Empowering Women in Smallholder Outgrower Schemes

Authors: Jasmin Hidanovic and Sandi Roberts
Date: 18 July 2018
Agenda

Gender in the context of AgDevCo and its Smallholder Development Unit (SDU)

Farmer profile: Nighty Akwero (GADC, Northern Uganda)

AgDevCo Gender Policy and Action Plan

Successes and challenges: 3 mini-case studies

Extension Services: Quick Wins

Closing Remarks
AgDevCo operates exclusively in sub-Saharan Africa

Ghana
Malawi
Mozambique
Rwanda
Senegal (SDU only)
Sierra Leone
Tanzania
Uganda
Zambia

Case Study: GADC, Uganda
25,900 farmers sold cotton to GADC, of which 10,360 can be attributed to AgDevCo’s contribution to the working capital

$46 Additional annual income earned by farmers thanks to the working capital facility

$55 Value of additional assets that GADC farmers accumulated between 2014 and 2017, compared to farmers outside GADC’s network

494 Village Savings and Loan Associations have been registered

85 farmers have received insured equipment loans from GADC
“I am proud that I managed to buy cows which reproduced so we can build up our herd. Last year, I sold cotton worth $540 to GADC and I used this together with money from making papyrus mats to buy a plot of land in Pader Town, where I plan to build a house and open a shop”. – Nighty Akwero
“In March, I get my farm ready for food crops like millet and ground nuts. In July I prepare to plant cash crops like cotton and sesame. I like to sell these crops to GADC because I know they pay cash and have reliable weighing scales. I have already made sure that I have enough beans to last our family to the next harvest and I make sure I balance my needs for cash with keeping enough food for us all to eat. It’s also important for me to pay school fees: my oldest son has just finished O-levels and I want him to carry on to finish A-levels next.” – Nighty Akwero
Lessons Learned

• Contracting the **head of household** (often male) may inadvertently exclude women
• Including women **benefits the entire household**
• Female farmers are more likely to **apply techniques learned during training**
• Trainings should take into account **domestic responsibilities and mobility constraints**
• Women’s empowerment is about **access** and **agency**
AgDevCo Gender Policy and Action Plan

5 key areas:

- Raising awareness and building capacity
- Gender mainstreaming in investment process/operations/reporting and M&E
- Implementation of gender action plans with selected investees
- Gender-inclusive strategies for greenfield developments and outgrower schemes
- Knowledge sharing

Women as employees
Women as smallholders
Women as intermediaries/entrepreneurs
Women as consumers
Gender as an integral part of our Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) framework

- Country gender studies
- Gender assessment checklists
- Investee workshops
- Gender-sensitive Due Diligence
- ESG audits

ESG Action Plans
### Empowering women in smallholder outgrower schemes

#### THE TEN PRINCIPLES OF SUCCESS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRINCIPLE</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td>Scale up and professionalise women’s crops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>Engage women as equal actors in male-dominated value chains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>Ensure women benefit from training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td>Ensure women access productive resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td>Improve market access for women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td>Ensure that contract farming schemes offer equal opportunities for women and men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td>Ensure women benefit from income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td>Promote equitable sharing and joint budgeting in the household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td>Promote women’s leadership in farmers’ organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td>Share success stories of gender-sensitive business practices and make the business case</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Promoting female leadership
Case Study: Phata Sugarcane Cooperative (Malawi)

Phata Facts 2017

- 310 female cooperative members (46%)
- 157 FTE female employees (26%)
- 2 female board members (2:12)

 Lesson learned
- Improvement in socio-economic livelihoods of members; but
- Lack of women’s empowerment in the community:
  - Dividends did not always benefit households
  - Low representation of women on cooperative committees

 Achievement
- More female land owners in Phase II
- Gender workshop raised awareness
- Gender policy approved
- Second female board member was elected
Empowering women in smallholder outgrower schemes

### The Ten Principles of Success

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principle 1</td>
<td>Scale up and professionalise women’s crops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principle 2</td>
<td>Engage women as equal actors in male-dominated value chains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principle 3</td>
<td>Ensure women benefit from training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principle 4</td>
<td>Ensure women access productive resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principle 5</td>
<td>Improve market access for women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principle 6</td>
<td>Ensure that contract farming schemes offer equal opportunities for women and men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principle 7</td>
<td>Ensure women benefit from income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principle 8</td>
<td>Promote equitable sharing and joint budgeting in the household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principle 9</td>
<td>Promote women’s leadership in farmers’ organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principle 10</td>
<td>Share success stories of gender-sensitive business practices and make the business case</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The commercial and social benefits of empowering women
Case Study: GADC (Uganda)

GADC Facts 2017

59% female outgrowers (25,900 farmers in 2017)
60% female ginnery seasonal workers
1/8 female senior managers

Commercial benefits:
- Access to new consumer bases
- Reduced post-harvest losses in sesame, increased profits
- Better adherence to agricultural best practices learned during trainings, improved yields

Social benefits:
- Individual farming – increased decision making power for women over their produce and the proceeds
- Stimulate female entrepreneurship
- VSLAs – access to finance, agronomic training
- Motorcycle video trainings
But with commercial success also come challenges
Case Study: New Rotations (Zambia)

NRZ Facts 2017

- 78% of FTE employees are female (61/78).
- 1 female senior manager (part-time)
- 1,327 female smallholders supplying groundnuts (47%)

▶ Lessons learned
- Women can be squeezed out of the supply chain for profitable crops if measures are not put in place to monitor and address this

▶ Achievements
- Training programme led to promotion to skilled position (Chanda, shown on photo)
- Strong investee management buy-in and plans to provide household budgeting training

▶ Lessons yet to be learned
- Better understand intra-household dynamics
- Contribution to women’s economic empowerment from a household farming approach
Extension Services: Quick Wins

- Invite the **entire household** to participate in trainings
- Ensure **trainings** are scheduled at a time and location that is convenient for women
- Encourage women to **deliver trainings** and use **female role models**
- Set **targets** for female lead farmers, extension officers
- **Identify star performers** (career opportunities)
- Provide **labour-saving devices** to reduce time poverty
Click [here](#) to read our blog about *Three practical steps agribusinesses can take to help close the gender gap in smallholder outgrower schemes*. 

---
More about our impact at Phata and GADC (click on the images)

- Click [here](#) to watch the *Story of Phata* video
Thank you for your attention!