee, cocoa and nut smallholder farmers in 17 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Twin owns a trading company, Twin Trading, which trades and markets quality coffee and cocoa in ways that promote development. Twin and Twin Trading work hand in hand to ensure access to value-added markets for their producer partners, balancing support to producers with market demand. Twin's approach

to strengthening producer organizations has six pillars: incorporating gender justice; sustainable agriculture; business management; governance; quality and processing; and market access. Twin's work in gender dynamics includes delivering training through methodologies working at the household and community levels, promoting women's membership and leadership in producer organizations, marketing coffee grown by women, and advocating for women's participation at all levels of the value chain through learning events and business advocacy.

### **Royal Tropical Institute**

KIT's Sustainable Economic Development and Gender unit generates and shares applied knowledge derived from practice with the aim of improving the performance of companies and organizations that pursue sustainable and inclusive agricultural development.

The unit specializes in sustainable and inclusive development and the fight against poverty and engages in practical research, provides advice and training and facilitates capacity building. It fulfils an important role for companies aiming to make their economic activities more efficient, inclusive and sustainable with a view to improving income levels among very poor people. KIT has been at the cutting edge in integrating gender analysis into value chain analysis and has a strong record in both cocoa and coffee value chains. KIT has worked intensively with the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) on improving outreach to women in the cocoa sector through WCF's cocoa livelihood programme.

The KIT Gender advisory group deals with issues relating to women's rights and role in economic development in lower-middle-income countries. KIT Gender is an international team of gender specialists who focus on gender and rights analysis, integration of gender issues into KIT's activities, capacity development and action research.



# Introduction

Over the years, various actors in cocoa and coffee supply chains have been working to address challenges related to gender inequality. In producing regions, cocoa and coffee are widely considered to be men's crops; it is often difficult for women to gain access to and control over land, productive assets and the income from the sale of produce and this results in an imbalance between women and men in decision-making regarding agricultural investment and household expenditure.

There are many reasons for working on gender strategies in the two value chains. Doing so helps to secure human rights for both men and women; reach better outcomes for families, traders, cooperatives and companies; and strengthen national and international economies. In addition, gender inequalities have costs in terms of product quality and economic outcomes. These costs arise at the household level – for example when men and women within the same households are competing with each other and sell coffee before it is ripe or when households are forced to make distress sales because of poor and uncoordinated planning between the household members. This affects the value chain further up, weakening the security of supplies and resulting in lower-quality products for companies.

There is increasing awareness among different value chain actors that investing in women farmers leads to improved volumes and quality of supply while the women farmers earn greater income and access opportunities for empowerment. For some companies and producer organizations (POs), investing in gender equality is part of a long-term risk management and sustainability strategy.

With the increasing efforts to address systematic gender inequalities made in recent years, it is now crucial to learn and share lessons from experience. Campaigns and programmes such as Oxfam's Behind the Brands campaign, WCF's Cocoa Livelihood Programme and the Coffee Quality Institute's Partnership for Gender Equity<sup>1</sup> have contributed to many new insights, partnerships and ideas. There is now a sound understanding of gender inequalities in the cocoa and coffee sectors, and their underlying causes. The discourse has therefore moved beyond explaining *why* it is necessary to address these inequalities (although some companies and households are still not convinced) and is now exploring *how* to address inequalities systematically and how to bring the solutions to scale.

There is much to be shared between the two sectors, and actors in both sectors can build on each other's experiences and together develop an ambitious agenda to promote gender equitable cocoa and coffee value chains. In order to start this work, the light shop organizers

<sup>1</sup> For more information see [www.coffeeinstitute.org](http://www.coffeeinstitute.org)

previous page: Malawi – Women carrying water to coffee plants during trials.

identified eight organizations doing pioneering work in the coffee and cocoa sectors and invited them to Amsterdam (the Netherlands) in June 2017 to present case studies on their experiences as part of a learning exchange among the case holders. The case holders represent farmers and their organizations, international organizations and knowledge institutes, NGOs and technical partners, cocoa and coffee traders, and chocolate makers and coffee processors.

## Changing the terms

Underpinning the FAO-Twin-KIT initiative is the recognition that although both women and men contribute to and participate in the cocoa and coffee sectors, they do not benefit in equal measure. FAO, Twin and KIT therefore sought to focus discussions at the light shop on how organizations and initiatives are changing the terms of engagement for women in the coffee and cocoa value chains in ways that enable them to grasp real benefits rather than merely participating.

With this in mind, FAO, Twin, KIT and the case holders formulated the shared ambition of contributing to the development of value chains in which women participate with motivation and in ways that reflect their own conditions and enable them to be active players in the market while providing farmer organizations, buyers, service providers and other stakeholders with strong incentives for engaging with women. Bringing about these changes requires changes in attitudes, confidence, capacities and power relations between women and men. Unless power differences are challenged, including at the household level, no change will take place. Changing the terms of women's engagement also requires the enforcement of existing constitutions and laws that support gender equality and equity and that hold both public and private actors accountable for complying with them.

When analysing the case studies, the authors kept the following question in mind: How do the activities described contribute to changes in the *terms of engagement*<sup>2</sup> in order to ensure that women gain more real benefits from coffee or cocoa? The analytical lens for this work was provided by Figure 1, which is inspired by the women's empowerment framework developed by KIT and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (van Eerdewijk *et al.*, 2017). It shows the core elements that shape empowerment processes for women and girls. This does not mean, however, that the role of men is ignored. As in any social change process, women's empowerment is relational and cannot be examined in isolation. Changing the terms of engagement is all about changing gendered power relations.

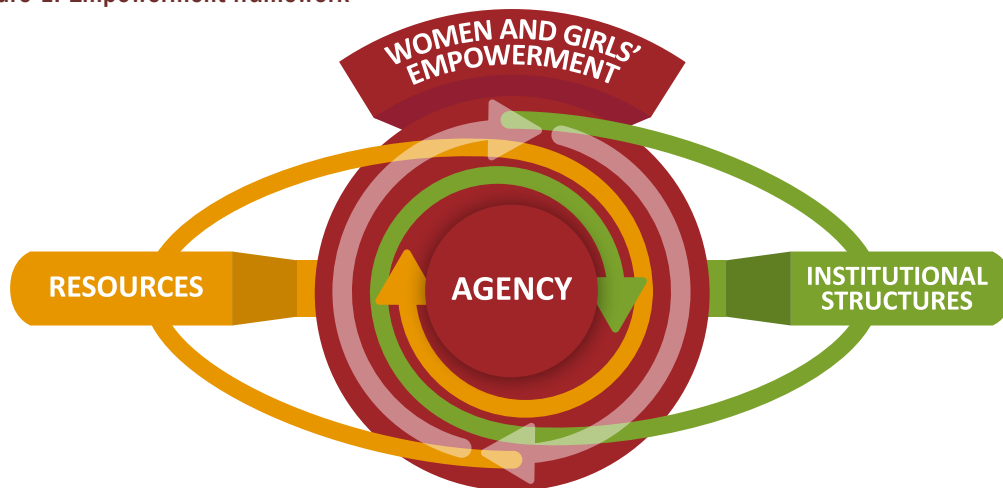
In the framework shown in Figure 1, empowerment is defined as “the expansion of choice and the strengthening of voice” through the *transformation of power relations* so that women and girls in cocoa and coffee growing regions have more control over their lives and futures:

- *Agency* is at the heart of empowerment. It is the capacity for purposive action and the ability to pursue goals, express views, and influence and make decisions free from violence and retribution. Expressions of agency include collective action, decision-making and leadership.
- *Resources* are what people have, own or use, individually or collectively in the exercise of agency. Resources can be tangible, such as productive and financial assets, or intangible, such as security and safety.

<sup>2</sup> This term was coined by Linda Mayoux during the key note address for the “Promoting Inclusive and Gender-Sensitive Producer Organizations and Agricultural Investments in Coffee and Cocoa Value Chains” workshop held at FAO, Rome in June 2016.



Figure 1: Empowerment framework



Source: van Eerdewijk et al., 2017.

- *Institutional structures* are the social arrangements governed by formal and informal rules and practices. They shape and influence expressions of agency and the availability of resources. They include laws, policies and norms at different levels (family, community, market, state, etc.).

Empowerment is contingent on the interactions among agency, institutional structures and resources. These dynamic interactions can be mutually reinforcing and as such offer entry points for interventions when actors engage in them explicitly and intentionally.

The empowerment framework served as an analytical lens for case holders, helping them to understand and explain how their different activities contributed to changing the terms of women's engagement in the coffee or cocoa chain. To facilitate this process, case holders were asked to reflect on the changes that resulted from their activities in terms of agency, resources and institutional structures, and the strengths and weaknesses of their respective approaches. The rationale for focusing on activities and the changes resulting from them was that it would facilitate learning regarding how different change processes are related and interlinked.

The selected eight cases are the following:

1. The case of Twin: Integrating gender equity from the start
2. The case of CAC Pangoa: Women's inclusion through training and microfinance
3. The case of Kookoo Pa: Registration of land as membership requirement
4. The case of Mzuzu: Campaigning for women's access to productive resources
5. The case of HRNS: Couple seminars changing the terms of engagement
6. The case of SMS: Champions in gender and farm practice
7. The case of Nespresso: Capturing best practices and developing a strategy
8. The case of Mondelez International: Women extension volunteers (community animators) as role models in the community

The report is structured around four themes including: women's participation and leadership in producer organisations, women's access to land, the household approach and innovations in extension services.



# Women's participation and leadership in producer organizations

Producer organizations (POs) are crucial actors in the cocoa and coffee sectors, providing services and facilitating access to resources and markets for cocoa and coffee farmers and their communities. To meet the needs and priorities of PO members, both men and women farmers need to be active participants in building and shaping the organization. However, women face many barriers preventing them from joining POs, such as limited access to land, narrow membership criteria, time constraints, lower education levels, and discriminatory, often internalized, socio-cultural norms (Kaaria *et al.*, 2016). As a result, women are underrepresented in the membership of POs and at all levels of their governance. Because of this exclusion, POs are shaped in ways that overlook the interests, priorities and needs of women and girls. This in turn leads to a situation in which POs do not attract women, who perceive the organizations as being established for and run by men.

On the other hand, when women are members of POs they tend to be in a stronger position than women who are not members. Women members are more likely to own land, have access to credit, training and advisory services and undertake independent income-generating activities, resulting in them having more control over household income and expenditure. They also have better opportunities for engaging in more lucrative value chains such as cocoa and coffee and taking on leadership roles in the community.

Experience shows that diversity in governance structures and women's active participation at various levels of POs translates into better governance practices and increased group collaboration, collective benefits and knowledge (Kaaria *et al.*, 2016). Equitable participation by women and men can also result in greater benefits for PO members and their families. In order for POs to perform better and share their benefits equally, it is important that both men and women are empowered to participate in meetings, activities and decision-making. Ensuring that women are included as members of POs and able to take up leadership positions requires explicit efforts. Two case studies of organizations that work in very different contexts provide examples of including women in different ways with positive results: the first case concerns experiences with cocoa in Sierra Leone, involving Twin and the Ngolegombu Cocoa Producer Organization and their efforts to increase women's participation in the PO; and the second discusses coffee production in Peru, involving the cooperative CAC Pangoa, and its women's committee.

previous page: Brazil – Women workers weed and clean around cacao trees in a plantation.

# The case of Twin: Integrating gender equity from the start

*Katie Sims, Former Programme Officer, Twin*

## Summary

Twin and Twin Trading have been working with smallholder farmers for 32 years with the aim of developing strong POs and facilitating access to markets. Twin recognizes the essential roles that women play in the coffee and cocoa value chains, in both production and processing and the economic development of families and communities. In Twin's experience, involving women in POs also strengthens the organizations, increasing their ability to provide benefits to their members.

Gender sensitivity in cocoa value chains has been a consistent feature of Twin's approach. In Sierra Leone, Twin is working with the support of the Royal Society for Protection of Birds (RSPB), to establish a new PO – the Goleagorbu Cocoa Producer Organization (CPO) – giving Twin a unique opportunity to mainstream gender equality from the outset of the organization's development and operation. Twin is conducting a comprehensive participatory gender assessment, providing gender training to partners and other stakeholders and implementing the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) methodology (Box 1) at household level. They are also helping the PO in formulating a gender equality policy for the PO.

### Box 1 What is the Gender Action Learning System?

Developed by the International Fund for Agricultural Development and Oxfam Novib, GALS is a community-led empowerment methodology that uses specific participatory processes and diagram-based tools to promote gender justice through enabling women to gain more control over their lives, as the basis for individual, household, community and organizational development. GALS is not merely a "methodology for women"; it is implemented with women and men to address the gender

issues that are important to the effectiveness of development in any sector, including coffee and, more recently, cocoa production. GALS was first used to promote coffee production by Bukonzo Joint Cooperative Union in Uganda from 2009, and was later embraced by NGOs and private-sector coffee companies in East Africa. Recently the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) and chocolate companies such as Nestlé have started to integrate GALS into their programmes and activities (Mayoux in Hivos Coffee Toolkit 2015<sup>3</sup>).

## Twin and Twin Trading

Twin is an NGO that focuses on "development through trade" and works with 59 POs representing more than 400 000 coffee, cocoa and nut smallholders in 17 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Twin owns a trading company, Twin Trading, which trades and markets quality coffee and cocoa in ways that promote development. Twin and

<sup>3</sup> For more information see [https://hivos.org/sites/default/files/coffee\\_toolkit\\_2015.pdf?\\_ga=2.195175404.1961858296.1500280271-1760249115.1500280271#overlay-context=coffeetoolkit](https://hivos.org/sites/default/files/coffee_toolkit_2015.pdf?_ga=2.195175404.1961858296.1500280271-1760249115.1500280271#overlay-context=coffeetoolkit)

Twin Trading work hand in hand to acquire access to value-added markets on behalf of their producer partners, balancing support to producers with market demand.

Originally Twin's work on gender issues in cocoa production focused on the inclusion of women in POs as members and leaders. Over the last five years, Twin has developed a four-tier approach to its work on gender, encompassing advocacy and activities at the household, community, PO and market levels. Beginning in 2015, a project working with communities on the edge of forests in Sierra Leone has provided a unique opportunity to consider issues of gender inclusion while establishing a new PO – Goleagorbu CPO<sup>4</sup> – drawing on experiences of working with the Kuapa Kokoo cooperative in Ghana and with other coffee and nut producer partners. Goleagorbu CPO is an umbrella organisation, made up of three farmer associations. These are Gaura Cocoa Farmers Association (GACFA), which has 13 village groups; Tunkia & Koya Cocoa Farmers Association (TUNKOCFA), made up of 11 village groups and Malema Cocoa Farmers Association (MACFA), made up of 12 village groups. This case study is mainly based on the development of GACFA, which was the first Farmers Association to be established under the project.

### Cocoa farming in Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone is not one of the world's principal cocoa producing countries. Yet, cocoa is an important crop for the national economy, and following the Ebola crisis the Government has declared that the country is "open for business". Cocoa farming is primarily small in

Mrs Nancy Mansaray,  
Chairlady of Niawama  
Village Level Executive,  
GACFA, Sierra Leone.



<sup>4</sup> Although Goleagorbu CPO is not yet officially formed or registered it is the umbrella organization that aggregates Gaura Cocoa Farmers Association (GACFA) with 13 village groups, Tunkia and Koya Cocoa Farmers Association (TUNKOCFA) with 11 village groups, and Malema Cocoa Farmers Association (MACFA) with 12 village groups.

scale and most farmers are not organized. The commercialization of cocoa is dominated by agents and traders, some of whom adopt questionable practices that exploit producers. In this context, women carry out a lot of unpaid and unrecognized labour and generally have smaller landholdings than men. Polygamy is common and 72 percent of the country's population is Muslim. There are low levels of formal education and high levels of illiteracy among both men and women.

The farmers with whom Twin works reside in communities on the edge of the rain forest in an area bordering Liberia. Cocoa is one of several income sources; others are peppers, nuts, palm oil, rubber and coffee. Women produce less cocoa than men; traditionally food crops have been women's responsibility. Cocoa production to date has not been profitable and before the project there was no collective action in cocoa processing or sales. Post-harvest practices were carried out individually and there were low levels of understanding of how to improve cocoa quality. Exacerbated by consistently low pricing and exploitive trading practices, this situation has resulted in few incentives to invest in cocoa farming.

### Working with local partners

The project began when Twin was approached by Gola Rainforest Conservation LG, a private limited non-profit company in Sierra Leone working on forest conservation with cocoa growing communities. Gola had identified a need to develop livelihood opportunities outside the protected forest areas and requested Twin to support farmers in obtaining access to cocoa markets through the creation of farmer-owned organizations. From the start, gender issues were taken into consideration in the project design. Based on Twin's experiences in other contexts, gender-related targets and indicators were developed, including the number of women members and leaders in POs and the volumes of cocoa delivered by women farmers.

Members of the PO Executive Committee for Gaura Chiefdom and Niawama Village, with the Gola cocoa team.



“ The difference between equity versus equality is an important question. Sometimes we say we need equality but in fact what we need is to focus more on women so that they can grow and achieve the same as men. In Sierra Leone, men always have to give permission for women to take part; men have to give permission for the women to share more of the power. So at the same time, we need to find a way to work with men so they see the value of working with women. ”

Katie Sims

To deliver its activities, Twin developed a partnership with Jula, a local service provider. One of the most important processes at the start of the project was to provide training to the partner organization on Twin's inclusive approach, including through participatory training methods and training in gender issues. Twin also carried out a gender assessment using GALS. The participatory nature of the assessment and the results obtained contributed to the sensitization of the local partner, which is seen as an ongoing process rather than a "one off" exercise. The approach includes the following steps:

### Mobilization of men and women farmers

The first step in forming the PO was to hold meetings with farmers in the project villages. Men, women and young people were encouraged to attend the meetings. Messages emphasizing the project's inclusiveness were communicated visually through posters featuring men and women cocoa farmers. Training materials on group formation covered gender equality, and case studies on POs with strong participation by women were shared. At the first meetings, 15 percent of attendees were women, but women now account for an average of 21 percent of the membership of the three associations which make up the PO and 24 percent of participants in farmer field schools.

### Institutionalizing a gender focus

In order to promote women's leadership, Twin suggested that the PO establish a by-law stipulating that all village branches must be jointly chaired by a woman and a man. Twin also promoted the idea that women should take on non-traditional roles in the structure of the organization. Introducing these changes is a slow process, indicating that still more needs to be done to analyse and address the broader structures and norms that constrain women's ability to take advantage of the new opportunities proposed. To date, the treasurer of the PO board is a woman, as are one cocoa buying officer (elected by the community

left: Juma Choroma, Niawama Village Group, treasurer.

right: Juma Choroma with Joint Chairs of Nialaforaa, Village Group and GACFA Farmer Association.



to manage purchases at the village level) and one of the eight field officers (who are paid to provide technical support and training to communities). Literacy levels and women's time burden have been a barrier to the recruitment of women as buying officers. A gender officer has been identified to coordinate future work, but she is also the only woman field officer, reinforcing the perception of gender as primarily a women's issue. Twin is working with the PO on developing a set of gender principles in discussion with PO members at the village level. The principles will gradually be expanded into a gender equality policy with the aim of further institutionalizing the focus on gender equity within the PO.

### Promoting women's participation from the bottom up

Twin is working with a local consulting company to deliver GALS workshops with the aim of shifting norms at the household level so that the project not only delivers higher incomes through cocoa farming, but also encourages more equitable decision-making in the household and greater recognition of women's unpaid work. Twin also sees GALS training as a way of promoting women's participation in POs as members and leaders: GALS tools address women's time burden and attitudes that prevent women from taking on roles outside the home, while GALS meetings offer an opportunity to identify and develop women's leadership skills. Twin is building on this opportunity by offering leadership training to women with leadership potential.

Figure 2: Steps involved in including women in a new producer organization



## Changing the terms of engagement by including women in producer organizations

### Recognition of women as cocoa farmers and partners in change



From the start of the project, a message was communicated that men and women farmers have equal value and should participate in the PO. Discussions with men and women farmers regarding the move to collective processing highlighted the contribution that women make to cocoa quality; women farmers suggested solutions to the problems that they were facing and felt empowered when men listened to their suggestions. The work that men and women are now carrying out collectively on post-harvest practices has resulted in higher-quality cocoa and the PO's first sale of cocoa to a luxury chocolate manufacturer.

### Market access opens the door

The project's focus on market access and improved livelihoods has attracted the attention of farmers. If the project were not creating tangible results such as improved cocoa quality, increased sales of cocoa and incomes, it would have been difficult to make the case for including women or men in a new PO. Twin is working concurrently in several areas, including sustainable agriculture, quality improvement, logistics, and sales and marketing. Fostering gender equality in this context makes sense because the project provides opportunities to improve the livelihoods of both men and women, as long as gender norms are addressed so that all the members of a household can benefit equally. However,



if the primary aims of the project – strengthening governance, product quality and market access – are not being realized, the opportunity to foster gender equality will be limited. Given that, gender equality objectives supports the realization of the project aims, hence the importance of focusing on gender issues from the outset.

### A participatory approach works

The style of training offered has also helped to attract both men and women to the project. The way in which meetings have been conducted and the use of visual aids and participatory methods such as GALS have created an environment where power hierarchies are implicitly challenged and where farmers themselves can contribute to designing solutions, rather than being seen as merely the recipients of assistance.

### Institutionalizing a gender focus

One challenge the project has faced was that the focus on gender issues was introduced by the project managers, primarily Twin, rather than the communities. Maintaining the focus on gender equality requires a continuous process of training and sensitization of both local partners and PO members in order to embed it into the PO and its activities within the relatively short period of project implementation. Twin's response to this challenge is to address gender issues at different levels, starting by promoting the inclusion of women farmers as PO members and leaders at the village level and encouraging women's participation in farmer field schools; then exploring ways of involving women in non-traditional roles and encouraging their participation on the board of the PO; and lastly carrying out GALS training at the household level. The intention is that these interventions will help to make gender equity the "new normal" within POs, backed by a set of gender principles and a gender policy. Achieving this objective is not straightforward given the prevailing socio-cultural norms and the tradition of men's domination in cocoa production.

### Successes

- Women have demonstrated greater interest in joining the PO, indicated by the increase in women's representation from 15 percent of the participants at the initial meeting to 21 percent of PO members.
- Women have also taken on leadership roles, so far mainly at the village level although there is one woman on the PO board, as treasurer. Of the PO leaders and committee members trained at the village level, 27 percent are women. As a result, women feel that they are represented and are therefore motivated to take part in more PO activities.
- Women are contributing to finding solutions to challenges such as the transportation of cocoa and have been active in leading the change towards collective processing at the village level. This change has brought benefits to women as their time burden has been reduced and the quality of their cocoa has improved.
- Women's contribution to cocoa production is increasingly recognized and valued by both men and women, who see that women's work has positive effects on cocoa quality.
- Recent village-level discussions, facilitated by Twin's gender associate with the aim of developing gender principles, indicate that women and men see gender equity as a vehicle for promoting unity and trust among PO members. Leaders recognize the need to take responsibility for progressive change that benefits their communities and their children's future.

## Challenges

- It is difficult to recruit more women as field officers because women are not putting their names forward as cocoa buyers because women have low levels of literacy and confidence. Time poverty is also a factor limiting women's participation. Further analysis and action is needed to address this.
- At the time of writing this case study, Twin had established one of three planned Farmer Associations, which has 13 village branches and approximately 500 members. The project is now working on establishing another two Farmer Associations. The challenge is how to sustain the same level of engagement, motivation and understanding as the project expands its reach. As the project is for three years only; there is therefore need to make its work on gender equity not heavily reliant on external consultants, so that the benefits to gender equality continue after the project ends.
- The sustainability of the PO depends on maintaining good governance, quality products and market access. If these elements are not in place the PO will not be sustainable. Gender equality contributes to these elements, but in turn, the space for continuing to work on gender issues also depends on these elements being maintained.

# The case of CAC Pangoa: Women's inclusion through training and microfinance

*Esperanza Dionisio, General Manager, CAC Pangoa*

## Summary

Coffee is a very important crop in Peru, where it is the largest agricultural export crop. As a result of the 1972 land reform process, the cooperative movement in Peru is relatively strong. Located in the central Amazon region, the *Cooperativa Agraria Cafetalera Pangoa* (CAC Pangoa) was established in 1977. CAC Pangoa started to work on women's empowerment in 1997 and in 1999, established CODEMU, the Committee for Women's Development. Since its inception, the committee has provided a space within the cooperative for the capacity building of women farmers and their integration into the organization through a collective body.

CODEMU initially focused on microfinance schemes and women in leadership positions. Today, it supports women farmers, including the wives of male members of CAC Pangoa, in improving family nutrition and promotes gender justice through training and sensitization. CODEMU is fully integrated into CAC Pangoa's structure and members participate actively in organizational decision-making.

## CAC Pangoa

CAC Pangoa is a cooperative in Junin, central Peru with 684 members, of whom 124 are women. Founded by 50 male farmers in 1977, its primary aim is to find markets for and to export coffee and cocoa produced by its members. Once part of an apex body, which has since been disbanded, CAC Pangoa initially exported its coffee through other cooperatives in Peru. It now exports directly and has developed close partnerships with buyers such as Dean's Beans, Twin Trading and, more recently, Taylors of Harrogate. Besides purchasing coffee and cocoa on fair trade terms, these partners have also invested in microcredit and training programmes for CAC Pangoa's members. The PO currently produces approximately 2 000 tonnes of coffee and 25 tonnes of cocoa and about 50 percent of its members are certified as organic producers. In 2016, CAC Pangoa exported two containers of coffee grown by women to markets in the United Kingdom and is investing the USD 0.05/lb<sup>5</sup> premium it earned from this coffee in health screening for women.

## CODEMU: the committee for women's development

CAC Pangoa began to engage with women in 1997 as part of a programme introduced by the apex organization that focused on women's self-esteem, management of the household economy and microcredit. The programme has since ended but CAC Pangoa decided to continue investing in training for women through the structure of the Committee for Women's Development (CODEMU), created in 1999 in recognition of women's essential roles

<sup>5</sup> 1 lb = approximately 0.45 kg.

in the home and in coffee and cocoa production. CODEMU now has 90 women members, including the wives and daughters of members of CAC Pangoa as well as women who are members themselves. The committee manages a microfinance fund of about 30 000 soles (approximately USD 9 250) and approves loans to its members, which are usually made for one year and are invested in coffee, cocoa, alternative income generation and home improvements, with a 0 percent default rate on repayments. CODEMU's training programme covers themes related to self esteem, leadership, health, financial literacy and production of coffee and cocoa as well as food crops for local sale and home consumption.

CODEMU's microfinance fund and training programme continue to be supported through partnerships, including in recent years a collaborative project with Twin, Marks and Spencers, Matthew Algie and Taylors of Harrogate to strengthen climate resilience. As part of this project, direct investments were made in the microfinance fund and training and equipment were provided to promote women's income diversification.

Yeny Sarzo Meza, member of CODEMU, preparing for the Saturday produce market organised by the group.



### Membership and governance

Women coffee farmers first joined CAC Pangoa after the period of instability and terrorism in the late 1980s, which left many women widowed. However, promoting women's membership has not been the primary strategic focus of CAC Pangoa's work. Requirements for membership are the same for men and women. These are to be land owners and to cultivate coffee and cocoa (there is no minimum acreage or production level), and to have no conflict of interest or association with a similar organisation. However, CAC Pangoa does not allow both husband and wife to be members at the same time to avoid the risk of them both taking out loans at the same time. Therefore although land is considered a joint

asset in a partnership or marriage, and coffee considered a 'family crop', the most common scenario is for men to become members of the organisation.

CAC Pangoa has instead focused largely on the inclusion and empowerment of women through CODEMU, which is fully integrated into the PO and has its own annual budget: the president of CODEMU sits on the board of CAC Pangoa. Women from CAC Pangoa participate in annual events organized by the National Coffee Council and the Peruvian Cocoa Producers' Association, the national networks for smallholder producers. The vice-president of CAC Pangoa, who is a woman, sits on the board of the Latin American and Caribbean Network of Fair Trade Small Producers and Workers, ensuring that women's concerns are heard at the regional level.

“Historically all of our focus and training has been to improve productivity, but really behind that we are interested in the people that are doing the work (the human resources) and the well-being of the family. We have been working with young people since 2006; the family focus is vital because the family earns an income but the question is how do you use that income? So we are working on capacity building of our team. We are interested in how to develop the emotional intelligence of our staff.”

Esperanza Dionisio

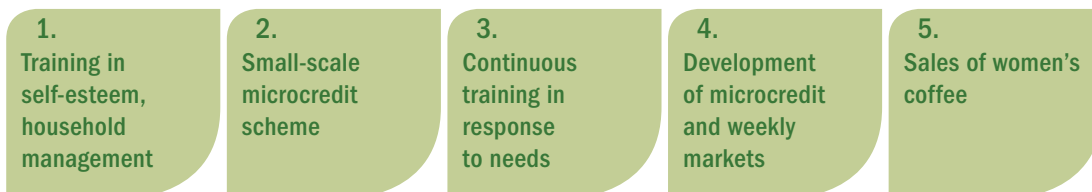
Women comprise 20 percent of positions on the CAC Pangoa board and in committees. Men and women with leadership potential are invited to an annual “leadership school”, a three-month course that lays the foundations for assuming roles on the board. The course has eight modules, beginning with personal development – self-esteem, developing a service attitude and conflict resolution – and moving on to cooperative principles, governance, planning, business, finance, internal control and information technology.

### Blazing the trail: Esperanza's leadership pathway

In spite of women's low representation in CAC Pangoa, the cooperative is currently led by a woman, General Manager Esperanza Dionisio. Her experience illustrates some of the challenges that women face in assuming leadership roles, and how these challenges can be overcome.

In the early 1970s, it became possible for women to study subjects at university that had traditionally been open to men only. Esperanza enrolled in an agronomy course as one of the 13 women out of the 150 students on the course. She began her career working as a field extension officer and encountered much scepticism regarding what women could teach men about farming. Over time, however, she gained the trust of farmers and began working for CAC Pangoa. In 1997, she was asked to serve as general manager of the organization.

Figure 3: Steps involved in including and empowering women in CAC Pangoa



## Changing the terms of engagement through training and microfinance



The experience of CAC Pangoa shows how creating a dedicated women's committee has provided a "bridge" for women between the home and the PO. This bridge is inclusive in that women cooperative members and the wives and daughters of male members can join CODEMU. The combination of training, access to microfinance and practical opportunities to diversify and increase their incomes is changing women's perceptions of themselves and their roles within the household and the community.

### Changing the terms through investing in training

The focus on training and education has been driven by several factors:

- It is recognized that women's self-esteem is affected by intra-household relationships and socio-cultural norms and that addressing these relationships and roles directly through training facilitates and enhances women's participation in decision making within the household and their ability to participate actively within groups.
- As demand for high-quality coffee has increased over the years, CAC Pangoa has included more women in technical training as a way of achieving higher-quality standards because women's work is more precise.
- Women's role in internalizing cooperative values and transmitting them to their children is also valued; the inclusion of women in training is therefore expected to have an impact on the sustainability of CAC Pangoa because this supports the work Pangoa is doing to engage with young people and encourage a new generation of cooperative members and leaders.

Mrs. Olestina Caso Bravo, board member of Pangoa and member of CODEMU, explaining the Gender Balance Tree she developed with her family, following training she received



One factor in the success of the training is that it has been based on the interests and needs expressed by participants and has therefore responded to farmers' priorities over time. Each training course builds on lessons learnt from the previous ones.

### More equality leads to market opportunities

CAC Pangoa started to sell coffee grown by women because the women farmers themselves expressed an interest in selling their coffee separately from that of men. They also erected signs in their coffee fields announcing that they held café de mujer (women's coffee). This, together with growing interest from companies to buy coffee grown by women, sparked the development of a limited edition "women's coffee" for Taylors of Harrogate in 2016. The two containers of women's coffee grown by women members of CAC Pangoa represented approximately 5.26 percent of the PO's total sales. For some POs, developing and selling women's coffee is a strategy for increasing the number of women members. For CAC Pangoa, it was rather a result of – and perhaps a natural development in – the PO's work on developing women's self-esteem and entrepreneurial spirit, as the initial impetus for marketing women's coffee came from the women themselves. There are now plans to build on this experience by carrying out a study of the impacts of women's coffee at the family level and establishing indicators for measuring progress over time.

### Successes

- There is greater recognition among both women and men of the value of women's work, and women's self-esteem has increased as a result. In some cases, men are helping more with domestic work and supporting their wives to attend training and to take part in other activities. This is a result of women developing an awareness of their rights and the confidence to speak up at home.
- The CODEMU microfinance scheme has successfully managed a rotating fund of 30 000 soles (about USD 9 250), which is managed by the women themselves. Anyone taking out a loan must first take part in training. The zero percent default rate on loan repayments suggests that the supervision and training processes are robust.
- The income diversification activities carried out by women, which have mainly centred on cultivating food crops and products, have also been successful because there has been a viable market outlet for their products. The cooperative's weekly market is well supported by the community and has provided women with very valuable experience of managing a commercial activity.
- Women have increased and diversified their incomes, improved their living conditions and been able to invest in their children's education. There are 27 children of CODEMU members currently attending university, supported by Pangoa's education fund, which uses the fair trade premium on coffee sales to fund long-term loans to members for covering the costs of their children's education.

### Challenges

- To date, CAC Pangoa has focused mainly on working with women and has not engaged directly with men in changing their attitudes towards women's participation. Women still sometimes encounter resistance from their husbands, for example, some men do not allow their wives to attend training or participate in meetings, or seek to control the household's income. In 2015, with support from a collaborative project with Twin, Marks and Spencers, Matthew Algie and Taylors, CAC Pangoa started using GALS training tools in group and family settings, providing a platform for structured discussions with men about household dynamics. This has had very positive results, with 94% of

trainees reporting that the training has had an impact on gender roles and dynamics in their households.

- The focus on developing CODEMU rather than including women as CAC Pangoa members has meant that the percentages of women members and leaders in the PO are relatively low, at 18 and 20 percent respectively. As a result, although women have collective representation through CODEMU, only a limited number of individual women have a voice and a vote in CAC Pangoa.

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## The value of including women in producer organizations as members and leaders

Both CAC Pangoa and Twin have found that including women in POs has provided an important opportunity to value and make visible women's contributions in both the productive and the domestic spheres and to strengthen the business.

### Similarities and differences between the two cases

**Promoting and empowering women within the PO:** The two case studies illustrate different approaches to promoting and empowering women within the PO. CAC Pangoa has focused on including women mainly through the establishment of a women's committee, which is integrated into the cooperative, while Twin and GACFA have encouraged women to join Ngolegombu as members.

**Results:** At this stage, the percentages of women members in the two organizations are similar – 21 percent for Ngolegombu and 18 percent for CAC Pangoa – but it is expected that the number of women members in Ngolegombu will grow over time, as its membership requirements are more flexible than those for CAC Pangoa, for example, both the husband and the wife in a household can be members.

**Women's economic empowerment:** CAC Pangoa is fostering women's economic empowerment primarily through microcredit and alternative income generation activities, while Twin encourages women to develop cocoa production as a profitable enterprise. These differences in strategy reflect in part the different contexts and desired changes. CAC Pangoa's CODEMU aims to provide a space for providing targeted training and microcredit to women. Its focus is on empowering women and ensuring that they have a voice through collective action and changing norms regarding decision-making and work distribution at the household level. Women's land rights are already fairly well protected in Peru so securing them further has not been among CAC Pangoa's main objectives.

In Sierra Leone, on the other hand, Twin's promotion of women's membership in Ngolegombu has been seen as a way of securing women's land rights and ensuring that women's contributions as cocoa farmers are recognized and valued. The challenge in this approach is how to engage with women who are not members of the PO, as CODEMU does. Twin is focusing on GALS training and meetings that are open to all family and community members as a potential solution to this challenge.

**Results:** While CAC Pangoa's combination of training and access to microcredit for women has proved powerful in helping women to develop self-confidence and the ability to contribute to their families' income, Twin's focus on land rights has led to women being recognized as cocoa farmers in their own right and benefiting directly from the proceeds of their cocoa farming.



**Promoting women as leaders:** In the CAC Pangoa case, not only is the PO's leadership school a well-established forum for developing the leadership skills of both men and women, but CODEMU also provides space for women to develop leadership skills. Twin's work with Nbolegombu on promoting women's leadership is at an earlier stage. So far, Twin has used gender quotas to promote women's leadership at the village level and is now using a combination of GALS training and targeted leadership training for women in order to create a "pipeline" of women leaders for the future.

**Market access:** Other important similarities between the two POs relate to the importance of improving access to markets and the POs' work in ensuring strong governance, improving product quality and developing long-term relationships with buyers. In both cases, the holistic approach to market access has created both the space and the incentive for women's involvement.

### The implications for other POs looking to include women as leaders and members

**Adapting strategies to fit each case:** A main lesson from these two experiences is that there is no "one size fits all" approach to including women in POs. The right strategy to follow will depend on the context and on the priorities for change.

For example, when setting up a new PO, there is an opportunity to promote women's participation as members and leaders from the start. When working with an organization that is already established and has low levels of women's participation, different mechanisms may be needed. Establishing a women's committee and then integrating it into the structure of the main PO can be an effective way of including women and ensuring that their voices are heard. It is important, however, that the women's committee is fully integrated in the organizational structure, with women's representation on the board and a dedicated budget for the committee's activities.

For an organization that aims to address issues related to women's landownership, economic empowerment through production of the primary cash crop and involvement in PO governance, focusing on increasing women's participation as members and leaders, is likely to be the most transformative route. The problem with this is that women who are not PO members but continue to work on the farms of their husbands or fathers who are PO members will remain to large extent invisible and outside the scope of PO interventions. Other mechanisms or approaches are needed to engage these women, such as the use of Household Methodologies such as GALS, spaces such as women's committees where wives and daughters of members can participate, and flexible approaches to other training, for example, policies which open technical training to family members who perform important production tasks but are not themselves registered as members. These are of particular relevance in situations where bylaws prevent both husband and wife joining or where membership of the PO is considered for the family, as in these scenarios men are often taken to be the de facto representative of the family and women remain sidelined.

“ We have to keep learning, keep asking questions, and in Pangoa's case, we have to look again at what development is for the women now. They have made progress, of course. But now, according to their progress, we need to look at another level, what is development? Where are they headed? If they have more income, what will they do? ”

Esperanza Dionisio

**Women's empowerment:** The two case studies describe similar outcomes in terms of enhancing women's self-esteem and their ability to take part in activities outside the home. However, with regards to economic empowerment, the two cases offer different pathways. Control over proceeds from the primary cash crop may be slower to change through the women's committee model. For example, when CAC Pangoa trainers started to use GALS, they discovered that some of the women who seemed empowered were still not able to make decisions about the use of coffee and cocoa income in their households.

Involving women as PO members has a direct effect on women's control over coffee and cocoa income and their sense of themselves as producers of the primary crop, rather than the wives of producers. When working with women's committees and groups, the focus tends to be on alternative income generation and microcredit, which empower women in different ways. For example, earning income from other sources and engaging in economic activities such as selling products at the Saturday market in the CAC Pangoa case can change women's negotiating power at home, and may increase their ability to participate in shared decision-making regarding coffee or cocoa income. This change in negotiating power has been further enhanced through GALS training which promotes joint decision making.

**Selecting the best approach:** The choice of approach will depend on analysis of the current situation. To clarify what change will be most transformative for women and men and how best to use the structure of a PO to bring that change about it is worth asking questions such as: Is membership open to more than one person in the household or is it considered for the family? Are coffee or cocoa regarded as crops that benefit the entire family? Who currently makes decisions about income? Are women interested in increasing their involvement in coffee and/or cocoa, or do they want to focus on other activities?

Maura Rochas, member of CODEMU, who has benefited from GALS training and from a loan to develop income diversification activities, including raising small livestock.



# Women's access to land as a catalyst for change

In many coffee and cocoa producing regions women have limited access to and control over productive resources, including land. Experiences from Africa and Latin America show that women are disadvantaged in both legal and customary land tenure systems. Women's access to land is often constrained in both women-headed households and those headed by men.

Female-headed households tend to have smaller farms and less secure tenure arrangements (FAO, 2014). While, women in male-headed households are expected to contribute their unpaid labour to the family farm, they often do so without having co-ownership rights to the farm and without directly benefiting from the production of cocoa or coffee, which are normally sold by men. In addition, the protection of women's rights on divorce or the death of a husband is often weak, leaving women and children without a home and a source of livelihood.

Land is an essential resource for coffee and cocoa producers, and landownership is often the entry point through which farmers gain access to many other assets and opportunities such as membership of cooperatives or loans from banks. In the longer-term, landownership gives farmers more income security for themselves and their children.

Although access to land, particularly for women, is a very complex issues, it is possible to empower women by strengthening their ownership of and usufruct rights to land, which can be a first step in achieving gender equality and ensuring that women benefit from the production of coffee or cocoa. Stronger rights encourage women to engage more actively in cocoa and coffee production, with benefits for themselves and their families, communities and the value chain.

In this section, light shop participants share the experiences of the (cocoa) Kookoo Pa Farmers Association in Ghana and the Mzuzu Coffee Planters Cooperative Union in Malawi, and describe how the two organizations promote land sharing within the household with the aim of increasing the benefits that women obtain from their contributions to cocoa and coffee farming.

# The case of Kookoo Pa: Registration of land as membership requirement

*Joyce Poku-Marboah, Business Development Manager and Gender Focal Person, Kookoo Pa*

## Summary

Kookoo Pa introduced a change in its membership registration policy to promote the active involvement of women in the cocoa production process by extending membership in the PO to the wives of men members so that they can have access to training and other services. The change requires men farmers to grant a part of their land for their wives' use so that the women can register as association members in their own right. This strategy is coupled with sensitization on gender issues for both men and women. As a result, women's membership in the cooperative has increased and women are gradually starting to control the income from their plots of cocoa farm. The next step is to reach more communities and involve more women as PO members and leaders.

## Kookoo Pa Farmers Organization

Formerly known as AHANSUCOFA, Kookoo Pa Farmers Association was formed in 2009 by cocoa farmers in ten communities of two political districts in the Ashanti region of Ghana. Its formation was inspired by Solidaridad West Africa, which was working with farmers on sustainable cocoa practices based on UTZ<sup>6</sup> certified standards. Supported by Solidaridad, the farmers decided to form an independent, vibrant and strong PO producing sustainable cocoa. Kookoo Pa started with 352 farmer members, 11 percent of whom were women. Ownership of land was one of the criteria for membership, which meant that most women were excluded from Kookoo Pa.

Recognizing that women do much of the work on cocoa farms, Kookoo Pa's officers regarded women's exclusion from PO membership and the PO's training in areas such as good agricultural, social and environmental practices as unfair and inefficient. In considering how to adjust this imbalance Kookoo Pa decided to take affirmative action in order to increase women's membership so that women could benefit more from their on-farm contributions. The PO therefore decided to loosen its membership requirements by asking men PO members to register with the PO portions of their land in the names of their wives. As a result, Kookoo Pa's membership has increased from 8 600 to 10 600 farmers, of whom 35 percent are women. About 85 percent of the members have been UTZ-certified since 2010.

<sup>6</sup> UTZ is a non-profit organization based in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, which promotes the sustainable farming of coffee, cocoa, tea and hazelnuts worldwide, including through a quality certification programme.

## Restoring the imbalance between women's contribution to cocoa production and control over resources and benefits

As in other cocoa producing countries, women do much of the work for cocoa production in Ghana. When it comes to selling the produce, however, men dominate, with the result that women do not control the income that is generated from cocoa. The often-quoted explanation is that the person who owns the land – usually a man – is the person entitled to sell the produce that comes from the land and control the income.

Although in Ghana women and men officially have equal access and control rights to land, in practice women are disadvantaged. For example, when purchasing land, women need the consent of their husbands. Landowners do not deal directly with women without their husbands.

Neither of the two systems of inheritance in Ghana (matrilineal and patrilineal) is beneficial to women in terms of landownership because in both systems it is the male next of kin who inherits land. Women become the “secondary owners” of land because they have only temporary user rights to it (GhanaWeb, 2016). For example, when a man dies, his wife does not have the right to his land. When women do have access to land, it is often only to small plots or as farmhands or workers rather than co-owners, even on their husbands' farms.

The disadvantages for women do not stop here. Without landownership, women miss out on the opportunities that could help them benefit more from cocoa production. For example, extension agents provide training to farmers who are the members of POs, most of whom are landowners – in Kookoo Pa's case, registered men cocoa farmers. According to Joyce Poku-Marboath, Business Development Manager of Kookoo Pa, “If you are a woman, you are considered the farmer's wife and are often not invited to training meetings”.

Kookoo Pa aims to correct this imbalance by loosening its membership registration policy in order to facilitate the inclusion of more women as members and to help ensure that women are treated fairly.

Hannah Achiaa with her husband, one of the women farmers who has benefited from the membership registration policy in the Ahafo Ano District of Ashanti Region.



©Kookoo Pa

## Membership registration policy to promote women's involvement

Kookoo Pa's decision to loosen its registration policy was taken during the annual general meeting in 2014, which is the main forum for decision-making in the PO and brings farmers, board members and management together.

The change in membership policy involved the following steps:

1. Men members were asked to register their wives as members by having first granted part of their land for the use of their wives.
2. The members (men and women) were sensitized to and received training in gender issues.

There was very little resistance from the men regarding registering portions of their land in the names of their wives, which the men perceived as "harmless" as they and their wives already worked on the land together. Moreover, the registration did not involve the formal redistribution of land; it is likely that if Kookoo Pa had asked the men to give their wives the formal titles to the land, the men would have resisted.

“ We told the men, don't just bring the name of your wife, but register her name with a portion of your land. So, for example, if you have 8 acres of land, then register 6 for yourself and 2 for your wife. ”

Joyce Poku-Marboah

Kookoo Pa's officers realized that without sensitization of both men and women, this initiative would not work. After introducing the new registration policy, Kookoo Pa therefore intensified training in gender dimensions for its members and found that explaining gender dynamics as a social construct helped men and women farmers to understand that roles, including traditional gender-based ones, are assigned on the basis of cultural and social norms and that they can be changed.

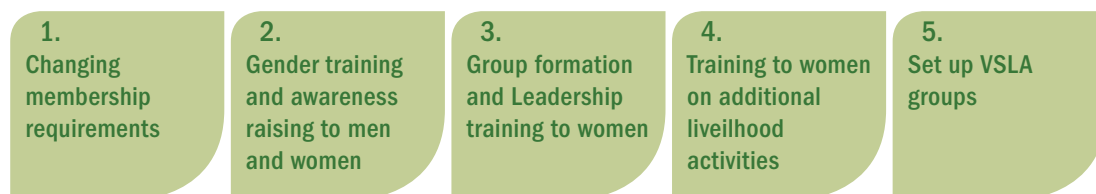
Some training sessions were held with both men and women and some with women only. Important topics covered during sensitization sessions with both men and women were the importance of men and women working together, violence against women and its prevention, legal literacy (family, marriage and inheritance law, children's acts, etc.) and business and marketing issues (recognizing women's labour as part of the costs of production, pricing, etc.). Topics with women only included women in cooperatives, women's leadership, assertiveness and negotiation skills.

The next stage was the formation of a women's group in each of the communities where Kookoo Pa has members. The women members of Kookoo Pa are automatically also members of the local women's group. Each group has an average of 20 members who identify two group leaders to receive leadership training. The role of the leaders is to encourage the other women in the group and help build their confidence.

Kookoo Pa's intervention also covered other livelihood activities and the development of relevant skills. Such activities are important because cocoa production is seasonal, so farmers need other sources of income for the periods between cocoa harvests. Kookoo Pa therefore trained women in the production of food crops that the women and their families could consume themselves and sell when they had a surplus. The women were also trained in processing cocoa husk to make soap (at home or to sell), and how to make *gari* to raise more income.

To avoid a situation in which trained women are unable to apply their learnings due to a lack of resources, Kookoo Pa promoted savings and financial inclusion. With support of the NGO Care Ghana, Kookoo Pa set up 16 Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs), in 16 communities. These VSLA activities give women access to small loans, for example to buy a sewing machine to start a business.

Figure 4: Steps involved in giving women access to land



## Changing the terms of engagement by giving women access to land for cocoa production



Kookoo Pa's case shows that despite the complexity of land issues in Ghana, it is possible to increase women's access to land for cocoa production. Kookoo Pa achieved this by loosening its membership criteria through the transfer of land from men farmers to their wives. These land transfers are symbolic in that landownership does not change, but they give women access to the training and services offered by the PO and have opened up opportunities for women to take control over the land and its produce.

“ We have a list of women who have confirmed that they keep the proceeds from the land. And some of them have gone a bit further – some husbands have given the titles of the land – but this is only a very few. ”

“ Men now understand that if your wife is doing the labour she also should be paid, and deserves a share of the money from the cocoa proceeds. ”

“ Even though the change was not imposed on the men, a risk can be that men first allow the women to keep the proceeds from their piece of land, but then at the end of the day want the money (or product) anyhow. This could become a problem. ”

Joyce Poku-Marboah

### Affirmative action can occur without resistance

Without the change in its membership policy, the number of women members of Kookoo Pa would not have increased so substantially. It is worthy of note that the affirmative action to engage more women as members did not meet with much resistance from men.

The proposal regarding land transfers was introduced to the men PO members in ways that helped to overcome potential resistance. The men's registration of part of their cocoa land in their wives' names did not involve any documents (such as land titles) or official procedures. In addition, the men themselves decided the areas of land to be registered in their wives' names.

Although Kookoo Pa's strategy has contributed to a change in women's terms of engagement in the PO, efforts to overcome persistent gender inequalities have to continue. For example, the portions of land given to women may be smaller or less productive than those that remain under the control of men. Sensitization on gender issues and allocation of resources within the households therefore needs to be continuous or the progress achieved so far will be undone.

### Equality in the household

The combination of being a member of the PO, participating in a variety of training courses and having land registered in their own names has boosted women's confidence and increased their self-esteem. These changes have been reflected not only in the cooperative, where women are assuming leadership roles, but also in households, where women have become more assertive and have started to negotiate and claim their rights.

Many co-habiting couples are not legally married, which means that many women have few rights when their partners die; they have no formal land rights and can even be turned out of their homes by their deceased partners' families. During the training both men and women learned about these legal issues and how they affect women in particular. With this understanding, women have started to ask their partners to legalize their marriages and to pay them for their contributions to their households' farm work.

“ With *fufu* preparation, the men are supposed to pound while the women turn it in a mortar. But in practice the women do it all as the men relax and play games. This situation is changing as some of the men are now assisting the women as they should. ”

Joyce Poku-Marboah

Kookoo Pa received feedback from women saying that men's attitudes are changing positively because of the training and that household tasks are being shared more equally. For example, a young woman said that previously, while she was cooking, the children would run around and distract her. Now that her husband has been sensitized, however, he takes care of the children when she is cooking. There is also more joint decision-making in households regarding how money is spent. This contributes to family well-being as women tend to spend money judiciously, especially on taking care of their families. Local analysis indicates that when women are not involved in decision-making, men are likely to misappropriate at least part of the family income for personal and social matters – including “chasing young girls” and alcohol according to feedback from the women. In addition, Kookoo Pa's empowerment of women is leading to greater family cohesion and the changing of deep-rooted attitudes towards women.

### Successes

- Currently, a total of about 6 900 men and 3 700 women are registered as Kookoo Pa members (in one district in each of three regions of Ghana). Kookoo Pa started with women accounting for only 11 percent of the total membership. Eight years later, almost 35 percent of its members are women. This is a far higher than the national average, which is about 25 percent.
- Women receive more benefits from their involvement in cocoa production:
  1. In three years Kookoo Pa had provided training in 20 percent of the communities where it is active. In about 250 cases, women keep the proceeds of the working the land and have control over the money raised.



2. As members, women have access to training in good agricultural practices. Increases in yields are expected to result from GAP training after three years. Currently, Kookoo Pa's members produce about 600 kg per hectare, which is significantly higher than the national average of about 450 kg per hectare (Tropenbos International, 2014: 34).
  - Currently, 35 womens' groups have been formed and 70 women group leaders have been identified, selected and trained in leadership skills.
  - Thanks to the VSLAs, women are now better able to save money and have easier access to soft loans. The assumption is that gradually the members of VSLA groups will obtain access to other types of microfinance because they will have track records that show that they can save.
  - The success of Kookoo Pa is encouraging other POs in Ghana to follow the same approach. Kookoo Pa has been active in inspiring other POs at learning events, including those organized by FAO, Twin and KIT (2016), and the World Cocoa Conference (2017).

### Challenges

- High levels of poverty sometimes make it difficult to encourage farmers to engage in activities because they have to concentrate on earning money quickly. It is therefore recommended that training be complemented with support to farmers in engaging in additional livelihood activities that help them to earn additional income.
- Kookoo Pa has not been able to carry out activities in all communities because of financial constraints. For example, the scale-up of VSLAs has had to be delayed until Kookoo Pa has additional funding. In addition, not all PO members have been trained (so far, only 20 percent have) and even the farmers who have been trained would benefit from refresher courses. Currently Kookoo Pa finances its activities through the support of WCF, but its main sources of funding are membership fees and a small part of the premium that farmers receive for their certified products.

# The case of Mzuzu: Campaigning for women's access to productive resources

*Bernard B. Kaunda, Chief Executive Officer Mzuzu Coffee Planters Cooperative Union*

## Summary

Mzuzu Coffee Planters Cooperative Union in Malawi started to work on gender issues in the coffee value chain in March 2011 with a workshop facilitated by Twin involving women members of Mzuzu's member cooperatives. Following Twin's experience of marketing coffee grown by women, Mzuzu carried out an *internal campaign to encourage men to share land with their wives*, working closely with men who were interested in trying. Mzuzu also promotes women's ownership of coffee farms by advocating for sole ownership and user rights for widows, and co-ownership for married women. The main strategy for this has been to encourage men to share land with their wives and daughters. The next step will be to work with families to ensure that shared and/or individual ownership is legally registered.

## Land rights in Malawi

Land registration in Malawi is an issue for both men and women and there are regional differences in land rights: the central and southern regions are broadly matrilineal, while the northern region is patrilineal. Traditionally, land is held by chiefs and the government. Since 2016, however, changes have been occurring and the new land bill introduced in 2016 is expected to improve land rights for men, women and young people.<sup>7</sup>

In Malawi, access to land depends on the decision of local chiefs. In order to convince local chiefs that women should have access land, it is therefore necessary to sensitize local communities and traditional authorities regarding the value of ensuring women's access to land. First, however, the men in local households need to be sensitized.

## Mzuzu Coffee Planters Cooperative Union

Mzuzu Coffee Planters Cooperative Union is a union of six coffee producing cooperatives, which are the primary shareholders in the union. A total of 3 000 farmers are registered as members of which 25% are women. Most of these farmers are based in northern Malawi, apart from the members of one cooperative, which is based in the central region. Mzuzu's focus is on the marketing of high-quality coffee and the economic development of its members. Mzuzu has four main development aims: adequate housing, food security, warmth (bedding and clothing) and education for all its members and their families.

<sup>7</sup> The 2016 land bill makes private landownership possible, including for women and young people. The bill was discussed during the Second Malawi Land Symposium in 2017, at which it was announced that the Government of Malawi is developing a gender strategy that includes an assessment of the main issues and barriers related to land rights that face women and other vulnerable groups, and the engagement of local institutions in addressing gender issues. A summary of the implications of Malawi's new land acts, including for women and young people, is available at [http://foodsecuritypolicy.msu.edu/uploads/files/Malawi/MoLHUD\\_-\\_2017\\_Malawi\\_Land\\_Symposium\\_-\\_James\\_Namfuko.pdf](http://foodsecuritypolicy.msu.edu/uploads/files/Malawi/MoLHUD_-_2017_Malawi_Land_Symposium_-_James_Namfuko.pdf) (accessed June 2018).

Mzuzu started a programme for women in 2011 when its officers observed that production volumes were stagnating and women and young people were gradually withdrawing from coffee production. Farms were becoming less productive, and the sustainability of the coffee sector seemed to be at risk. Mzuzu started to work with women and young people with a view to increasing the involvement of these groups as essential to the stability of the coffee industry.

Work on women's inclusion started when a group of women cooperative members were involved in a workshop facilitated by Twin. At the workshop, participants learned that women were not motivated to work in coffee production because their husbands were taking all the proceeds and the women were receiving no direct benefits. Based on Twin's experience of marketing coffee grown by women, Mzuzu carried out an internal campaign with its membership in order to encourage men to share their land with their wives, working closely with men who were willing to try this. Mzuzu started collecting coffee grown by women separately from that grown by men, although the coffee was not specifically marketed as "women's coffee" until 2012/13. Women were encouraged to deliver their coffee to coffee washing stations, and received direct payment for it.

“ As the women's coffee premium is divided up, with 45 percent that goes directly to the women (the members), 30 percent goes to the microcredit scheme, 10 percent goes to the cooperative, and 15 percent goes to the union, to cover the costs of women's committee meetings at these levels. ”

Bernard B. Kaunda

Female coffee farmer at work.



©Mzuzu

Mzuzu is now promoting women's ownership of coffee farms and selling "women's coffee". Although Mzuzu's original interest in working with women was stimulated by business considerations, the cooperative union is now more interested in the overall impact of its programme for women, particularly in how involving women more directly in the value chain can promote the economic development of the whole family.

### Promoting access to productive resources for women and young people

The focus of Mzuzu's gender programme since 2011 has been on increasing control over productive resources and capacities to generate and control income from coffee among women and young people by involving them in coffee farming.

The first step in the programme was to sensitize the staff and leaders of Mzuzu's member cooperatives on gender issues, helping them to understand the roles of men and women and the importance of land sharing. Gender issues have also been integrated into the agricultural training provided to farmers since 2011 in order to promote the idea of sharing land with women.

The trained cooperative staff then started to encourage men to share their land with their wives and daughters. Mzuzu's strategy targeted both married and unmarried women by promoting women's ownership of coffee farms through co-ownership for married women, sole ownership for single women and land-user rights for widows.

Mzuzu also fostered women's participation in decision-making through their holding of leadership positions in cooperatives. Currently, 313 of Mzuzu's 601 women members hold leadership positions. Mzuzu suggested that women form local women's committees and integrate them into the structure of their local coffee producers' cooperative. After receiving leadership training, the members of women's committees came together at the union level to formulate a gender policy for Mzuzu and promoted the idea of land sharing among other women in their communities, including in conversations at coffee washing stations during which the benefits of Mzuzu membership were discussed. So far, 23 women's committees have been created in the six member cooperatives of Mzuzu.

Women participants, including women committee members, participating in GALS training at Misuku, Mzuzu's largest member cooperative.

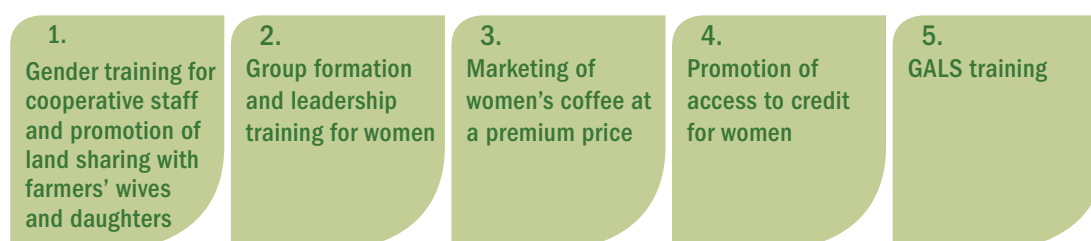


Mzuzu also advocated for increasing women's access to credit, and has so far set up five microcredit groups with a combined membership of 80 women in two of its six member cooperatives. The microcredit is designed to support underprivileged women in scaling up their coffee production and can also be used for other household necessities.

In 2016/17, in five of the six cooperatives, GALS training was provided by Mzuzu's Gender Coordinator in order to support households in planning and to introduce them to gender analysis and strategies. GALS training was also provided by Twin in one cooperative and by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and the Ministry of Agriculture to two cooperatives. Mzuzu's Gender Coordinator is following up on these GALS courses in all six cooperatives, with support from Twin.

In 2012, Mzuzu started to market "women's coffee", which is achieving consistently high ratings in quality evaluations, scoring well above the 80 point threshold for speciality grade coffee. The women's coffee earns a premium of USD 0.20/lb (approximately USD 0.44/kg) on the international market. Of this premium, 45 percent goes directly to the women, encouraging them to continue investing in their coffee farms.

Figure 5: Steps involved in promoting women's access to productive resources



## Changing the terms of engagement by promoting women's access to productive resources

### From a focus on women to a focus on gender

When Mzuzu started working with women in coffee production, the focus was very much on "women" and not on "gender issues". Mzuzu's interest was driven purely by business needs: without the involvement of women in the coffee sector, the future of the sector was not assured. In practice, however, from the start, sensitization activities were directed towards both men and women because men had to be convinced to share their land and coffee plants with their wives. In households where women sell coffee directly, both men and women have learned from experience that, rather than dividing the household, women's ability to earn their own income from coffee has led to greater harmony in decision-making and an improved quality of life.

The recent introduction of GALS training has provided another opportunity to work with both men and women, encouraging them to make household plans and visions together. Reflecting on this and in dialogue with Twin, Mzuzu officers decided to reframe the women in coffee programme as a gender programme. Mzuzu still markets coffee grown by women but recognizes the crucial role that men play in bringing about change and aims to carry out GALS training for all of its member cooperatives. Both the marketing of women's coffee and GALS training contribute to the achievement of Mzuzu's four development aims.

### Start changes at the household level

In the case of Mzuzu changes occurred at both the household and the more formal institutional levels (e.g. changes in organizational policy and by-laws, including by enabling women to be elected to Mzuzu boards and leadership positions). Resource sharing at the household level was key in bringing about other changes, including by providing incentives for women to start investing in coffee production again as well as creating more harmony in the households.

Changes at the household level were fostered by sensitization of cooperative staff, leadership training for women, access to microloans for women and the campaign for promoting land sharing in households. Women's involvement in leadership was very important and helped to improve women's agency. The formulation of policies in consultation with women's committees resulted in the development of a gender policy.

The decision to separate women's coffee from the coffee grown by men cooperative members, and to pay women directly (rather than through their husbands) for their coffee led to women starting to talk at the meetings of other cooperatives and at coffee washing stations in order to encourage other women to join. Women's coffee is now a product in its own right and earns a premium payment. This access to markets for women reinforces the changes related to increasingly joint decision-making in households, because by selling their own produce women gain more control over the income from coffee and their self-esteem and morale are boosted by the international recognition they receive.

### Marketing women's coffee increases women's incentive to invest

The marketing of coffee grown by women encouraged the women to dedicate more time to coffee farming and to try to produce more coffee. If the market for women's coffee grows it will be possible to increase the current volume sold – two containers a year – to three or four containers a year. The full potential of the market for coffee grown by women has still to be explored, but demand and interest are generally increasing. The uncertainty of supplying an as yet emerging market is a challenge for Mzuzu and other POs supplying coffee grown by women, because it creates a need to manage expectations and ensure that the programme and its activities can survive any fluctuations in demand. The strength of Mzuzu's approach is that the benefits for women go beyond the coffee premium. Whether they receive the premium or not, women will benefit because their ownership of coffee plants and direct receipt of income transforms decision-making and gender relations in their households. At the same time, the premium is valuable as a resource for investing in the microcredit scheme and for providing additional income for women to invest in their coffee farms. In addition, a portion of the premium is used to support the activities of women's committees at the cooperative and union levels – a key element in attracting more women to join Mzuzu.

“ The coffee that is produced by women is kept separate. There is traceability. You can't mix the two. The women's coffee gets this premium to assist the women as they have to make quite some investment, such as drying. Also, part is used for the microcredit fund, which helps to get women on board, who have a low income. ”

Bernard B. Kaunda

## Successes

- The number of women members increased from 584 in 2011/12 to 648 in 2016/17.
- When Mzuzu started the gender programme in 2012/13, 108 women farmers sold “women’s coffee” through the union. In 2016/17 this figure had increased to 564.
- A total of 23 women’s committees have been set up to provide direction and oversight of programmes for women. All women members of Mzuzu engage in coffee production, but some of the newer members who have recently planted coffee for the first time have not yet delivered coffee as it takes three years for the plants to mature and start producing cherries.
- Women have been elected to decision-making positions in the cooperatives and the union. The membership of Mzuzu boards at all levels is at least 30 percent women, and by-laws stipulate that if the chair is a man the vice chair must be a woman, and vice versa. The current vice chair of the union board is a woman.
- The premium paid on the international market for coffee grown by women has generated a total of MWK 32.4 million (approximately USD 44 000).
- The volumes of women’s coffee sold increased from 3.7 tonnes in 2012/13 to 38.4 tonnes in 2014/15 and 34.4 tonnes in 2015/16, resulting in increased incomes for women farmers.
- A microcredit scheme has been set up using a percentage of the premium earned from sales of women’s coffee. To date, five microcredit groups have been formed, with a total membership of 80 women – about 12 percent of the women who are currently members of Mzuzu. The women have access to credit at low interest rates and their repayment rate is an outstanding 99 percent compared with the 60–70 percent repayment by men farmers.
- Mzuzu shares its best practices on gender issues through networking, including with the African Fine Coffees Association and at the FAO/KIT/Twin event in June 2016. This is inspiring other POs and farmers to follow the same practices.

## Challenges

- No data are yet available on achievements in terms of landownership, use of land and women’s land rights. These aspects are currently being monitored. Cultural barriers make it challenging to change landownership. Because these barriers vary from region to region, multiple situational analyses need to be carried out and tailored approaches developed. This requires time and resources.
- When Mzuzu started to market women’s coffee there was some resistance from men because sensitization had been inadequate – only women in one cooperative had been invited to the original sensitization workshop. In a few cases, men tried to sell their own coffee as women’s coffee (through their wives). One way of controlling such misuse of the system is through central processing.
- Obtaining sufficient financial resources to cover all operations is a challenge, particularly when not all the coffee can be sold as specialty coffee, like women’s coffee.
- The market for women’s coffee is still emerging and there is a risk that Mzuzu rely heavily on a few buyers. Mzuzu needs to find new buyers and start diversifying its members’ produce to obtain access to different market channels, such as those for organic and fair trade women’s coffee. In 2016/17 the volumes of women’s coffee sold were lower (19.2 tonnes) than in the previous year because one regular buyer did not buy that season, meaning that about half of the coffee collected as women’s coffee had to be sold without the women’s coffee premium.

## The power of giving women access to productive resources

**Improving women's access to land:** Both the Kookoo Pa and Mzuzu cases show that even when customary land systems are complex, it is possible to improve women's access to land, and that doing so creates a wide range of spin-off benefits. Both POs share the belief that helping women to obtain access to land and capital opens up many possibilities for more transformative change.

### Similarities and differences between the two cases

**Entry points for addressing gender issues:** The POs for coffee farmers in Malawi and cocoa farmers in Ghana are similar in the contexts in which they operate, not only in terms of the traditional land systems that are in place, but also regarding the lack of direct benefits that women receive from their contributions to coffee and cocoa production respectively. In Malawi, this lack resulted in women moving out of coffee production, creating a business incentive for Mzuzu to invest in fostering gender equality and equity. In Ghana, the starting point for addressing gender issues was slightly different and was based on the realization that it was unfair and inefficient for women who contribute to cocoa production not to be rewarded.

**Fostering women's investments in production:** Another similarity is that both POs emphasized the need for incentives for women to invest in coffee or cocoa production. However, while Kookoo Pa started by approaching men and asking them to register parts of their land in their wives' names, Mzuzu started by building women's agency directly, offering them a separate marketing channel for their coffee. In both cases, it was recognized that success depends on targeting both men and women for sensitization activities.

### The implications for other POs looking to address land issues

**Addressing landownership and access issues:** The main lesson from the cases presented in this section is that there is no universal approach when seeking to give women more access to and control over land because regional differences call for different regional approaches. What is clear, however, is that it is crucial to resolve issues regarding landownership and access. This is a complex challenge, but changing land distribution helps to empower women, alleviate poverty and bring sustainability and a brighter future for the coffee and cocoa industries.

**Developing markets and marketing strategies:** An important lesson from the marketing of women's coffee is that regular and committed buyers play a core role. A strength of Mzuzu's approach to addressing gender issues is that it is multifaceted and the marketing of coffee grown by women is a fully integrated element of an overall strategy for enhancing women's control over assets and participation as members and leaders of POs. This means, however, that when coffee grown by women is not marketed as such because of a drop in demand (as occurred in 2016/17), there will be impacts on the rest of the gender programme and on the motivation of women farmers. Although in recent years, Mzuzu's marketing activities have focused on developing long-term relationships with buyers, for women's coffee there is a risk of becoming over-dependent on too small number of buyers. Mzuzu is working actively with Twin to explore new markets and generate more consistent demand for women's coffee, including by developing differentiated products such as organic coffee grown by women.



**Avoiding misuse of incentive schemes:** Another lesson is that when a product earns a price premium there is the risk that people will try to cheat the certification system in order to gain the premium. This occurred in the Mzuzu case, when men tried to sell their coffee as women's coffee to earn the premium price. Mzuzu has established a system for preventing cheating in the future:

- Before the coffee harvest, farmers are asked to estimate the expected volumes of their coffee crops (in kilograms), and anyone whose crop exceeds the estimate by at least 10-15 percent is questioned regarding where the additional production came from.
- Mzuzu trains farmers to monitor the harvesting process.
- Mzuzu's system of central processing facilitates monitoring because men and women farmers deliver their coffee to a central site for primary processing<sup>8</sup> on separate days. Women's coffee can therefore be weighed and processed separately from that of men, and any coffee in excess of these amounts is not accepted as women's coffee.

**Resource challenges:** In both case studies, it was emphasized that obtaining sufficient resources to pay for activities is challenging, particularly because both men and women cooperative members have to be trained and sensitized in order to achieve the planned results. Kookoo Pa has found that the cheaper training of trainers approach is not effective for most non-agricultural topics. For example, it does not work well for training on gender issues, which are too complex in comparison with the overall education levels of farmers, making it difficult for trained farmers to share their learning with peers. In addition, it is difficult for farmers to sensitize their communities about sensitive topics such as gender-based violence without incurring the wrath of community leaders and other people in positions of authority. Kookoo Pa therefore finds it far more effective to send its own officers into communities to talk with farmers and other community members. In contrast, Mzuzu's adoption of GALS training, which relies on community champions and a system of peer sharing, has proved effective for sensitize men and women about gender-related topics.

**Addressing imbalances of power:** Another challenge is that men are afraid of losing their power as a result of sharing their land and resources. In programmes that aim to improve gender equality it is necessary to identify and address issues related to power and power balances. This means examining not only the households where women have gained control over the land they have been allocated, but also comparing them to those where men have retained their dominant roles, and analysing why this has happened.

<sup>8</sup> Primary processing is carried out at the local level in the villages, using machines that are controlled by cooperatives. Central processing allows the cooperatives to check whether or not the farmers have delivered the contracted quantities.



# Improving business performance through the household approach

Changing the mindset of women and men producers is a necessary step in changing behaviours both in the household and on the farm. The household or family approach has been increasingly embraced by private-sector companies, often through their technical and implementing partners. Although a household approach on its own is often insufficient to bring changes in the terms of engagement of cocoa and coffee growing families in value chains, it has proved to be effective in engaging women and men in a process of change.

Household methodologies are participatory approaches that support family members in working together to improve gender relations in order to benefit from joint decision-making and realise their full development potential. The household approach is an exciting innovation in the agriculture sector, because it shifts the focus of interventions from assets to people, looking inside the household and identifying the differentiated priorities, needs and constraints of different members of a household. These methodologies allow household members to identify and overcome obstacles and improve their lives by tackling the underlying social norms, values and attitudes that shape existing gender relations. Several household methodologies are being used in the coffee and cocoa sectors and many of them build on the GALS introduced in the previous sections.

This section highlights the experiences of two companies working through technical partners to follow a household approach with the aim of stimulating the production of quality coffee by addressing gender inequalities within the household.

The first experience is that of the coffee company Lavazza and their service provider Hanns R. Neuman Stiftung in Uganda, and the second is that of ECOM and Sustainable Management Services in the United Republic of Tanzania.

**previous page:** Workers are seen weeding the new wilt resistance coffee at a nursery belonging to Mrs Betty Ndugga during a visit by the Food and Agriculture Organization on the United Nations (FAO).

# The case of HRNS: Couple seminars changing the terms of engagement

*Malisa Mukanga, Programme Manager Youth and Gender, Hanns R. Neumann Stiftung*

## Summary

Lavazza is part of a consortium of family-owned coffee businesses that share a common interest in supporting sustainability projects in coffee producing regions. In 2001, the consortium established International Coffee Partners (ICP). ICP member Hans R. Neumann Stiftung<sup>9</sup> (HRNS) led the development of the “gender household approach”, which works directly with coffee producing families through “couple seminars”. The first case study describes how couple seminars in Uganda helped stimulate gradual change in women’s terms of engagement in the coffee chain.

## Hans R. Neumann Stiftung and Lavazza

HRNS is one of the implementing partners of International Coffee Partners, a consortium of seven European, family-owned coffee businesses with a common interest in supporting projects in coffee producing regions. HRNS has led the development of an improve family well-being called the “gender household approach”.

## The gender household approach

The gender household approach promotes coffee production as a family business that involves both men and women with all household members benefiting equally from the proceeds because decisions are made jointly about how to increase and invest farm income. HRNS developed and pioneered this approach in Uganda, and has gone on to use it successfully in several other African countries and, in an adapted version in Latin America.

## Driving change in smallholder coffee farming households in Uganda

Coffee is one of the main cash crops in Uganda where 84 percent of the population lives in rural areas.<sup>10</sup> As in many other coffee producing countries, in Uganda coffee is perceived as a “man’s crop”. Although both men and women contribute to coffee production, and women have overall longer working days,<sup>11</sup> men make the decisions regarding how the income from coffee is spent. As a result women do not benefit equally from any increase in productivity or income.

<sup>9</sup> ICP was set up by Michael R. Neumann of the Neumann Kaffee Gruppe. Other members include Löfberg of Karlstad, Sweden, Paulig of Helsinki, Finland and Herz of Hamburg, Germany. Sharing core values, these family companies have pioneered a highly innovative concept by forming a democratic joint not-for-profit corporate venture. More information is available at <http://www.coffee-partners.org/about-us/our-history>

<sup>10</sup> According to data for 2016 from Trading Economics. <https://tradingeconomics.com/uganda/rural-population-percent-of-total-population-wb-data.html>

<sup>11</sup> Research by Kasante (2012) indicates that men were found to work for eight hours day while women worked for up to 15 hours, including their hours spent on coffee production and household tasks.

The gender household approach, which fosters the sharing of household responsibilities, resources and decision-making power by husbands and wives, challenges this situation and helps to generate benefits from coffee production for the entire family.

HRNS combines the gender household approach with the promotion of women’s participation in farmer organizations. To support women in taking up leadership positions, HRNS provides women with training in leadership and business skills.

### Couple seminars

One of HRNS’s main activities in Uganda is organizing couple seminars. To ensure that the approach is followed effectively, HRNS staff have received capacity strengthening in dealing with gender inequality issues at the organization and farmer levels.

In couple seminars, about 30 couples – pairs of husband and wife of farmers who supply coffee to Lavazza – are invited to discuss topics such as their household responsibilities and activities, access to assets and family decision-making. Exercises help to increase participants’ awareness of gender issues; for example, lists reflecting the division of tasks between men and women show that women often have far more to do than men. The seminar facilitator asks the couples what they think about the division of tasks in their households and whether they see it as problematic and in need of change. In about 25–30 percent of the participants in most couple seminars have said that they intend to make changes and this recognition forms the basis for introducing change to the couples’ current behaviours. HRNS staff observed that these couples commit themselves to changing some of the practices in their households, including by introducing joint decision-making regarding, for example, the generation and use of household income.

Couples who make this commitment are given a two to three-month “incubation period” during which they are invited to training as “change agents” and are monitored. At the end of the incubation period, couples who are successfully making the changes that they planned are visited in their homes and given follow-up support from HRNS staff. After some time these sensitized couples are considered to be “change agents” and are each expected to train five other couples who are participating in farmer field schools, for example by helping them to develop joint vision plans for their households.

Figure 6: The gender household approach to increasing and sharing the benefits of coffee farming

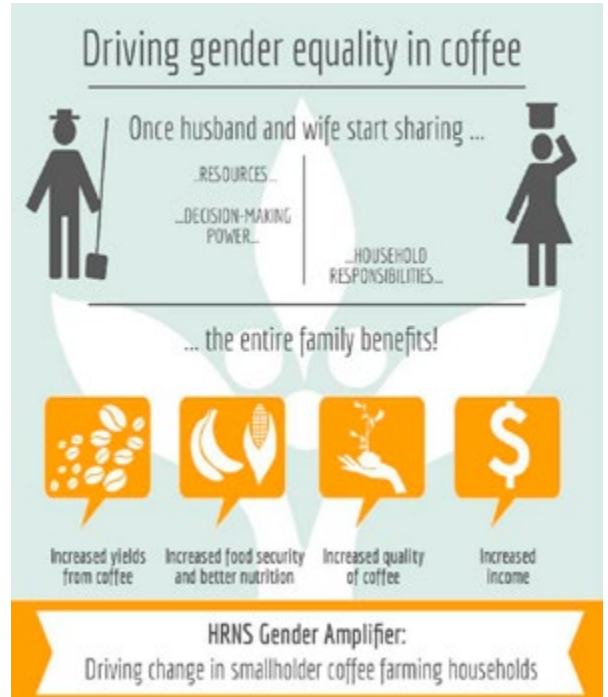


Figure 7: Steps involved in changing couples’ behaviour



In addition to the couple seminars, HNRS organizes community dialogues as an important step in ensuring that change agent households are not working in isolation. Community dialogues include activities such as drama through which couples enact the changes that they have brought about. These dramas are an exciting and engaging way of working with people and, by avoiding the over-personal, provide a very safe way of addressing sensitive issues. They are also a good way of sensitizing communities through the sharing of experiences. Another activity that complements the couple-seminars involves training stakeholders along the value chain – including farmer field school facilitators, extension agents and lead farmers – to integrate gender issues into their work.

An important that emerges from this experience is that when the members of a household feel supported by the community in changing their behaviour and practices, it is easier for them to do so.

## **Changing the terms of engagement through a household approach**

The experience of HNRS and its work with Lavazza and other ICP shareholders show how a household approach gradually changes the mind-set of women and men and influences gender norms and values within the household. This bottom-up approach guides reflection and transformation. Because the change is driven by the couples themselves, there is a strong sense of ownership over both the process and its results. The positive changes in power dynamics are not limited to the participating households but is also felt at the community level

### **Changing conditions by changing people's mind-sets**

This example shows how the gender household approach enables household members to change the ways in which they relate to each other: how they divide the labour in and around the house and on the family farm; how they make decisions; and how they obtain access to and control over resources. One of the findings from the project was that sharing domestic work can give women more time to rest or to engage in other income-generating activities.

In Uganda, another interesting change was that although farmland is still owned by men, both men and women increasingly perceive the family farm as a shared asset. There is also more transparency on how household resources are spent.

### **More equality is good for business**

The couple seminars have led to better communications and more joint planning within households. This has led to women becoming more interested in participating in coffee production, as coffee generates most of their households' income. Because women feel that they may benefit more from their contributions to coffee production they have become more involved.

Another result is that the quality of the coffee delivered has improved. One finding is that the greater the transparency on how the proceeds of coffee production are used within the household, the smaller the temptation to side-sell secretly to local traders, which used to be a common practice. These changes are of interest not only to Lavazza but also to the participating households because their incomes have increased.

### “If she can do it, we can do it”

The gender household approach is not the only activity HRNS is involved in. HRNS combines the approach with the provision of leadership and entrepreneurship training for women, focusing on building women’s self-confidence, knowledge and skills. As a result, women are becoming role models who inspire other women to act by, for example, providing literacy training for women or forming a VSLA. Together with the couple seminars and the community dialogues, this new role for women has led to them feeling more empowered to respond to their own needs, which in turn has not only amplified their voices, but also increased the choices they have in both the household and the community.

### Successes

A 2014 evaluation<sup>12</sup> of a two-year project using the gender household approach in Uganda indicated some of the impacts that can be achieved through this methodology:

- 79 percent of respondents reported greater sharing of domestic work between husbands and wives. This leaves women with more time for rest and other activities, including additional income generation.
- 84 percent of respondents reported shared decision-making regarding land use. Although men still own the land, the project increased the sense of shared ownership within participating couples.
- 95 percent of respondent couples had achieved greater transparency and shared decision-making regarding the use of coffee income and resources. Among other impacts, this has led to an increased asset base, greater household income and improved relationships between husbands and wives in participating households.
- 97 percent of respondents also engage in joint planning for the future; the benefits of this included women’s increased involvement in coffee producing activities as they became more confident that the proceeds would be used fairly.
- As a result of the methodology, 60 percent of couples reported that they had progressed more quickly by being able to make investments in their homes and farms, including in expanding their coffee plantations.

Another study (Lecoutere and Jassogne, 2016) – which was carried out in Uganda to analyse whether the more participatory intra-household decision-making promoted by HRNS contributes to sustainable intensification of coffee production, better livelihoods and fairer use of resources within the household – indicates that participatory decision-making is associated with greater investments in sustainable intensification, consideration of women’s interests, fairer divisions of labour within households, more equitable control over the income from cash crops and improved livelihoods.

To strengthen evidence generation further, HRNS is currently undertaking a randomized control trial of the gender programme in Masaka and Mubende in Uganda and Mbeya in the United Republic of Tanzania, together with the University of Antwerp and the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture.

<sup>12</sup> The Kabarole Research and Resource Centre carried out an evaluation of the “Improving Gender Relations in Targeted Coffee Farming Households for Equitable and Sustainable Development” project, which was implemented from January 2011 to December 2013.

## Challenges

- Follow-up visits are resource-intensive because trained gender officers have to visit the households after the couple seminars. In Uganda, since there are only four field officers providing outreach to 30 000 households, contact farmers in the HRNS new farmer extension system will be trained to integrate the gender household approach into farmer field school sessions and agronomy training. The contact farmers will receive capacity building that will enable them to reflect on workload distribution in the household, access to assets and family decision-making and promote joint decision-making regarding the generation and use of household income. This will empower them in supporting households through farmer field schools that provide training in how to adapt the concept of joint planning and decision-making to local conditions.
- Some model households lose sight of their common goals after a while. Frequent follow-up visits from project staff need to be carried out in order to maintain households' motivation.
- The approach needs to be adapted to different contexts. For example, in Latin America, HNRS realized that couple seminars and follow-up visits were not enough. To change household dynamics in this context, there is need for an even more intensive approach that includes training in masculinity, for example.
- The approach had to be adapted to the needs of polygamous as well as monogamous families by allowing polygamous men to start applying the household approach with one of their wives.
- Households face challenges such as land grabbing and the presence of HIV and AIDS, which cannot be addressed by the project alone and will require linkages to other development partners.



# The case of SMS: Champions in gender and farm practices

*Peter Ndambiri, Head of Sustainability at ECOM Coffee Company*

## Summary

Sustainable Management Services (SMS) Ltd was created by ECOM, one of the world's largest coffee trading companies, to provide coffee management and marketing services, including advisory/extension services and certification, to members of coffee cooperatives/producers' organisations. ECOM started to familiarize and use a household approach through SMS.

SMS first worked on gender issues in 2009 in collaboration with the Netherlands development NGO Hivos. The main aim of SMS's work on gender equity in coffee is to encourage men, women and young people to view coffee production as providing opportunities for ensuring the well-being of their families and realizing their own dreams. SMS uses GALS tools to help achieve this aim. As budget constraints made it impossible to deliver GALS training to all farmers, SMS integrated GALS tools into its good agricultural practices training. By training "farmer promoters" to provide households with training in both gender and coffee issues, SMS aims to enhance both the quality and the volumes of coffee it receives from farmers and to promote the longer-term viability of coffee farming as a way of life. Project managers estimate that deliveries to SMS from existing cooperatives' members could increase by up to 30 percent, based on their experience to date.

## Sustainable Management Services

SMS is a private-sector company, which is fully owned by ECOM and provides ECOM with technical assistance, generating its income from commissions on sales of coffee. This means that low coffee production by ECOM means low income for SMS. However, SMS sees increasing coffee production not as an end by itself but as an opportunity for improving people's livelihoods.

In 2014, two SMS employees attended a training workshop in the GALS methodology conducted by Linda Mayoux in Same, United Republic of Tanzania. After the training, a GALS catalyst workshop for 52 farmer champions was carried out in Kenya with support from well-established GALS champions from the United Republic of Tanzania. In 2015–2016, with support from SMS staff, the new GALS champions in Kenya trained promoter farmers from each of the participating cooperatives on the GALS methodology.

“ I started integrating gender into my good agricultural practices (gap) training for farmers after understanding the gals household approach”. ”

Peter Ndambiri

## Taking a household approach

In Kenya, proceeds from coffee production are frequently not equally shared between women and men. This situation encouraged women, who do the majority of the work in coffee production, to switch to other activities, resulting in low coffee production. One of the reasons why coffee production is stagnating is because women lack incentives to participate actively.

The main aim of SMS's work on addressing gender dynamics in coffee production is to encourage men, women and young people to see coffee production as an opportunity to achieve their ambitions at both the household and individual levels. SMS has been using GALS tools to achieve this aim. With budget constraints hampering its ability to deliver GALS training to all farmers, SMS started to integrate GALS tools into its training in good agricultural practices (GAPs).

As well as being cost-efficient, the integration of GALS tools into GAP training also made it possible to replace the conventional approach of using technical personnel to deliver training to farmers with a more farmer-centred approach that puts the farming household and its intra-household dynamics at the centre.

Peter Ndambiri explains how this works from his own experience: "As a technical person I used to deliver GAP training to farmers without understanding whether that was what they needed. But using the GALS livelihood tools, like challenge action tree, I am able to bring in the gender perspective and put at the centre of the training what farmers propose themselves... If I train them on pruning for example, using the pruning challenge action tree, we are now asking how women and men contribute to the challenge of poorly pruned coffee and the solutions to the causes. They also develop SMART [specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound] commitments to the solutions."

## Role models

SMS set itself the objective of increasing the number of women promoters by 50 percent. To achieve this objective, in each of the coffee cooperatives where it works, SMS introduces the promoter farmer model in which farmers are divided into groups of 50 members each. Each group then elects a promoter farmer who must be an active producer, able to read and write and available to be trained and to train other farmers and their household members.

In coffee producing households, it is often the man who is registered as a member of the cooperative, even though women do a large part of the coffee production activities involved in coffee production. With the majority of cooperative members being men – about 70 percent – increasing the number of women promoter farmers requires affirmative action. SMS therefore asks the men cooperative members to identify a woman in each coffee producing household who would be available for GAP training, even if the women do not have coffee trees themselves. The women who attend cooperative meetings can then be elected as promoter farmers and provided with further capacity building.

## All-round champions

The GALS household approach was explained to gender champions identified in each of the cooperatives that SMS was working with. The new GALS gender champions were men and women who could apply their GALS training in their own lives and who were expected to share their knowledge of the GALS approach with other community members. As SMS already had the promoter farmer's structure in place in participating cooperatives, the gender champions were included in this structure. The gender champions then trained the promoter farmers in the GALS approach and were themselves trained in GAPs.

Both the GALS gender champions and the GAP promoter farmers therefore became champions of GALSGAP, a new curriculum that integrates consideration of gender issues into GAP training. Currently, the training that SMS provides to promoter farmers includes the basic GALS tools of visioning, the vision journey, the family (gender) balance tree and challenge action trees. Integrating GALS tools into GAP training is not only effective in increasing farmers' participation in training on coffee production but also a cost-efficient way of reaching coffee growing households with GALS training.

To ensure that there is some institutional support, SMS engaged the boards of cooperatives in setting up forums for women's engagement, with the possibility of establishing women's councils that could be recognized in the cooperatives' by-laws. In the women's councils, women are trained in GALS visioning and in developing vision journeys and gender balance trees. They then form small groups based on their visions and meet regularly to review progress in their vision journeys. Each group also elects its own women leaders. SMS is building the capacity of these women in order to support them in forming women's councils.

Successes from the GALS vision journeys facilitated by SMS include men's purchasing of water tanks to reduce the burden on women who have to fetch water from distant sources and to alleviate water shortages during the dry season. Other successes include the installation of biodigesters, which has motivated men to participate in domestic tasks such as cooking. In addition, the use of biogas reduces the smoke in kitchens, making cooking safer for both men and women.

SMS's other main activity has been governance training, which is training in cooperative management provided to the boards of directors of cooperatives. Consultants are usually deployed to provide this type of training, which includes training in gender dynamics in order to make the boards of directors more supportive of the change process in the farming households.

Figure 8: Steps involved in capacity building for farmer promoters of both GAPs and gender equality



## Changing the terms of engagement through a household approach

### The power of taking a family approach



Exposure to GALS exercises can be a life-changing experience. In Kenya it has contributed to more joint planning and collaboration among household members in trying to achieve their vision and has motivated women and men producers to jointly address the challenges that inhibit this. This has sometimes resulted in very practical changes, for example the opening of joint bank accounts. A family approach not only raises awareness and understanding of roles and relationships within the household and of how the behaviour of one household member can affect the whole household's wellbeing, but also helps increase understanding of the differences among households. GALS tools can also help in identifying the underlying challenges that help to explain people's behaviours and choices; for example, women with sick parents may find it difficult to attend training sessions. Ultimately, GALS exercises can also be used in participatory monitoring and evaluation.

### **GALS and GAP: a powerful and efficient combination**

The reason for integrating GALS and GAPs was partly cost-driven. The promoter (or lead) farmer model is a cost-efficient way of reaching other farmers. What makes the model effective as well as cost-efficient, is the involvement of women promoters. As role models they demonstrate to other women that being involved in coffee production as producers or promoters is something that they can do and benefit from. In addition, the quality of the GAP training has improved because of the gender sensitivity that GALS has brought.

### **Women promoters contribute to better quality and greater equality**

Women promoter farmers have proved to be more able to reach households and their members and pay family visits. Women have also shown more commitment toward the GALS approach.

### **More equality is good for business**

Although anecdotal, there are already some powerful stories from Kenya that illustrate how more equality can increase the delivery of coffee beans to the cooperative wet mill. Peter Ndambiri gives an example, "I did a family [gender] balance training in 2014 for a group of promoter farmers, and after the training, one of the male participants went home to share with his wife. The following day, more coffee was harvested and delivered to the wet mill as the husband had agreed to [open] a joint account where coffee proceeds are paid."

## **Successes**

- Currently 18 cooperatives, involving more than 25 000 coffee producers have been exposed to GALS and GAP training.
- The most common impact of GALS training is that men, women and young people develop personal and joint visions of their future and learn how to plan and work together to achieve their life goals.
- Using the gender balance tree, many households have decided to open joint bank accounts; previously, only men managed and accessed bank accounts.
- Men have reduced their expenditures on alcohol and become more supportive of women's membership of saving groups. Previously men did not understand where the money for these savings groups came from and where it went. Now women can use the saving groups to invest more in coffee, while men are giving women money to save for their shared visions.
- Changes in landownership are starting to occur, with married men sharing land with their wives and widows initiating conversations with other family members when their land is in their deceased husbands' name.
- Changes in gender roles also led to improved conditions. For example, when men started to learn to cook, they were concerned about the amount of smoke in the kitchen, both in terms of its impact on health and also because they were worried about what other people would think if they went to town smelling of smoke. As a solution, some men are saving towards the installation of a biogas digester for producing energy for cooking
- Each of the 18 cooperatives working with SMS has a leading woman serving as either a board member or a manager. Within SMS there are 14 sustainability officers, four of whom are women.

“ I am also a living testimony of gals. After attending the first GALS training, we developed a common vision with my wife. We are both employed but could not agree on what we wanted to do. Each one of us was pulling in different directions. One day as we were having lunch, I passed a piece of paper and agreed that each should draw the visions. My vision and hers surprisingly turned out to be very similar. One of the things we wanted was land. Since both of us are employed, we agreed to open a joint bank account and each to fill a standing order for monies to be remitted from our personal accounts. We have been able to buy the piece of land that we wanted. ”

Peter Ndambiri

- Coffee cooperatives aim to have women as 50 percent of their promoter farmers. They manage to meet this target by making it possible for the wives of registered coffee farmers to be elected.

### Challenges

- Technical staff perceive GALS training as being for illiterate people and those with little education. This makes them resistant to integrating GALS tools into their training for farmers.
- There is a lack of materials needed for conducting exercises during household visits, such as paper and pens.
- Although the promoter model is cost-efficient, it is time-intensive. This can be challenging, especially when working with volunteers.

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## The transformative power of a household approach

Both HRNS and SMS have been using a household approach in order to change the mindset of men and women household members. The cases show how taking such an approach helps to improve relations within both the household and the wider community. This has made the household approach an amplifier of what HNRS and SMS are achieving in terms of gender equality.

### Similarities and differences between the two coffee cases

One finding that emerges from both cases is that the household approach supports a bottom-up process of gradual change, which requires that other activities are carried out in combination to achieve more transformative change.

A first similarity is that both HNRS and SMS combine the household approach with other activities. For example, HNRS organized community dialogues, gender training for the leaders of farmer groups and coaching for women to encourage them to become involved in the farmer organizations in order to improve the organizations' structures, increase their performance and foster an entrepreneurial attitude. SMS established councils for women and young people in the cooperatives with which it worked with and introduced a gender component as part of governance training for the cooperatives' boards of directors. These activities help to shift norms and values in households and other institutions, such communities and cooperatives.

Second, in both cases, a household approach started to change the mindsets of men and women in participating households, encouraging a more equal distribution of labour on coffee farms and in households and improving women's access to the resources needed for coffee production. By engaging both men and women, the household approach was also successful in overcoming resistance from men, preventing them from sabotaging or opposing a process of change in gender norms or from feeling excluded.

Both cases also highlight that there is a business case for improving gender equality and creating incentives for women to contribute actively to coffee production. In addition, both approaches demonstrated the power of having role models for women and men, in both the community and producer organizations.

In terms of differences between the cases, while SMS chose to combine the household methodology (GALS) with training in GAPs, HNRS treated gender as an essential but separate topic, although HNRS now plans to integrate the gender household approach into the farmer extension system. The motivation for SMS to combine GALS with GAPs was mainly economic. However, it turned out that the integration of GALS in GAP training is not only economically more sustainable but that it is also a very powerful combination in terms of promoting more gender equitable household dynamics and coffee production.

The experience of Peter Ndambiri serves as an example of what GALS can achieve. After his GALS training, Peter has become a gender champion, motivated to roll out the approach in his daily work at SMS/ECOM. The exposure of company staff to gender training and household methodologies is showing promise for changing people's terms of engagement in the coffee chain.

### The implications for other producer organizations looking to adopt a household approach

Adopting a household approach takes time and resources, but is key to changing the mindsets of people within households, communities, producer organizations and coffee companies. Following a household approach is not a stand-alone activity but supports other interventions and can be a catalyst for change.

The following considerations are based on the two case studies and will be useful for producer organizations that are interested in adopting the household approach:

1. Household methodologies are available and instructions on how to use them are well documented. There is a network of international experts who can be consulted by producer organizations that are interested in piloting a household approach.
2. A household approach is not automatically inclusive. Household approaches often involve couples, creating the risk that single women are excluded, even though it is known that single women are one of the most vulnerable groups involved in coffee production.
3. It is essential to involve committed, capable and dedicated people as change agents (promoters) because they play a critical role in the household approach. This may require the use of a probation period (such as HNRS uses), good monitoring and the provision of incentives for the people involved. It also requires buy-in from project staff on the ground, who need to understand why change is needed.
4. Integrating household methodologies with training on GAPs is economically efficient and more effective.

The learning from the two experiences is that the household approach helps to change the mindset of people and encourages equal distribution of labour and access to resources between men and women. However, this does not mean that women will automatically benefit from these shifts. Changing gender relations is a gradual process, and adopting a household approach is an important step.

A household approach also has its limitations. Working at the household level does not automatically lead to gender-sensitive changes in producer organizations and community-based institutions. It can be a powerful driver, but it is not enough on its own. Hence work on gender dynamics at the household level should be combined with interventions at other institutional levels.





# Advancing gender equality through innovation in extension services

Women cocoa and coffee farmers are often overlooked in the provision of extension services. For example, in cocoa growing communities in Ghana, women farmers are 25 percent less likely than men to have received training in the past year (Hiscox and Goldstein, 2014).

The belief that women are not farmers is still prevalent, especially for lucrative crops such as cocoa or coffee, which are perceived as being primarily owned and managed by men. Even though women's role in production is recognized, the belief persists that women do not need to attend training, as knowledge given to one member of the farming family (usually a man) will “trickle down” to others in the household. Formal or informal selection criteria for participation in training, such as landownership or size of landholding, also make it difficult for women to obtain access to extension services. In addition, agricultural training is often organized without due consideration of women's time and mobility constraints or their needs and preferences.

In some contexts, women agronomists are known to engage more effectively with women farmers who feel more able to ask questions and discuss problems openly with another woman. For example, in the gender analysis report *Working Together for Gender Equality*<sup>13</sup> which was published in September 2018 by Nespresso, 19 percent of the women interviewed in Aceh, Indonesia, and 63 percent in Sidamo, Ethiopia, stated a preference for a woman trainer. However, jobs in the field are more likely to be held by men than by women. Women account for strikingly low proportions of extension agents and agronomists, averaging 15 percent at the global level and only 7 percent in Africa (World Bank, 2012). This can be explained by women's lower levels of education and the fact that the travel and physical work required are often considered unsuitable for women.

The private sector is playing an increasingly important role in the delivery of agricultural services. This is in part linked to the demands of certification and also to companies' increasing engagement in direct work with farmers on sustainability programmes in order to secure supply in the long term. Many companies, such as Mondelēz International and Nestlé Nespresso have recognized that in order to reach women farmers they need to look at women's access to training and what can be done to ensure that women participate and benefit in full.

previous page: Ethiopia.  
An FAO-EU Project  
beneficiary roasting  
coffee beans.

<sup>13</sup> For more information see <https://www.nestle-nespresso.com/newsandfeatures/nespresso-aaa-program-gender-equality>

# The case of Nespresso: Capturing best practices and developing a strategy

*Melanie Landthaler, Sustainability Consultant working with Nespresso*

## Summary

Nespresso began embedding sustainability into its supply chain in 2003 with the launch of the AAA Sustainable Quality™ Program. The AAA Program is first and foremost a programme for fostering long-term relationships with farmers while at the same time embedding sustainable practices into activities on farms and in surrounding landscapes and improving yields and the quality of harvests. Today, Nespresso sources more than 93 percent of its coffee through the AAA Program. This translates into the creation of favourable conditions for more than 100 000 farmers in 13 countries who benefit from premiums, the expert assistance of agronomists and a wealth of other pioneering initiatives such as the first ever retirement scheme for coffee farmers in Colombia. The AAA Program has evolved considerably over time. While quality and productivity improvement through sustainable farm management is still at its core, it also focuses on building community and landscape resilience and responding to the wider systemic challenges the coffee sector faces such as gender inequality, which the AAA Program has been addressing since the end of 2014. Nespresso's report *The positive cup*<sup>14</sup> outlines the company's broader commitment to sustainability and the way in which the Nespresso model creates shared value for all stakeholders.

## Nespresso's sustainability journey

Nespresso is a pioneer and reference for highest-quality portioned coffee. With more than 13 500 employees worldwide, the company operates in 80 countries and sources coffee from 13 origins. Most of the company's impacts occur beyond the immediate sphere of the production and commercial operations. Integrating sustainability at every step of the value chain reinforces the way the business model creates shared value.

The Nespresso AAA Sustainable Quality™ Program is one of the assets to deliver against the company ambitions and the 2030 UN agenda of the Sustainable Development goals. The AAA Global Gender Strategy was built on the acknowledgement that equality between men and women is not only a human rights issue but also a precondition for and indicator of sustainable development.

“ It is common to think of a farmer being a man. This is not a coffee-specific problem. Many women that we interviewed in Kenya didn't consider themselves to be farmers. When we asked them who was responsible for coffee production, they pointed at their husbands, saying that they themselves “only” work on the coffee farm. ”

Melanie Landthaler

<sup>14</sup> For more information see <https://www.nestle-nespresso.com/asset-library/documents/nespresso-positive-cup-csv-report-interactive.pdf>

Nespresso's motivation to work on gender issues is twofold. First, although gender equality is a complex and highly contextual issue, Nespresso recognizes that gender disparities are particularly severe in rural areas of low-income countries and believes that companies that do not address these inequalities are in effect reinforcing them. Nespresso also recognizes that women often do much of the work on the family coffee farms, and when training and equipment are provided only to men, the women, and therefore the farms, don't benefit from it.

### Identifying good practices

At the end of 2014, Nespresso began to develop the gender strategy and approach for the AAA Program. The first important step was to carry out an internal analysis and benchmarking of the AAA Program, which included examining core documents to ensure that their language and content were not gender-biased. It was also at this early stage that the AAA Program began to measure the numbers of women agronomists in each country. Managers of the programme became well aware that agricultural extension services, including advisory services, training and access to inputs, were fundamentally important for farmers, and noticed that there was a significant gender gap in extension services, which were known to be strongly biased towards male farmers.

An analysis of the numbers of women agronomists has since become a yearly exercise for the AAA Program. While the World Bank estimates that women account for about 15 percent of agronomists worldwide, over 30 percent of the AAA Program's agronomists are female.<sup>15</sup>

Nespresso has managed to recruit so many women to its agronomy team by working closely with its partners and local communities. In East Africa, for example, the AAA Program, together with its NGO partner TechnoServe,<sup>16</sup> adjusted the recruitment processes to enable and encourage more women to participate. Realizing that women may either lack the confidence to apply for formal interviews or not perform well in the interviews, the AAA Program in East Africa instead offers candidates an agronomy training course that lasts for several days. By removing the potential pressure of the formal interview process, Nespresso significantly lowered the barriers for women, thus enabling them to participate. During the training course, women usually gain confidence and are able to demonstrate their skills on an equal footing with men. Child care facilities for children under two years of age are provided in order to allow women who are still breastfeeding to take part.

Figure 9: Steps involved in recruiting women agronomists



<sup>15</sup> In 2017: 31 percent of a total of over 400 agronomists were women, in 2018, this figure rose to 34 percent.

<sup>16</sup> For more information see <https://www.technoserve.org/our-work/projects/nespresso-aaa-sustainable-quality-program-in-ethiopia-and-kenya>

## The power of women field officers

Agronomists have a strong influence on farmers because of the knowledge that they share, the inputs that they distribute and the respect that they garner. As farmers' regular point of contact with a company, agronomists provide a link between the institutional levels of the household and the cooperative. They serve as important role models and help sensitize the community (including community and cooperative leaders, men and women farmers and their children) to the importance of increasing women's inclusion in coffee production. For example, women agronomists who confidently deliver training on GAPs affect the way in which women are perceived at the community level, not only because of the knowledge that they deliver and the position that they hold, but also, indirectly, because they drive a motorbike or car in areas where this is not the norm for women.

Female agronomists working with Nespresso AAA in Kenya.



In a 2018 campaign, Nespresso promoted the stories of several Ethiopian women agronomists to celebrate the positive impact their work has on coffee quality and local communities.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> For more information, see: <https://www.nespresso.com/us/en/our-choices/sustainable-coffee-quality/secret-to-growing-great-coffee-in-ethiopia> and the campaign videos, such as "Hundatu, female agronomist who brings confidence to her community" (<https://www.youtube.com/watch%3Fv%3DDHzL2xPoiwKg>) or "Adanech and the old trees" (<https://www.youtube.com/watch%3Fv%3DSRbiOHUxwrQ>).



## Developing a strategy

In 2017, the AAA Program developed a gender equality strategy for 2017–2020 and beyond, which recognizes that gender equality is a core concern and driver of sustainable coffee production and enables the AAA Program to contribute significantly to gender as a cross-cutting issue of the achievement of all the SDGs.

The AAA gender equality strategy has four main objectives:

1. The AAA Program reaches and benefits men and women equally
2. Targeted interventions reduce gender disparities and increase women's empowerment
3. AAA Program agronomists, field managers, other Nestlé Nespresso employees and suppliers are better informed and gender-sensitized
4. Nespresso contributes to sector-wide change

To inform this strategy, in the second half of 2017, the AAA Program developed a gender analysis tool for smallholder coffee farmers that facilitates rigorous data collection and in-depth analysis. The AAA gender analysis tool generates insights that inform the development of effective interventions that will reduce gender disparities and increase women's empowerment. The starting point for the tool was the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEIA).<sup>18</sup> The WEIA tool and methodology were reviewed and adapted

Nespresso shining a spotlight on female agronomists through an advertising campaign

<sup>18</sup> The WEIA was created by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) and USAID's Feed the Future, see: <http://www.ifpri.org/publication/womens-empowerment-agriculture-index>



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Melanie interviewing female farmers in Sidamo, Ethiopia, for the gender analysis.

based on the specific needs of the AAA Program. The edited version was provided to the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) for their suggestions and comments, before it was field tested and refined in three AAA clusters in Aceh in Indonesia, Fraijanes in Guatemala and Sidamo in Ethiopia. The findings of the gender analyses are being used to adjust the AAA Program where necessary so that women and men can both participate and benefit equally and to inform the design and implementation of targeted interventions. It will also be used to monitor changes over time.

“ When we did a gender analysis in Sidamo, Ethiopia, [we found that] a large majority (63 percent) of the interviewed women would prefer a female trainer. ”

Melanie Landthaler

## Changing the terms of engagement by including women as field officers

### Changing the terms for women farmers and beyond



Recruiting women agronomists is a very practical way of changing the terms of engagement for women involved in coffee production. It has a direct impact on the amount and quality of training to which women farmers have access, which in turn affects the quality and productivity of coffee production. In addition, women's involvement in training is a powerful factor in shifting people's perceptions of women farmers, from invisible labourers to producers in their own right. This approach also helps women to “move up”

the value chain by providing opportunities for them to adopt roles that are traditionally held by men in cooperatives or service providers. This in turn sends ripples through the cultural and organizational landscape, communicating powerful messages about women's capabilities.

### Investment for change

The recruitment of women extension agents requires more significant investments than the current approach of recruiting mainly men. As well as investing in the recruitment process, Nespresso has provided tailored support by, for example, paying for women field officers to obtain driving licences. This approach requires creative thinking in order to identify the potential barriers to women's recruitment and ways of overcoming these barriers, and a willingness to do things differently. The fact that these investments are prioritized and the barriers are investigated and overcome is in itself a tangible sign of a company's commitment to gender equity and communicating with women farmers and of its understanding that the time and resources invested in integrating women more fully into the value chain is worthwhile, with benefits for the company and beyond. In developing its AAA gender equality strategy for 2017–2020, Nespresso has demonstrated not only long-term commitment but also ambition: one objective of the strategy is "Nespresso contributes to a sector-wide change". Nespresso invests more than CHF 220 000 (approximately USD 230 000) a year in promoting gender equality.

### A tailored approach

Although Nespresso identified the fostering of more diverse extension teams as a best practice, along with other approaches, the aim is not to implement a standardized programme in all countries but rather to assess the constraints and needs in each area and respond with solutions that are tailored to the context. To this end, Nespresso has developed the above-mentioned gender analysis tool for smallholder coffee farmers. As part of Nespresso's commitment to contributing to an industry-wide change, the survey tool, together with information on the methodology used, lessons learned and core findings, was published in September 2018 in order to enable and encourage other organizations to use it.



Publication of gender analysis tool makes the training delivered more cost-effective.

# The case of Mondelēz International: Women extension volunteers (community animators) as role models in the community

*Margreet Groot, Cocoa Life Communications and Budget Manager and  
Lead Women's Empowerment, Mondelēz International*

## Summary

In 2012, Mondelēz International launched its Cocoa Life programme in 6 origins. Cocoa Life follows an integrated and holistic approach in order to create thriving cocoa communities. It has five focus areas: farming, community, young people, livelihoods and environment. For Cocoa Life, gender equality and particularly women's empowerment cut across all of these areas as it is not possible to achieve sustainability in cocoa (regarding both sustainable production and viable livelihoods for cocoa farmers) without actively working to include both women and men. Cocoa Life also recognizes the central role that women play in protecting children's rights and preventing child labour.

In Ghana, Cocoa Life is implemented through a public-private partnership in 15 districts in the Eastern, Western, Ashanti, Brong Ahafo and Central regions, engaging 447 cocoa growing communities and more than 47 000 cocoa farmers. Given women's core role in cocoa production, the Cocoa Life programme strives actively and visibly to enhance equality in social relationships, create opportunities for women and men and eliminate existing gender disparities.

The Cocoa Life programme in Ghana launched and developed the concept of "women extension volunteers" building on insights about the barriers that prevent women from acquiring access to and benefits from training. This concept has been further developed and integrated, and now forms part of a model of 'Community Animators' which comprises of one woman and one man in each community that are responsible for development activities implemented as part of the programme.

## The situation of women cocoa farmers in Ghana

Women play a vital role in the cocoa value chain, carrying out approximately 45 percent of the work on cocoa farms, mainly in early plant care and the drying and fermentation of cocoa, which are critical stages for the productivity and quality of cocoa, and playing important roles in the development of their communities and companies. However, women are not usually included in the training organized by cooperatives, which target recognized farmers who are landowners with passbooks and therefore usually men. Women also bear



a higher time burden because of their domestic responsibilities, making it harder for them to attend training, particularly in certain locations and at certain times. In some cases, men do not wish their wives to attend training if the trainers are men.



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### How Cocoa Life engages women in training

Community extension agents provide farmers with information about and skills in Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) for cocoa production. Over the years, the proportion of women agronomists has increased to about 25 percent of the total and Cocoa Life ensures that the training is held at times that enable women farmers to attend.

Women carrying cocoa, Atwembesa community in the Wassa East District, Western Region.

To improve the livelihoods of cocoa growing communities, the Cocoa Life programme focuses on access to finance and other sources of household income. Women can play an important role in this area. An effective way of economically empowering women is by enabling them to pool their savings and make loans to each other through VSLA and providing them with support in setting up small-scale income-generating activities.

### From women extension volunteers to community animators

Among a wide range of interventions at different levels,<sup>19</sup> the Cocoa Life programme in Ghana launched and developed the concept of “women extension volunteers” building on insights about the barriers that prevent women from acquiring access to and benefits from training. This started in 2009 in the Eastern region in a first cohort of about a 100 communities and was followed by another 109 communities in 2013. For a variety of

<sup>19</sup> For more information on Mondelez International’s approach to women’s empowerment, see <https://www.cocoalife.org/progress/cocoa-life-a-transformative-approach-for-womens-empowerment-in-cocoa-communities>

reasons, women have found it more difficult than men to attend training and subsequently to implement what they have learned. Women extension volunteers mobilize women in the communities, encouraging them to attend training and make use of the knowledge and skills that they acquire. The women extension volunteers also serve as a link to the company, communicating information about the needs of women and the kind of training that they want. This approach contributes to strengthening women's networks and building social capital. Today this concept has been implemented in all the 447 communities of Cocoa Life in Ghana.

The model follows a training of trainers approach. Two women volunteers are selected from each Cocoa Life community. The volunteers mobilize other women and lead the way in creating a women's group, encouraging women to attend training and apply the skills and knowledge that they have learned. The women extension volunteers are highly valued and are instrumental in promoting VLSAs, community mobilization and GAPs in the cultivation of food crops.<sup>20</sup> In addition, the mobilization of women's groups facilitates joint ventures that build on the business training they receive. Women are establishing joint soap making businesses and bakeries and making joint purchases of equipment for processing food crops, to make *gari* for example.

Akotusu women drying cocoa on a drying mat, Wassa East district, Western Region.



Through the GAP training delivered by the women extension volunteers, women are enabled to cultivate additional crops such as carrots, tomatoes and cabbage, which they sell during lean periods in the cocoa season, thereby increasing their households' incomes. Women are able to take part in household decision-making, especially during lean periods

<sup>20</sup> For further information see Care International's report on women's leadership in Cocoa Life communities. <https://www.cocoalife.org/progress/womens-leadership-in-cocoa-life-communities>

when women are likely to have access to more income than men have. In addition, the sense of empowerment that women gain through participating in a women's group and the greater levels of acceptance that they experience in their communities gives them the confidence to negotiate more balanced relations within the home.

A women's group meeting in Bienuye community, Wassa East district, Western Region.



This model contributes to the achievement of Mondelēz's aim of promoting women's leadership and reaching as many women as possible. It supports the adoption of GAPs and provides a sustainable solution for empowering communities through training that they receive. It also supports progress in relation to two of Mondelēz's ten global key performance indicators – enhancing the role of women in decision-making processes and increasing income from sources other than cocoa.

Women extension volunteers are contributing to the acceptance of women's leadership in the community. They are mobilizing other women and encouraging them to become leaders, and serving as role models, especially to young people.

The volunteers also communicate the needs and priorities of these women to Cocoa Life, enabling the programme to respond by providing appropriate training. The training curriculum that is delivered to women's groups includes agricultural extension on GAPs, the cultivation of other food crops, child development and child protection, entrepreneurship and business skills, advocacy and influencing, community mobilization and development, and gender equality and women's empowerment.

Women extension volunteers are included in the delivery of training by NGO partners through their participation in training of trainers.

Following training that sensitizes the community to the role of women extension volunteers, the volunteers are chosen from a group of five women put forward by the community. The usual selection criteria are that the women must be able to read and write, be committed to the work involved, be respected by the community and have time to assume the role and responsibilities of volunteer extension agents. The initial group of five women are provided with further training and are monitored by the partner NGO for six months before two women are selected to serve as volunteers through a democratic process in the community. The role is voluntary, but Mondelez has observed that the women extension volunteers increase their income streams through the training that they receive, giving them the confidence to try new ventures and take on other roles.

Bunsu Cocoa Collegue, in the Eastern Region, demonstrating how to fill bags for the nursery and how to manage nursery plants.

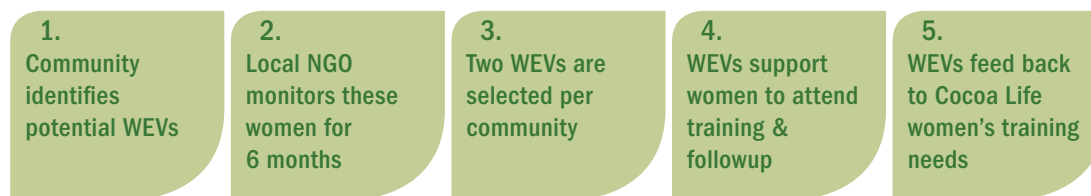


### Complementary initiatives

The women extension volunteers are only one element of a comprehensive programme, which carries out a range of other interventions, including the establishment of quotas (30 percent) for women's membership in community development committees,<sup>21</sup> and training in gender awareness at all levels – farmers, community leaders, Cocoa Life implementing partners and programme staff. Cocoa Life has set up gender dialogue platforms coordinated by the women extension volunteers in 278 communities and at the national level with a view to engaging in policy-making and implementation issues. It has also supported the creation of VSLAs at the community level, with women accounting for 70 percent of VSLA membership; most members of women's groups are also members of VSLAs.

<sup>21</sup> The community development committees are community-level groups that define and advocate for the development needs of their communities. They are part of Cocoa Life's approach to empowering communities to giving them a leading role in their own development rather than making them passive recipients of external support. Each committee develops an action plan through a process facilitated by the leading NGO partner. The action plans are being integrated into district plans in order to facilitate fundraising for their implementation.

Figure 10: Steps involved in developing the WEV programme



## Changing the terms of engagement through the appointment of women extension volunteers

### Women as leaders



The work with women extension volunteers has produced very tangible results in terms of promoting women's leadership at the community level. Working with women who have leadership potential and organizing them into women's groups has helped to harness women's capacity to mobilize and support each other in very concrete ways. Women have benefited financially from their involvement in the groups and the training provided, and the women extension volunteers have developed their leadership skills, going on to assume other roles and develop their own business activities.

### Achieving scale and maximizing impact

The women extension volunteers model has given Cocoa Life a structure through which to engage with larger numbers of women and leverage the training that it provides, ensuring that more women participate and benefit. In other models, women may receive training in, for example, business skills but still lack the confidence to apply what they learn, or training may be offered but women cannot attend for a variety of reasons. The presence of women extension volunteers and women's groups encourages women to attend training, implement and build on what they have learned and provide feedback so that future training responds to their needs even better.

### Successes

- The Cocoa Life programme in Ghana has women's groups in 447 communities. These groups are supported by 894 trained women extension volunteers who have mobilized about 6 000 women in the communities, encouraging them to attend training and adopt new knowledge and skills.
- To date, Cocoa Life has established 594 VSLAs, in which 70 percent of the members are women. Women extension volunteers have contributed to the success of these associations as they encourage other women to join.
- In Ghana by the end of 2017 more than 9 000 community members were trained on financial literacy. Additionally the programme provides business training to support women and/or women's group to start or continue additional generating income activities (IGAs) and to ensure they are viable.
- By the end of 2017 almost 7 000 community members were trained on business management and more than 7 400 reported to be involved in such additional sources of income.

- Cocoa Life has supported the establishment of cooperative societies in all of the communities where it works. On average, women account for 35 percent of the registered farmers in these societies. Cocoa Life can trace a link between women's empowerment as members of extension volunteer groups and their interest in becoming members of cooperatives
- Women have developed entrepreneurial activities and diversified their incomes, drawing on their training in financial literacy and business skills.

All of the women involved in the programme have improved their livelihoods.

- There has been an improvement in household food security because women extension volunteers have supported women in planting vegetable gardens through which they can supplement their incomes and improve their family's nutrition.

It is not possible to separate entirely the impacts of women extension volunteers from those of the programme as a whole, but Cocoa Life views the volunteers as having contributed to the programme's success and the achievement of its outcomes, as described above. Programme staff have observed an increase in the positive impacts experienced in the communities where women extension volunteers are very active.

## Challenges

- The voluntary nature of the women extension volunteers may have effects on the ability of Cocoa Life to hold the women accountable. It also adds to women's responsibilities in the community and to the time they spend on unpaid work.
- The women's role as group leaders results in other women depending on them. If a woman leader is unable to continue carrying out her responsibilities, the group may feel lost and it is not easy to replace the leader. Over time, women's groups may become less active if new women leaders are not available.
- Illiteracy is a persisting challenge although literacy training has been recently introduced by Cocoa Life.

Following feedback from the Care International assessment, the Cocoa Life team rolled out an evolved concept of the Women Extension Volunteers in 2017.<sup>22</sup> This new concept is called the community animators. The Community Animators comprises Women Extension Volunteers and Local Cocoa Facilitators. The animators in each community is made up of one female and a male. LCF initially were not involved in community mobilization at the community level. The LCF's attention was only on the farmer society members in each of the communities. Under the new concept, each of them (WEV and LCF) are responsible for every development activity at the community level. Further they receive a reimbursement (goods rather than monetary value) to bring more weight to the position and to avoid the concept being completely voluntary.

“ I think we both also believe that a multifaceted approach is extremely important. We have to work on so many different levels, especially big companies like Mondelez International and Nestlé, including managers, headquarters and so on. We have to put a gender lens at every level of the company from the headquarters down. ”

Margreet Groot

<sup>22</sup> For more information on Mondelez International's approach to women's leadership, see <https://www.cocoalife.org/progress/womens-leadership-in-cocoa-life-communities>

## Women as influencers in training roles

### The similarities and differences between the two cases

Both cases presented address the need for women farmers to have access to training. Both focus on helping women to take on roles as trainers and role models, and in both cases this is having an impact at the local level on perceptions of women's roles and capabilities.

However, there is a difference in emphasis between the two cases: while the women agronomists working with Nespresso are in paid roles and work closely with the service provider, the women extension volunteers in the Cocoa Life programme are community members and serve as a link between service providers and women's committees.

In Nespresso's work to encourage the recruitment of women trainers and agronomists, the focus is very much on agronomy and including women in the coffee value chain. In the case of Mondelēz, the agronomy training is delivered by Cocobod or supply chain partners while the women extension volunteers are concerned primarily with training and learning in other areas with a view to improving women's economic situation more broadly. This is partly because the overall aim of Cocoa Life is to help cocoa growing households and communities to thrive and become more resilient.

Both organizations are working at scale and at different institutional levels and both follow a multifaceted approach. Both work with specialist partner organizations in producing countries, and Cocoa Life also works closely with leading NGO partners in communities in Ghana. Nespresso's work on gender includes a strong focus on institutionalizing a "gender lens" and developing its own gender expertise.

Regarding their overall approaches, both Nespresso and Cocoa Life believe in the efficacy of gender quotas in encouraging and normalizing women's participation as volunteers in committees or in paid roles. Although they recognise that complementary interventions are also needed, they feel that quotas offer the first push and incentive for change.

### The implications for other producer organizations looking to work with women extension agents and volunteers

Although there are clear similarities, the two examples presented address gender issues at slightly different levels in the value chain and with different but related aims.

There is no doubt that working to increase the number of women agronomists or field officers is a powerful method for overcoming some of the barriers that prevent women farmers from participating in agricultural training.

The relevance of recruiting women field officers will depend on the findings of an analysis of roles in coffee or cocoa production and of which household members usually have access to training and why: these factors vary from one context to the next. The recruitment of women agronomists is an interesting option for companies and organizations looking to increase women's direct participation in the value chain. It relates directly to questions of improving quality and productivity because it addresses the gap between who does the work and who receives the training. It also changes perceptions of women's capabilities by employing women in non-traditional roles.

However, it is clear that even if an organization sets quotas or targets for the number of women field officers, the usual approach to recruitment often does not yield results because of barriers such as low literacy levels or a lack of women candidates with suitable higher education qualifications. An important lesson from the Nespresso case is that these barriers need to be addressed by abandoning "business as usual", carrying out

a thorough analysis of the constraints women face to work as advisors and thinking imaginatively about approaches that unlock women's potential and meet the real needs of both the company and women farmers.

The women extension volunteers model does not address gender imbalances in the provision of technical assistance. It is instead a community-level intervention that amplifies the impact and efficacy of the training delivered to women by service providers in that it mobilizes women, enabling them to attend the training and supporting them after they have done so. This structure has potential for addressing a broad spectrum of training needs and providing an immediate feedback loop that helps in increasing understanding of the constraints that women face and the needs and interests that they have. This approach reflects the fact that training on its own does not create change. It is through the adoption of new practices that sustainable change is created. In addition, when training comes to an end the trained farmers and community members need to take ownership of what they have learned. Training of trainer models support this process of knowledge transfer so that the new skills and understanding gained remain in the community after the training has ended.

The women extension volunteers model is clearly effective in developing women's leadership skills at the community level through the creation of locally based role models. It also increases women's confidence to participate in other forums such as cooperatives or local committees. This makes it an interesting approach for organizations looking to increase the participation of women in producer organizations and other community structures. As a voluntary model, it does not add a cost burden but rather makes the training delivered more cost-effective.



# The business case

In bringing together actors from the two value chains and from different levels within those chains, the “lightshop” provided a unique opportunity for reviewing experiences of defining and articulating the “business case” for investing in the improvement of gender equity.

## What is a “business case”?

The term “business case” is widely used to describe the justification for undertaking an activity. The business case provides an evaluation of the benefits, costs and risks of alternative options and a rationale for selecting the preferred solution.

This section of the report articulates the business case for investing in gender initiatives and goes on to demonstrate that doing so has the potential to bring higher returns on other investments. The overall objective is to contribute to the body of literature that demonstrates how taking positive action to change the conditions for women to engage in coffee and cocoa value chains has clear business-related impacts such as increased product quality, price returns, incomes, productivity and long-term sustainability for the coffee and cocoa industries, in addition to its benefits in other areas such as human rights and social development. The section is also aimed at contributing to discussions about how such investments can be made and what the most effective approaches are.

During the lightshop, questions were posed to help shape the discussions. The main conclusions are summarized in the following subsections.

## Why consider the business case?

Investments in gender equity imply additional costs. As such, anyone advocating for greater gender equity must understand and articulate the anticipated benefits of making such investments, and the potential losses of not doing so.

Historically, failure to engage in addressing gender issues has brought some reputational risk for companies. For example, Oxfam’s “Behind the Brands” campaign uncovered the current practices of cocoa companies in relation to a range of sustainability issues. In the cocoa and coffee sectors, the principle driver of change is the shift in focus from avoiding reputational risk to recognizing that investing in gender equity is key to any sustainability strategy and has to be considered as an integral element of other areas of investment, such as sustainable agriculture, while making it a stand-alone work stream. The next step is to make decisions regarding how to work on gender equity, particularly in relation to taking

successful initiatives to scale. These decisions are aided by comparative analyses of the costs, benefits and risks of different approaches.

## Why focus on the business case?

The business case is only one argument for making greater investments in gender equity. As Linda Mayoux articulated in her presentation at the event in June 2016 on promoting gender-sensitive producer organizations and agricultural investments, “We are talking about human rights for half of the human race”. As gender inequality has an ethical dimension, attempting to quantify its impact, particularly the short-term impact, in purely business terms can be seen as reductive. Accurate attribution of improvements in productivity and quality can also be a challenge, meaning that advocates for investment in gender equity can feel that the necessary data for convincing companies to make such investments are not available. At the same time, however, the business case may help to “open the door” to investments that subsequently have a much broader social impact.

## For whom is the business case made?

Discussions of the entities and individuals for whom the business case should be made revealed multiple perspectives. Although the focus is usually on the private sector, the business case begins with women and men farmers. Women need to be convinced that coffee and cocoa production will offer them a viable livelihood before they will make the necessary investments. At the same time, the most powerful argument for convincing men to participate in changing gender norms is provided by evidence that their economic situation and that of their families will improve as a result. The first level of the business case is therefore the household, and this requires that there are opportunities for both men and women to earn viable incomes through coffee or cocoa production. Such opportunities depend on the prices that farmers receive and the extents to which they are supported in improving productivity and can take control over the income they earn. This emphasizes the central theme of focusing less on the integration of women into coffee and cocoa value chains than on changing the terms of engagement so that women benefit from their engagement equally to men.

At the next level, producer organizations (their members, boards and staff) need to be convinced of the value of including women as members and offering them leadership opportunities. For producer organizations the business case for recognizing women's role in production and quality assurance and including women in training will focus on their potential to improve product quality and productivity. It will also focus on the potential for strengthening governance, as the experience of various producer organizations indicates that women can play valuable roles in mobilizing other women and encouraging them to join the organizations, join the organizations in financial management as treasurers of organizations and in bringing diverse perspectives to decision-making within organizations. Involving women also leads to additional market opportunities such as the sale of coffee grown by women, which can be a motivating factor. Other service providers need to see women as customers with interests and needs that are different from those of men and to recognize the value of tailoring services to women farmers.<sup>23</sup>

Other important actors at other levels are buyers and multinational companies. Sustainability is now accepted as a priority area for investment, but the value of investing in gender equity is not always fully understood.

<sup>23</sup> In all of these discussions, it should be recognized that “women” or “women farmers” are not a homogeneous group and that individual, socio-economic and cultural factors must always be taken into account.

## How does gender equity relate to sustainability?

When considering the business case, the question arises of how gender equity relates to the long-term sustainability of the coffee and cocoa industries.<sup>24</sup> There is broad agreement that women's involvement is central to the viability of coffee and cocoa production. Many analysts have demonstrated that when women are empowered to make decisions about the use of income from coffee or cocoa, the whole family benefits, for example through more investment in children's education and in the household. In addition, broader support for women as important economic actors, through microfinance services and income diversification, can play an important role in ensuring the long-term sustainability of coffee and cocoa activities for farming families and communities.

There is growing evidence that when women are included in training, coffee and cocoa productivity and quality improve. Examples of this were given during the lightshop by Twin, Mzuzu, Pangoa and Nespresso. In turn, the improvements in the standard of living of cocoa and coffee farmers that can come about as a result of interventions for addressing gender issues also make cocoa and coffee production a more attractive proposition for the next generation. During the lightshop, Bernard Mzuzu and Esperanza Pangoa spoke about the experience of some of the young people in their communities who had realized that coffee production offered them a more viable way of life than employment in the city. In some situations where stagnating or declining production threatens the sustainability of the business (as was the case for Mzuzu), providing incentives for the integration of women and young people into the supply chain can be an effective strategy for revitalizing local coffee production.

## Building an evidence base

The demand for hard data poses challenges. For example, in order to demonstrate and quantify the links between gender-related interventions and outcomes relating to coffee or cocoa quality and productivity, it is necessary to disaggregate data on the impacts of different activities, such as work on gender equity, sustainable agriculture or product quality, in order to distinguish between the impacts of gender-related interventions and the results of other activities. In many cases, the most interesting findings regard how a combination of gender-related and other interventions work together to produce results. The best solution could therefore be to compare the results of a combined, gender-sensitive approach to service provision with activities that do not take into account and address the gender dimensions.

## Approaches to the measurement of results

A "before and after" comparison can be useful in, for example, measuring the number of women participating in training as a result of recruiting women field officers. The challenge with quantifying the final impact on productivity or quality is that many of the factors that affect these outcomes are not related to or dependent on a single intervention, and these factors need to be taken into in any measurement of results. The most appropriate solution may therefore be to carry out a longitudinal study; for example, comparing productivity or quality between two consecutive seasons may not produce reliable findings regarding improvements, but comparisons over three to five or even five to ten years would.

<sup>24</sup> Mondelez International's publication *Cocoa Life: A transformative approach for women's empowerment in cocoa communities* provides a clear articulation of the connection between gender equity and sustainability. <https://www.cocoalife.org/-/media/CocoaLife/en/download/article/cocoa-life-womens-empowerment-publication-oct-2016.pdf>

### Measuring the impact of a combined, gender-sensitive approach to service provision: Example from HRNS in Kasese, Uganda

An example of a control group approach is a study carried out by the Institute of Development Policy and Management at the University of Antwerp in order to assess the impact of changes in intrahousehold decision-making in coffee farming households in Kasese working with HRNS. The study compared outcomes in households that were targeted by the household gender approach for over a year with outcomes for households that had not. Both groups had received the same training in agronomy, post-harvest practices and marketing, which allowed analysis of a range of factors, including a comparison of the contributions to and

consumption of household income between women and men.

One finding was that couples who were change agents for the household gender approach were more likely to adopt sustainable intensification methods for coffee production than those who had not participated in the gender programme but had received the same agricultural training. This is an example of how to measure the impact of a combined approach – involving both gender-related and sustainable agriculture activities in this case – by focusing on the adoption of practices as well as the delivery of training.

It is also possible to use the control group method for measuring results by comparing, for example, groups that have received no support with those that have received agricultural support (such as technical assistance) with no gender dimension and those that have received both technical assistance and gender-related interventions.

The business case for the household level can also be measured through participatory monitoring in which women and men define their own desired outcomes (for example, increasing the volumes or quality of the coffee or cocoa they produce) and are given the tools that help them to reflect on the extent to which these objectives have been achieved. These data can then be aggregated, but will usually require triangulation or verification by a third party. This is the approach utilized in GALs training.

The ideal scenario is to integrate the measurement of results into the activities that are being carried out and the internal monitoring systems, as Nespresso is aiming to do with its diagnostic tool. However, the level of detail required in order to develop an accurate understanding of some impacts often requires a dedicated research or monitoring activity, for example in partnership with a research institution, and has resource implications.

## Conclusion

There is no common evidence base from which to draw when building a business case because different actors use different approaches. However, consistencies in the findings regarding the impact of gender-related interventions in both the coffee and cocoa sectors indicate that the overall case for investing in gender equity has been made and that the focus should now be on the “how” rather than “why”. The business case still has value in providing a framework for analysing specific interventions and comparing different approaches in order to assess their cost effectiveness.

The original aim of the lightshop was to start such an assessment, but participants realized that measuring the cost of an activity is not a straightforward task given the diversity of contexts and could result in misleading results. Participants therefore decided that it would be more helpful to visualize the different levels of the cocoa and coffee value chains and provide a “snapshot” of the business case using examples from the cases analysed. The aim is to increase understanding of the potential impact of different interventions and to inspire action.

## Aim: higher volumes delivered, improved quality, motivated families, higher incomes, and a more attractive proposition for the next generation

### MARKET ENGAGEMENT

- Working with women farmers can open up new market opportunities
- Women's work helps producer organizations to meet quality standards
- Stories of women farmers and women's empowerment promote marketing activities

→ CAC Pangoa and Taylors of Harrogate launched a "limited edition" coffee grown by women on the United Kingdom market in 2016. Thanks to an effective marketing and communications campaign and the high-quality product, the women's coffee proved to be Taylor's highest selling limited edition product to date and received more press coverage than any other product launch. <https://www.taylorscoffee.co.uk/women-in-coffee/>

→ In its work with Ngolegombu Producer Organization in Sierra Leone, Twin provided opportunities for women to play a leading role in changing the way of processing cocoa in order to increase the quality. The PO has recently sold their first container of cocoa to a craft chocolate buyer

### TECHNICAL SERVICES

- Women agronomists have greater outreach. Men may forbid their wives from attending training given by a man field officer
- Women are more likely to come if the training is held at a time and in a location that make it accessible to them
- Several invitations may need to be issued to make sure that women know that they are invited

→ Nespresso is working to increase the number of women agronomists. In areas where this initiative is already advanced, it has resulted in more participation by women farmers in technical training

→ Mondelēz is looking not only at how training is delivered, but at how knowledge is retained and acted upon, at a community level. It is also expanding outreach through a training of trainers model. In Ghana, through 894 women extension volunteers, it has reached and benefited the lives of 6 000 women farmers to date

### PRODUCER ORGANIZATION

- Women's role in producing high quality coffee or cocoa is recognized and incentivized
- Women come to be seen as producers in their own right and can deliver coffee or cocoa and receive payment directly
- When women and men are involved in governance, the PO is stronger and more stable

→ The case of Mzuzu coffee  
Mzuzu was experiencing stagnating volumes and quality in its coffee and discovered that women were withdrawing from family coffee production because they were demotivated. By promoting the sharing of land between women and men, increasing women's membership in the producer organization and marketing coffee grown by women, Mzuzu has stimulated both the volumes and the quality of production.

### HOUSEHOLDS

- HRNS found that the adoption rates of GAPs are higher when families have received household gender training as well as GAP training
- ECOM found that women and men are more motivated to invest in coffee or cocoa production when they have adopted a household approach because it results in higher disposable incomes and more equitable sharing of work
- ECOM and HRNS found that women and men develop livelihood visions and are motivated to improve the quality and volumes of their coffee and cocoa production and to engage in other income-generating activities

→ Sustainable Management Services, a subsidiary of ECOM in Kenya, found that the use of GALS tools resulted in a noticeable improvement in the quality of coffee delivered, with between 2 and 9 percent more coffee achieving higher grades between 2012/2013 and 2015/2016 in the eight cooperatives that SMS source from HRNS found that couples engaged as change agents through the household gender approach were more likely to adopt sustainable agricultural practices such as composting, the planting of shade trees and stumping than couples who did not participate in the gender programme but received the same agronomical training.



# Conclusions

When producing this publication, the authors brought together representatives of farmer organizations, technical organizations, companies, knowledge institutes and international organizations that share the ambition of changing the terms of engagement for women in coffee and cocoa chains. By sharing practical experiences from different sectors, countries and perspectives, the lightshop facilitated a process of exchange and learning on how to change the terms and on how other actors can build on these experiences in order to contribute to the achievement of gender equity in the cocoa and coffee sectors.

A number of powerful cases were presented at the lightshop organized by FAO, KIT and Twin in Amsterdam from 13 to 15 June 2017, using the empowerment framework (see page 3) as an analytical lens for increasing participants' understanding of how their different activities terms of agency, resources and institutional structures contributed to changing the terms of women's engagement in the coffee or cocoa chain.

The following are some of the main messages that were derived from the lightshop.

## Addressing intrahousehold dynamics is essential

Intrahousehold relations have to be addressed if the terms of engagement for women in coffee and cocoa value chains are to be improved. Following a household approach is one option, but there are other routes.

The cases discussed at the lightshop illustrated how household-based approaches to training and extension can be effective in bringing about tangible changes in who has control over the resources and proceeds from cocoa and coffee production. For example, it was only when it started working with GALS that Pangoa discovered that some women who had seemed empowered were still not able to make decisions about coffee income at home.

The case of HNRS and its work for Lavazza and the other ICP shareholders also shows how a household approach gradually changes the mindsets of women and men and influences gender norms and values within the household. This bottom-up approach guides reflection and transformation. Because the change comes from the couples themselves, there is a strong sense of ownership over the process and results.

At the same time, it is also true that changes at one institutional level do not always translate into systemic changes at other levels. For instance, the two case studies on household methodologies show that despite the critical changes achieved in intrafamily dynamics, producer organizations are still largely dominated by men. Comprehensive approaches that target different institutional levels are needed in order to achieve meaningful and sustainable gender transformations. Starting from the household can be a valuable entry point.

previous page: Uganda. Farmer Betty Ndugga weeding the new wilt resistance coffee at her coffee nursery during a visit by the Food and Agriculture Organization on the United Nations (FAO).

### Pushing for change, bottom-up and top-down

The cases in this publication demonstrate that the push for gender equality and the subsequent shifting of power between men and women can come about through the introduction of bottom-up processes such as household methodologies, through changes in training approaches and methods of service delivery or by ensuring that gender considerations are integrated into company policies. Overall, different approaches to institutionalization present various opportunities and challenges.

Sometimes top-down interventions are necessary for achieving impact. For example, multinational companies play an important role in introducing standards that their sourcing partners and service providers must follow in order to reach gender equality objectives. The argument for using gender quotas in order to encourage and normalize women's participation in committees or in paid roles came up in discussions during the lightshop, particularly among the private-sector participants. Although they recognized that other interventions are needed, the private-sector participants felt that quotas offer the first push and incentive for change. Donors and governments also play a role as the initiators of change. While governments may set up laws and regulations, donors set the conditions for funding and investing in activities.

The process of institutionalizing a gender focus within a company also results in increased understanding of the fact that gender inequality exists not only in small-scale farming households, but that it is a global issue. The introduction of a gender focus can and should be a catalyst for a company or partner organization to reflect on its own practices and work culture. Gender dynamics within an organization or company also play a part in how and whether addressing gender issues is recognized as a priority for investment.

### Anyone can have an influence...

Changing the terms of engagement requires that policies and laws are formulated and implemented in a gender-sensitive manner. This means that they should recognize that women and men from various social categories have differentiated needs, constraints, roles and priorities, and therefore that appropriate measures and mechanisms should be adopted so that all rural women and men can benefit equally from their engagement in the coffee and cocoa supply chains.

While in some cases policies and laws that support gender equality and women's empowerment on paper very often are not implemented. For instance, in many countries constitutions and/or policies and laws (such as those relating to land, investment or agriculture) promote gender equality, but discriminatory practices hinder women's effective participation in cocoa and coffee supply chains.

Although national governments hold the main responsibility for formulating and implementing policies and legislation, non-state actors such as NGOs, CSOs, producer organizations and business enterprises can influence the development of laws and policies and play an important role in their implementation. Non-state actors can establish standards that comply with gender-sensitive policies and laws in their own areas of responsibility, carry out advocacy campaigns, raise awareness and sensitize communities to their rights, and sensitize or pressure business partners to adopt gender equitable practices.

### There is no need to wait...

In Ghana, for example, the Constitution and laws and policies recognize women's land rights, but in practice women have limited access to land because of prevailing conditions under customary law that privilege men's access to and control of land. Despite this situation, Kookoo Pa adopted measures for convincing their men members to register their wives and partners in the organization and to register shares of their land in their wives' names with the cooperative. This and other positive results were achieved through a sensitization and training programme for women and men.



In addition, when non-state actors adopt successful innovative practices that change the terms of engagement, they can influence governments and encourage them to integrate the practices into policy and institutional frameworks in order to bring the results to scale. The Bukonzo joint case provides a good example of this. Following its successful initiative, which resulted in women gaining control over land for coffee production, Bukonzo is now engaging with local institutions so that women's land rights can be legally recognized.

The good practices and promising approaches observed in the case studies can inform and influence existing national policy and legal frameworks. For this to happen, however, important efforts in collaborative action on advocacy and awareness raising are needed.

### Investments in women's leadership are critical

Women lack influence in the formulation of policy and laws that may affect them and also, for example, in the development of services or innovations that target women. Women are underrepresented on the boards and in the management of producer organizations and in influential positions in communities, for example, as extension agents, local traders or farm leaders.

In order for gender-sensitive innovations to be successful and scalable, it is important to ensure that women participate in and influence the development of models and approaches as part of the innovation process and that the models and approaches address women's needs and build on their knowledge. Most successful pro-woman innovations have occurred when women have actively participated in identifying the changes that they want to see. For instance, the visual nature of GALS tools makes them particularly suitable for women and men who have not had a formal education, as it allows women and men to express their expectations and visions of change through the use of diagrams and drawings and to develop action plans towards that change. The strength of the training programme offered by CODEMU and Pangoa is that the topics for training were defined in consultation with women members themselves. Similarly, Mondelēz's work with women extension volunteers provides a feedback loop that enables Mondelēz to tailor training to the needs and interests of women.

Leaders and champions are powerful multipliers of innovations. Local women leaders act as role models and are essential in mobilizing support for new interventions and activities. Investments in strengthening women's leadership are therefore critical, as demonstrated in all the cases.

### Scaling up – challenges and opportunities

The organizations that participated in the lightshop operate at different scales. Examples were given of approaches to scaling up at all levels, from the local to the international. These demonstrated how different actors in the supply chain have roles in increasing the outreach of gender programmes. Central to the process of scaling up is the institutionalization of a gender focus. Gender issues have to be integrated into the strategic plans and activities of all organizations in the value chain, so that consideration of gender dimensions moves from being a niche or side issue to being recognized as an integral part of all commercial activities and programmes.

At the local level, farmers and community members, such as women extension volunteers, GALS champions or change agents, are tasked with disseminating training and approaches to other people in their communities. This is an important "first level" of the scaling up process of ensuring that changes are replicated and reach beyond the original recipients of training. Producer organizations and service providers can build on this voluntary sharing by integrating household approaches into GAPS training, as SMS Kenya has done and HRNS is starting to do. This further increases the outreach and reduces costs by combining learning activities.

Women leaders within the community level and at all levels of producer organizations also have a role in advocating for change and sensitizing other community members, and should therefore be recognized as important agents of change. The role of specialized partner organizations in implementation and increasing outreach was also found to be key, especially in the cases presented by Mondelēz and Twin. At the national level, involving government extension services can be a way of extending outreach and increasing sustainability beyond a project cycle.

In some cases, such as the Mzuzu programme, the potential for scaling up within an organization is limited by market factors that are beyond the organization's control. For example, the volume of sales of coffee grown by women determines the level of resources and motivation for integrating more women into the producer organization. An essential element of Mzuzu's strategy for scaling up its gender activities is therefore increasing its sales of coffee grown by women.

The value of cross-learning and the replication of successful approaches was mentioned by all the lightshop participants from their various countries. However, contextual factors always inform the solutions that are designed. Even at the scale of a single producer organization, such as in the Mzuzu case, there was need to carry out an analysis of the socio-economic factors that inform gender relations because of regional differences in culture. Each phase of the scaling up of a programme across a country therefore requires a separate analysis and an adaptation of approaches to the specific local context.

One of the prerequisites for investments by larger companies interested in testing a specific approach is that the approach must be scalable and cost-efficient. The emphasis on scale can lead to a focus on measuring outreach alone (for example, the number of women trained), which creates the risk of failing to capture the final impacts of women's participation on women and on households. The diagnostic tool based on the women's empowerment in agriculture index, which Nespresso is developing, provides a good example of how to structure a deeper analysis of the impacts of interventions on women's empowerment and on changes in power relations within the household at a large scale.

### **Working together is fundamental for achieving change**

The lightshop organizers believe that innovative multi-stakeholder collaboration and partnerships can play a crucial role in producing the changes that they are aiming to achieve. Changing the terms of engagement is a very complex process that requires actions at various levels and in many dimensions and collaborative efforts among the various cocoa and coffee value chain actors, including entrepreneurs, traders, NGOs, producer organizations, donors and international organizations. To achieve the desired transformations, it is essential that different actors work together in an integrated manner by pooling financial resources, knowledge and expertise.

All the cases show that collaboration and partnerships were always crucial to the establishment and implementation of the various initiatives and approaches described in this publication. In addition, the cases confirm that when stakeholders from sectors with similar or complementary interests are brought together, they can learn from each other and explore forms of collaboration.

This is one of the key objectives of the Gender in Coffee and Cocoa Initiative.

### **Future steps**

On the last day of the cocoa and coffee lightshop, participants and the core team engaged in a brainstorming session in order to identify and cluster ideas for the future continuation of their work together.

The first area of work was networking and advocacy, with activities such as collective campaigning, fundraising, establishment of mechanisms for continuing dialogue among actors and sectors and the expansion of networks and the identification of network supporters. The need to map out existing networks and develop better targeted advocacy products and strategies emerged as a major element. All participants showed interest in continuing to create safe and collaborative space for mutual learning and the exchange of experiences.

The second area of work was the generation, exchange and dissemination of knowledge, the continuation of which was agreed to be crucial, and this publication constitutes a first step in the continued sharing of knowledge. Knowledge dissemination was seen as critical in supporting mainstreaming efforts and taking successful gender initiatives to scale. Many participants agreed that there is a need in both the coffee and the cocoa value chains to continue the systematization of good practices in order to capitalize on the learning and experiences gathered to date and to make a strong and well-tailored business case that will attract investments from industry.

Another area of interest that came up strongly was capacity building and South-South learning, especially among cooperatives, gender champions and women producers. One participant proposed developing a learning route programme that would enable cooperatives and other relevant actors to experience innovative approaches to addressing gender issues. Through the implementation of learning route programmes, South-South learning is another powerful mechanism for policy dialogue and enables women and men small-scale producers to voice their needs and interests alongside more powerful stakeholders. Some participants considered that the collaborative space created by KIT, Twin and FAO was very effective in facilitating mutual learning. Regarding capacity development, the need to raise awareness and build the capacity of critical actors along the value chain was felt as an essential area for action.

Equally important was a commitment to policy and programme efforts. There was strong interest in working together with a view to encouraging industry boards, donors and governments to adopt gender-sensitive regulations, strategies and budgets. Some companies expressed the need to develop a comprehensive gender strategy, with related key performance indicators. Others proposed anchoring a gender-focused monitoring system on the SDG indicators. Overall, participants mentioned the need to better define and operationalize gender equality goals at different institutional levels and in different domains, such as access to resources.

In general, participants mentioned the need for a more holistic approach to gender equality that takes into account women's specific constraints. Women's landownership stood out as a fundamental underlying issue that affects both women's human rights and their ability to participate as economic actors in producer organizations and coffee and cocoa value chains. In order to tackle this issue there is a critical need to act coherently at multiple levels – individual, household, community, etc.

Regarding programmatic work, solving gender-specific challenges and supporting women's coffee initiatives were mentioned. Women producers need more and better quality training and support in expanding their coffee farm and linking up to gender-sensitive traders and market actors.

The convening partners will support the Gender in Cocoa and Coffee Initiative by facilitating learning between the two sectors; creating opportunities for exchange of knowledge and capacity development; and advocating for change through their work and networks.

# Resources

*Provided by the lightshop participants*

## Kookoo Pa

**Kookoo Pa** Farmers Association: [www.kookoopa.org](http://www.kookoopa.org)

**Tropenbos International.** 2014. *Projects on “Sustainable cocoa production in Ghana related to forests”*. Available at: [www.tropenbos.org/file.php/1750/report-sustainable-cocoa-production-ghana.pdf](http://www.tropenbos.org/file.php/1750/report-sustainable-cocoa-production-ghana.pdf)

## Lavazza – HRNS

**Lecoutere, E. & Jassogne, L.** 2016. *“We’re in this together”: Changing intra-household decision making for more cooperative smallholder farming*. Working Paper. Institute of Development Policy and Management. Available at: <https://cgspace.cgiar.org/handle/10568/73444>

**HRNS Uganda.** 2016. *Service delivery model assessment: Case study*. Available at: [https://issuu.com/idhsustainabletradeinitiative/docs/sdm\\_full\\_case\\_report\\_hrns\\_uganda](https://issuu.com/idhsustainabletradeinitiative/docs/sdm_full_case_report_hrns_uganda)

## Mondelēz International

**Mondelēz International.** Cocoa Life. Available at: <http://www.cocoalife.org>

**Mondelēz International.** 2012. *Mondelēz International to Invest \$400 Million to Help One Million People in Cocoa Farming Communities*. Available at: <http://www.mondelezinternational.com/Newsroom/Multimedia-Releases/Mondelez-International-to-Invest-400-Million-to-Help-One-Million-People-in-Cocoa-Farming-Communities>

**Barrientos, S. & Bobie, A.O.** 2016. *Promoting gender equality in the cocoa-chocolate value chain: Opportunities and challenges in Ghana*. GDI Working Paper No. 2016-006. Manchester, United Kingdom, University of Manchester. Available at: <https://www.cocoalife.org/progress/promoting-gender-equality-in-the-cocoa-chocolate-value-chain-opportunities-and-challenges-in-ghana>

## Nespresso

**Nespresso.** no date. *Our 2020 goals and ambitions*. Available at: <http://www.nespresso.com/positive/int/en#!/sustainability/commitments>

**Nespresso.** no date. *The positive cup: Because coffee can have a positive impact. Creating shared value report*. Available at: <https://www.nestle-nespresso.com/asset-library/documents/nespresso-positive-cup-csv-report-interactive.pdf>

**IFPRI.** 2012. *Women’s empowerment in agriculture index*. Washington, DC, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). Available at: <http://www.ifpri.org/publication/womens-empowerment-agriculture-index>

## **Pangoa**

**CAC Pangoa:** <http://www.cacpangoa.com>

## **Sustainable Management Services**

**GALS.** no date. *Gender Action Learning Systems: For sustainability at scale.* Available at:  
<http://www.galsatscale.net>

## **Twin**

**Twin.** 2016. *Women, coffee and land.* Available at: <http://twin.org.uk/resources>

## Key reports and toolkits

**Chan, M.K.** 2010. *Improving opportunities for women in smallholder-based supply chains: Business case and practical guidance for international food companies*. Prepared for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Available at: <https://docs.gatesfoundation.org/documents/gender-value-chain-guide.pdf>

This guide presents the results of a study that explored the business case for food companies to support women in smallholder-based supply chains, and identified and developed good practice guidance to how companies can best deliver such support.

**Chan, M.K.** 2014. *Independent evaluation of Mars, Mondelēz International and Nestlé gender assessments and actions plans for their cocoa supply chains in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana*. Commissioned by Oxfam's Behind the Brands Initiative. Available at: [https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file\\_attachments/women-and-cocoa-analysis-oct-2014.pdf](https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file_attachments/women-and-cocoa-analysis-oct-2014.pdf)

This report presents the findings of an independent evaluation commissioned by Oxfam's Behind the Brands campaign and provides an analysis of four gender assessments and action plans published by the world's "top three" chocolate companies in the summer of 2014.

**CQI.** 2015. *The way forward: Accelerating gender equity in the coffee value chain. A practical guide with recommendations for action*. Coffee Quality Institute's (CGI). Partnership for Gender Equity. Available at: <http://www.coffeeinstitute.org/genderreport>

The Coffee Quality Institute (CQI) founded the Partnership for Gender Equity in the autumn of 2014. The objective of this strategic initiative is to illuminate how gender inequality at the point of origin has impacts on coffee outcomes and the well-being of producers and to determine how to respond.

**Greene, M. & Robles, A.** 2013. *A sustainable, thriving cocoa sector for future generations: The business case for why women matter and what to do about it*. Available at: <http://cocoasustainability.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/A-Sustainably-Thriving-Cocoa-Sector-for-Future-Generations-As-Publicly-Released1.pdf>

Based on the results of a comprehensive rapid field assessment completed in May 2013, this document identifies priority actions that the chocolate producer Mars can take in order to ensure that women farmers in Côte d'Ivoire have equitable access to the resources, opportunities and skills that will enable them to both maximize cocoa yields on their family farms and improve their livelihoods.

**Hivos.** 2015. *Sustainable coffee as a family business*. Available at: <https://www.hivos.org/coffeetoolkit>

This toolkit provides a range of approaches and tools that have been tried and tested. They can lead to considerable improvements in coffee quality and increases in coffee quantity while fostering greater gender equality and the involvement of young people.

**KIT, Amsterdam.** 2014. *The Gender and Cocoa Livelihoods Toolbox: A practical guide for business to work on gender in the Cocoa Livelihood Program Matching Grants*. Commissioned by the World Cocoa Foundation. Available at: [http://www.worldcocoaoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/files\\_mf/1476298058TheGenderandCocoaLivelihoodToolboxDecember2014.pdf](http://www.worldcocoaoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/files_mf/1476298058TheGenderandCocoaLivelihoodToolboxDecember2014.pdf)

The objective of this toolbox is to support the cocoa industry and its implementing partners in understanding and addressing gender inequalities in the cocoa sector through KIT's matching grants programme.

**Marston, A.** 2016. *Women's rights in the cocoa sector: Examples of emerging good practice*. Oxfam Discussion Papers. Available at: [https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file\\_attachments/dp-womens-rights-cocoa-sector-good-practice-100316-en.pdf](https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file_attachments/dp-womens-rights-cocoa-sector-good-practice-100316-en.pdf)

This report identifies emerging good practice in areas that were identified as priorities for strengthening women's role as cocoa farmers during a multi-stakeholder meeting held in Accra, Ghana on 10–11 September 2015 with representatives of cocoa traders, chocolate brands, cocoa producer organizations, governments and NGOs.

**Oxfam.** 2013. *Equality for women starts with chocolate: Mars, Mondelēz and Nestlé and their fight for women's rights*. Oxfam Media Briefing. Available at: <https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/equality-for-women-starts-with-chocolate-mb-260213.pdf>

This is the report from an Oxfam investigation into how women fare in cocoa supply chains in four countries (Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, Indonesia and Nigeria), which revealed stories of neglect, inequality and unfair treatment.

**SCAA.** 2015. *A blue print for gender equality in the coffeelands*. Specialty Coffee Association of America (SCAA) White Paper. Available at: <https://www.scaa.org/PDF/scaa-white-paper-gender-equality.pdf>

This paper, developed by the SCAA Sustainability Council, examines gender inequality on the supply-side of the coffee value chain and proposes solutions for creating greater balance.

**Twin.** 2013. *Empowering women farmers in agricultural value chains*. Available at: <http://www.twin.org.uk/resources/policy-reports/empowering-women-farmers-in-agricultural-value-chains>

This report looks at the role of women in agriculture against four key indicators – labour, income, ownership and decision-making – in Twin's main commodities – coffee, cocoa and nuts.

**UTZ Certified & Solidaridad.** 2009. *The role of certification and producer support in promoting gender equality in cocoa production*. Solidaridad-Certification Support Network. In cooperation with Oxfam Novib. Available at: <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.594.8992&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

This report analyses the position of women in the cocoa value chain and the constraints that they face. It is partly based on a field study conducted in Côte d'Ivoire and also analyses the current policies of UTZ Certified and CSN/Solidaridad with regard to gender issues.

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- Tropenbos International.** 2014. *Projects on “Sustainable cocoa production in Ghana related to forests”. A quick scan*. Available at: <http://www.cocoaconnect.org/publication/projects-sustainable-cocoa-production-ghana-related-forests>
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- World Bank.** 2012. *World Bank Development Report 2012: Gender equality and development*. Available at: <https://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWDR2012/Resources/7778105-1299699968583/7786210-1315936222006/Complete-Report.pdf>



# Annex:

## Facilitation team and participants

### Facilitation team

#### **Ambra Gallina, Consultant on Agricultural Investments, Gender and Land, FAO**

Ambra Gallina is a social anthropologist who specializes in gender and social inclusion issues in rural and agricultural development. Ambra joined FAO in May 2014, supporting the gender team in its programme of work on agricultural investments, gender and land. Before joining FAO, she was responsible for mainstreaming the targeting of poverty and gender issues into the value chain projects portfolio of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). She also worked with other development agencies such as the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, the Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security of the Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centres (CGIAR) and the Overseas Agronomic Institute. She has fieldwork experience in many countries in Latin America and Africa.

#### **Anna Laven, Senior Advisor KIT, Sustainable Economic Development and Gender**

Anna Laven is Senior Advisor at the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) in Amsterdam and holds a Ph.D. in international development studies. She has more than 15 years of expertise in sustainable development and is an expert on the cocoa sector in West Africa, particularly Ghana. Anna has conducted many research projects related to global value chains and inclusive development specifically for the cocoa sector. A specific part of her research focuses on identifying more inclusive upgrading strategies for smallholders and business opportunities for rural service providers in the West African cocoa sector. She was a partner of the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) in improving outreach to women cocoa farmers in WCF's programmes. This resulted in a knowledge portal on gender in cocoa livelihoods. Ongoing research projects include a large-scale study on income diversification in cocoa growing communities, farmer segmentation and intrahousehold dynamics, and a study on sustainable tree crops in Ghana.

Anna is currently leading an evaluation of the Netherlands Choco Work Group, which has committed to achieving 100 percent sustainable cocoa consumption in the Netherlands by 2025. Anna is active in the public debate and is an active contributor to cocoa organizations and cocoa conferences. She is one of the board members of the Chocoa Festival and participates actively in the Women in Cocoa Network. Anna is involved in a start-up called Rokbar, which produces chocolate that is produced and owned by women "from bean to bar".

### **Katarzyna Jaskiewicz, Gender and Social Inclusion Consultant, FAO**

Katarzyna Jaskiewicz is a social scientist who specializes in agricultural value chains and gender. She has been with FAO since November 2016 when she joined the gender team in the Social Policies and Rural Institutions Division in order to support the programme on agricultural investments, gender and land. Prior to that she was part of the research team in the Inclusive Value Chain Collaboration project of the Netherlands Foundation for the Advancement of Tropical Research (WOTRO) Science for Global Development for which she conducted research among women cocoa farmers in South Africa and Ghana. Katarzyna holds an M.Sc. in international development studies from the University of Amsterdam.

### **Lisanne Oonk**

Lisanne Oonk is an entrepreneur who is active in the sustainable coffee trade. At the time of writing this publication she was advisor to KIT. Lisanne holds an M.Sc. in cultural anthropology and non-western sociology from the University of Amsterdam in the Netherlands. With her experience as a quality coordinator for an international green coffee buyer, she has developed knowledge of and experience with the role of the private sector in development cooperation. At the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT), she found her niche working on sustainable agricultural development and gender, focusing on agricultural commodity chains. Lisanne has extensive work experience in several African and Latin American countries.

### **Martha Osorio, Gender and Rural Development Officer, FAO**

Martha Osorio leads the FAO programme on gender and land. This work includes management of the gender and land rights database, a capacity development programme for promoting gender-equitable land tenure and policy support in accordance with the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security. Martha is also responsible for indicator 5.a.2 of Sustainable Development Goal 5 on women's equal control and ownership of land. She has a background in economics and international relations and has wide-ranging expertise in various areas of gender and rural development. Martha has conducted extensive research and work in the areas of rural employment, land tenure rights and investments in agriculture and supply chains with a gender perspective.

Over the last five years, Martha has been leading the Promoting Gender Inclusive and Equitable Investments in Agriculture in the Context of Poverty Reduction programme, which encompasses research, the promotion of multi-stakeholder dialogue and the provision of technical and policy support to countries. Martha holds Master's degrees in economics from the Universidad de los Andes in Colombia, in international relations from Johns Hopkins University in the United States and in Cooperation and International Development from the European Institute.

### **Rebecca Morahan, Associate at Twin**

Rebecca Morahan is a consultant specialising in gender and value chains, and participatory methods including GALs and Participatory Video. She has over 15 years experience working with cooperative organizations, specialising in coffee and cocoa value chains. As lead gender associate at Twin, Rebecca works on all levels of Twin's gender activities, from household to market. She has collaborated on several publications, including 'Empowering Women in Agricultural Value Chains' (Twin, 2013) and 'Women, coffee and land' (Twin, 2017).

## Participants

The participants are representatives of eight organizations or companies who are based in Latin America, Africa and Europe. The individuals were chosen by their respective organizations as having both a global overview of the organization's gender activities since their inception and a sound knowledge of practices on the ground.

### **Bernard B. Kaunda, Chief Operations Officer at Mzuzu Coffee Planters' Cooperative Union, Malawi**

Mzuzu Coffee is a union of six cooperatives spread across the country's northern region close to the shores of Lake Malawi. More than half of Mzuzu's coffee is grown in the Misuku hills at altitudes of 1 700–2 000 m above sea level. Mzuzu has a climate and environment sustainable farming pilot project aimed at moving farmers from monocropping to shade/intercropping of coffee and providing training and mentoring of field staff on good agricultural practices. The cooperative is also a member of the Joint Marketing Initiative (JMI) and received support from Twin for product differentiation, buyer communication and contract negotiation. Twin has also conducted a review of Mzuzu's gender policy and development of women's coffee proposition.

Bernard joined Mzuzu in 1998. He holds a Masters' degree in business administration, a diploma in agriculture and certificates in advanced maize agronomy, horticulture, coffee cupping and training and extension. As Chief Operations Officer he is responsible for cooperative and microfinance development, training and extension, gender, and the production and processing of coffee in Mzuzu's six member cooperatives. He has also been Vice Chair and a board member of the African Fine Coffees Association, representing Malawi.

### **Esperanza Dionisio, General Manager of CAC Pangoa, Peru**

Pangoa is a coffee and cocoa cooperative located in Junin in central Peru. It was founded in 1977 by 50 small farmers and has 724 members (124 of whom are women). Pangoa is a dynamic cooperative with a strong management team that supports members and communities through education programmes, technical assistance and credit services. Pangoa has an advanced gender programme and has established CODEMUS – women's committees that manage women's empowerment initiatives.

Esperanza Dionisio Castillo is the General Manager of CAC Pangoa. She began her career as one of only 13 female agronomy students in a year group of 150 in Peru's national agricultural university in Lima. After graduating she began working as an agronomist and joined CAC Pangoa in the year it was founded (1977). In 1997, she was asked to step in as General Manager and since then has taken the cooperative from strength to strength, developing close relationships with buyers in the United States of America and Europe and supporting farmers in obtaining fair trade and organic certification. Under her management, Pangoa has worked on a range of activities for promoting the development of women farmers and the well-being of coffee farming families.

### **Joyce Poku-Marboah, Business Manager of Kookoo-Paa, Ghana**

Kookoo-Paa is a producer organization and a farmer-based NGO that works to promote the adoption of sustainable farming practices in order to achieve the economic and social well-being of its members and farming communities. Formerly known as Ahansucofa, Kookoo Pa was formed in 2009 by cocoa farmers in ten communities, in two districts of the Ashanti Region in Ghana. It now operates in 218 communities, in seven districts and three regions. Its current membership is 8 600 farmers, of whom 2 924 are women. All farmers have been certified since 2010. As well as certification, Kookoo-Pa implements a cocoa livelihoods programme for its members, with three pillars: gender development, food security and nutritional improvement.

Joyce Poku-Marboah is a social development practitioner and trainer and a business-information technology (IT) alignment strategist. She is the gender focal person and Director of Operations at Kookoo Pa. She has been active in learning events organized by, for example, FAO, Twin and KIT (2016), the World Cocoa Foundation Conference for Global Women in Cocoa (2017) and the World Bank/FAO Women and Youth Inclusion in Responsible Investment in Agriculture programme (2017), where she has made presented and inspired others. She has analysed the business-IT alignment strategies of successful companies from diverse industrial backgrounds in Finland and Germany. As a trainer, she has trained staff of the Quality Control Company of Ghana Cocoa Board in cocoa certification and traceability throughout the country in order to enhance their capacity.

Joyce has a very strong innate inclination towards development work and interventions that have direct impacts on the lives of underprivileged people in society. This innate inclination has seen her work with government organizations, NGOs, social enterprises and on projects such as the FORUM Project (Ghana), AfricareWo (Finland), Lokalt Resurs Centrum för kvinnor (Malmö, Sweden) and TechAide (Ghana). She has worked with these organizations in order to help local communities mitigate and adapt to climate change through confidence building measures, providing robust technology solutions for rural poor people and orphanages in Ghana, promoting education of girl children and empowering African women while living abroad.

She holds an M.Sc. in economics and business administration, an Executive Certificate in business administration (project management option) and a B.Sc. in business information technology from Finland. She has worked with Nokia Corporation and Miljoy Group (both in Finland) and TechAide (Ghana).

### **Katie Sims, Former Programme Officer, Twin**

Twin is an organization that focuses on the entire value chain, offering support to producer organizations in coffee, cocoa and nuts. It works with all stakeholder in the value chains. Based in the United Kingdom and with an office in Kigali, Rwanda, Twin and Twin Trading have been working with smallholder farmers for 28 years on developing strong producer organizations and facilitating access to markets. In coffee and cocoa, gender sensitivity has been a consistent feature of Twin's approach.

At the time of writing, Katie worked with the Twin Producer Partnerships Programmes team on projects in Africa and Latin America, supporting the sustainable growth of cocoa and nut businesses and inclusive producer organizations. In the past, she has worked with ethical trading organizations, rural women's cooperatives in Honduras, and youth organizations in Europe. She has a Master's degree in environment, development and policy and a B.A. in Spanish and French.

### **Malisa Mukanga, Program Manager Youth at Hanns R. Neumann Stiftung (HRNS), Germany**

Hans R. Neumann Stiftung is a non-profit foundation that was founded by the Neumann family in 2005. For decades, the family has been rooted and strongly involved in the production and trade of coffee, and the family's company, Neumann Kaffee Gruppe, is a market leader in its field. The foundation was established in recognition of the need for different types of support in the supply chains, particularly at the level of smallholder farmers. The foundation's mission is to initiate, implement and scale up best practices, focusing in this case study on the gender household approach. The foundation has two key focus areas: changing people's mindsets and knowledge by providing technical support on GAP and the mitigation of climate change; and changing the framework conditions in which it acts through, for example, bulking and the strengthening of farmer and apex organizations for lobbying and advocacy.

### **Margreet Groot, Communications and Budget Manager at Mondelēz International, Switzerland**

Mondelēz International is one of the largest chocolate companies in the world. To Mondelēz, it is obvious what the business case for sustainable cocoa is: without cocoa there is no chocolate. In 2012, under the new ownership of Mondelēz International, the Cadbury Cocoa Partnership was relaunched as Mondelēz International Cocoa Life with an enhanced goal of improving the livelihoods of cocoa farmers and cocoa growing communities in alignment with the sourcing strategy of Mondelēz International. The Cocoa Life programme is implemented in Ghana through a partnership among Mondelēz International and government and non-governmental organizations. The vision of Cocoa Life is "empowered thriving cocoa communities as the essential foundation for sustainable cocoa". The programme currently engages with farmers in 447 cocoa communities in 15 districts in Eastern, Western, Ashanti, Brong Ahafo and Central regions of Ghana.

Margreet leads the communications strategy and manages the budget for Cocoa Life, which aims to transform Mondelēz's cocoa supply chain by investing directly in creating empowered, thriving cocoa communities as the essential foundation for sustainable cocoa. With its USD 400 million investment over ten years in Cocoa Life, Mondelēz International is committed to empowering 200 000 cocoa farmers and improving the lives of more than 1 million people in cocoa communities.

Margreet also leads the programme's women's empowerment work stream, which is critical in fostering the amplifier effect that women have on the impact of the programme. Margreet joined the company in 2009, when it was known as Kraft Foods, and brings more than eight years of experience of working in marketing development, working with various business stakeholders and in virtual teams and managing creative agencies supporting marketing. Margreet is multilingual, has a background in business, international relations and corporate social responsibility and has lived, studied and worked in the Netherlands, South Africa, Denmark, India and Switzerland. She is also the president of GreenBuzz Zurich, a network that connects sustainability professionals in Zurich in order to advance sustainability across sectors and organizations.

### **Melanie Landthaler, Sustainability Consultant at Nespresso, Switzerland**

Sustainability is Nespresso's way of doing business and is at the heart of everything it does. The Nespresso AAA Sustainable Quality Program was launched in 2003. By 2004, hundreds of farmers in Costa Rica, Mexico and Colombia had joined the programme and committed to applying a method of coffee production that was both sustainable and environmentally friendly. By 2015, this number had swelled to more than 70 000 farmers in 12 countries, representing more than 80 percent of Nespresso's total coffee supply. The company is committed to increasing this number by 100 percent by 2020.

Melanie began working on coffee sustainability in 2008 with the 4C Association, a baseline coffee sustainability standard. She later joined leading green coffee merchant ECOM Trading as sustainability manager in Indonesia, responsible for building the company's Arabica supply chains with an emphasis on productivity and quality, and improving the livelihoods of more than 6 000 smallholder farmers. In 2013, she moved back to Europe to take up a job with the United Nations International Trade Centre in Geneva (part of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the World Trade Organization), where she focused on fostering sustainable trade and competitiveness among small and medium enterprises in developing countries.

A freelance consultant since 2015, Melanie supports clients such as Nestlé Nespresso S.A. on various social sustainability issues. She is excited to currently be developing a global gender equality strategy for Nespresso's AAA Program, which works with more than 300 agronomists and 75 000 coffee farmers in 12 countries.

### **Peter Ndambiri, Sustainable Management Services (SMS), Kenya**

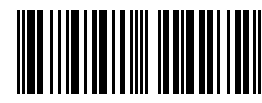
SMS Ltd is a subsidiary company of ECOM Agroindustrial Corporation. It was established in Kenya in 2007 and is licensed by the coffee directorate to provide coffee management and marketing services to coffee producers in Kenya. SMS is currently working with more than 120 000 small-scale producers from all the coffee growing regions of Kenya. SMS is located in Thika, Jumapili estate on the Thika-Mangu-Gatukuyu road, 40 km from Nairobi city. The role of SMS in the coffee value chain is to provide coffee management and marketing services to producers. It also plays the role of linking farmers to coffee buyers overseas. The coffee management services that SMS offers are farm advisory and extension services, certification, agro inputs and crop advance financing.



This publication critically reviews the experiences of different organizations around the world (producer organizations, companies, NGOs, and service providers) working towards gender equality in the cocoa and coffee sectors. Its purpose is to showcase good practices and provide inspiration as well as guidance for actors engaged in agricultural supply chains on how to change the terms of engagement for women producers in order to achieve more gender-equitable distribution of opportunities and benefits, while at the same time reaching business objectives at various levels.



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